

## **An Exploration of Nursing Assistants' Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Engagement in a Acute Healthcare Setting: A Qualitative Case Study Pilot in England**

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**Abstract :** Background: Continuing Personal Development (CPD) enables professionals to keep up to date with the professional requirements, broadening their knowledge and expertise. However, much of the research explores the registered professionals' experiences and the factors that influence their choice of engaging, despite the unregistered staff providing the majority of the direct patient care. Aim: To explore the Nursing/Midwifery Assistants' (NAs) perception of the concept of CPD, as well as explore the factors that influence the NAs to engage (or not) with CPD experiences. Methodology: This pilot study used a qualitative approach through a case study, where a semi-structured interview was applied to three NAs to explore the factors that influence the decision-making of process of CPD engagement. Thematic analysis was used to analyse their answers and interpret patterns and associations. Findings: All the participants agreed that CPD is important and relevant to their practice and personal lives. Five main categories were identified: NAs' scope of practice, the impact of CPD; decision-making process; challenges; changes required. Although similar findings to the registered nurses were identified, the lack of CPD regulation for NAs and the rapid evolution of their role make the CPD engagement more problematic. Conclusion: Engagement with CPD is influenced by a wide range of professional (organisational and national) and personal factors. NAs perceive lack of management support at different stages of the CPD activities as a main influence. Organisations should be more flexible in the recruitment, offer of CPD choices, content, delivery, and contractual arrangements of NAs, which may increase engagement.

**Keywords :** nursing assistants, engagement, factors, pilot, continuing professional development (CPD)

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