

Skills for Health News

January 2011 Edition

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Re-skilling and staff development overtakes budget cuts as employers' top workforce concern

Re-skilling, training and staff development is a more pressing concern for health workforce managers than budget cuts or maintaining service quality during organisational change, new research from Skills for Health shows.

The survey of directors and senior managers from the NHS, independent and voluntary sectors in the UK found that 36% cited skills development as one of their top three workforce issues for the coming year.

Maintaining service quality during a time of rapid change came second (35%), followed by dealing with budget cuts (33%).

With the Department of Health currently consulting on proposals for a new framework to develop the healthcare workforce (see article below), the annual research from Skills for Health shows that skills development remains high on many health managers' workforce agenda.

Employers who cited workforce concerns and issues were also asked which workforce development solutions and support could best help them address their challenges over the next year.

Responses included:

- Greater availability of standardised training for emerging roles, such as those described in Skills for Health's library of 'nationally transferable' roles
 - Cost-effective workforce strategy tools and guidance to support workforce transformation
 - Training and advice to help managers deal with organisational change.
- ▷ **For further information on the tools and solutions Skills for Health offers to help you address your workforce skills and productivity challenges, contact your local country or region director via www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/nations-and-regions**



DH consultation: 'Developing the Healthcare Workforce'

Skills for Health has welcomed the launch of *Liberating the NHS: Developing the Healthcare Workforce*, the Government's consultation on proposals for a new workforce, education and training structure driven by patient need and led by local healthcare providers.

The new system aims to give employers greater autonomy and accountability for planning and developing the workforce, alongside greater professional ownership of the quality of education and training.

Local healthcare provider-led 'skills networks' are proposed, to deliver effective planning and development of the local workforce. A new national body - Health Education England - will also be set up, to provide national oversight and support on workforce planning and the commissioning of education and training.

The consultation runs until 31 March 2011 and Skills for Health, as the employers' voice on skills issues within the health sector, will be responding in detail. To make sure we accurately reflect your views in our response to the consultation, we will launch an e-survey next week. Please do sign up to share your thoughts with us.

- ▷ **To get our next e-survey just email epanel@skillsforhealth.org.uk**
- ▷ **Read more about the Government consultation www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_122590**

Rostering system saves hospitals £1.6 million each a year

Junior doctors provide work at a cost of around £2 billion a year¹. Effective use of this time is key to delivering service quality and productivity.

The Doctors Rostering System (DRS) is used by over 130 hospitals across the UK. These hospitals have made significant savings - together saving £250 million a year on Band 3 payments compared to eight years ago². That's about £1.6 million for each hospital, every year.

We also now offer a revolutionary new roosting tool that runs alongside the Doctors Rostering System.

The NW Rostering tool enables you to manage your junior doctors rotas more flexibly and to deal more efficiently with short-notice changes. It also enables you to better predict future staffing shortfalls and helps you arrange cover in advance, reducing your reliance on locums.

The system helps junior doctors and consultants as well as general managers, rota planners, medical workforce planners and European Working Time Directive leads.

¹ Calculated using the median pay at each grade and band, according to Pay Circular (M&D) 1/2010

² In 2002 there were 7,320 non-compliant posts in SHAs who were DRS stakeholders. In 2010 this had reduced to 70

This system has been developed by NHS doctors and staff whose prime aim is service quality, not commercial profit.

"It's brilliant," said Katie Elder of Central Manchester University Hospitals. "Using the NW Rostering tool has been a revelation. Well done, you have done wonders for the department!"

Anna Finbow, Medical Staffing Co-ordinator, Central Manchester NHS Hospital, said: "This software gives healthcare staff the opportunity to actively take part in the rota design process.

"Non medical staff can view the availability of doctors in real time and contact them for clinical care and Doctors can log onto the system and view their rosters from home."

▶ **For further information contact Sean Whyment on 0161 266 2261 sean.whyment@skillsforhealth.org.uk, or visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/rostering**



New healthcare apprenticeships to help employers prevent future skills gaps

Skills for Health has welcomed Government plans to invest £10m in apprenticeships in the health sector in England.

Apprenticeships offer a route for employers to develop new talent and ensure their workforce has the right skills and qualifications. Key benefits include:

- improved productivity
- improved competitiveness
- a committed competent and sustainable workforce
- enables you to develop your own solutions to prevent skills gaps.

Christina Pond, Skills for Health's Director of Standards, Qualifications and Policy Development, said: "This is excellent news and we look forward to working with employers across the health sector to support the delivery of the new apprenticeships."

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We can offer practical support and advice on establishing and supporting apprenticeships in your organisation to deliver on your workforce needs.

- ▶ **To find out more about how Skills for Health can help you realise the benefits of apprenticeships, contact your country or regional director. For details visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/nations-and-regions**
- ▶ **For details of the apprenticeship resources see www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/apprenticeships.**

PCT reaps reward of Apprenticeships

NHS Birmingham East and North has won the HSJ 2010 Award for Workforce Development, sponsored by Skills for Health, for their apprenticeship scheme.

The scheme has enabled 117 people to achieve their apprenticeship qualification. So far, 73 per cent of apprentices have gained permanent employment in the trust or local health economy. Retention of apprentices who get permanent jobs stands at an unprecedented 96 per cent.

The judges said: "This scheme is outstanding in the way it reaches out to the local population to attract, develop and maintain a workforce for the future".



John Rogers, Chief Executive, Skills for Health (left) and presenter David Vine (right) with the award winners.

NHS Cornwall & Isles of Scilly transforms health visitor service and cuts recruitment and training costs

Cornwall's children's directorate was unable to fill eight health visitor vacancies, and care provision within the service focused solely on crisis management.

To resolve the issue, the trust decided on a competence based approach and worked closely with several stakeholders including Skills for Health, The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and the local university.

The aim was to stabilise the workforce, rapidly expand its skills and knowledge and establish a clear career pathway with a degree in healthcare studies.

To kick off the process, Skills for Health worked closely with the trust to identify the 58 competences (National Occupational Standards) that made up the service.

Skills for Health then provided bespoke training for the new recruits and their mentors on using our online tools. This formed the basis of the recruits' development and ensured they met all the requirements to be declared competent.

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The trust then asked learners to hold a health visitor caseload. In some cases this involved taking responsibility for a child protection or safeguarding caseload within four months.

As a direct result of the initiative the trust received 65 applications, from which 13 band 5+ learners were recruited and trained up - saving a significant amount on recruitment and training costs.

- ▶ **If you would like Skills for Health to help you develop your services and deliver savings, contact your country or regional director. Visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/nations-and-regions for details.**



250,000 healthcare staff using Skills for Health e-learning courses

Latest figures show that 250,000 staff in healthcare organisations across England are using Skills for Health e-learning programmes.

The online e-learning programmes deliver essential training to maintain a safe, competent and legal workforce.

They are designed to be used sector-wide and are being successfully used in a variety of NHS, independent and third sector healthcare organisations.

The system, which can be accessed via both the Skills for Health's Core Learning Unit or the National Learning Management System (NLMS), is a highly cost effective way to help meet your statutory and mandatory training requirements. It reduces the need for face to face training, provides consistency of learner experience, and is endorsed by key national authoritative bodies such as City & Guilds.

The programmes allow employers to track what training is taking place, monitor the progress of learners and evaluate the impact of the training.

For learners they offer a straightforward and flexible training package that can be accessed anywhere, anytime.

A recent learner said: "The Infection Control modules were very good and every employee in the health service should complete them."

- ▶ **To see more go to www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/clu**
- ▶ **To find out how online e-learning programmes can help you maintain a safe, competent and legal workforce, contact your country or regional director. Visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/nations-and-regions for details.**



New flexible, employer-led vocational qualifications now available

On 1 January more than 25 new vocational qualifications - including 'replacement' NVQs - launched on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), the new framework for all vocational qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Now is the ideal time to update your training and development plans, and to explore how the new framework can help you develop a more productive and flexible workforce delivering better patient care.

Skills for Health Director for Qualifications Strategy, Anne Eaton, said: "The QCF and these new vocational qualifications present a genuine opportunity for employers to be smarter and leaner in their training and development activities.

"Using the flexible unit-based approach of the QCF, employers will be able to get greater impact from limited training budgets, while also designing their workforce training and development activities more closely around patient need.

"It will also benefit staff, who will be able to learn at a pace that suits them and to transfer credit between qualifications to avoid having to repeat their learning."

Skills for Health has worked with a range of partner organisations during the last year to 'transition' existing vocational qualifications to the new framework. Subjects range from Health Informatics to Emergency Care Assistance, Maternity and Paediatric Support and Optical Retail Skills.

The new qualifications are approved by the Qualifications Regulator for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and are recognised by regulators and workforce development organisations as the benchmark for the sector.

Within Scotland where the QCF does not apply, qualifications will continue to be regulated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

▷ **To see our handy new guide to the new qualifications and explore all our supporting information and resources visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/qcfupdate**

Do you need to improve your commissioning skills?

Effective commissioning is a vital skill set for an increasing number of health sector roles.

To meet demand, Skills for Health has worked with Government Skills to develop the skills (National Occupational Standards) for commissioning in the public sector, which are now available from our website.

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) are nationally recognised as a single standard of competence across sectors such as social care, housing and the independent sector.

With the current move towards GP commissioning consortia and the increased focus on commissioning, the NOS can be used to develop and define the new roles and teams that you need.

You can use our online tools to build NOS-based profiles for your role or team. These will identify any commissioning skills and knowledge gaps and gives you a structured approach for future development. Just register on our tools website at tools.skillsforhealth.org.uk and select the Competence Search Tool.

▷ **For further information on the commissioning NOS and what they can do for you and your team, contact your country or regional director. Visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/nations-and-regions for details.**

Give us your views on the skills for effective Chemotherapy services

Chemotherapy services are evolving rapidly, with a growing number of services being delivered in the community by a widening range of service providers.

The National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death report *Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy: For Better, for Worse?* (2008) highlighted the need for change to ensure all chemotherapy services are responsive and effective.

A second report, *Chemotherapy Services in England: Ensuring Quality and Safety* by the National Chemotherapy Advisory Group, recommended that the competences for chemotherapy developed by Skills for Health in 2005 should be updated.

Skills for Health is now working with the National Cancer Action Team in England and stakeholders in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure that the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Chemotherapy and Chemotherapy Pharmacy are up to date, relevant and applicable across the UK.

We have revised the existing NOS and want your views on them to ensure they are fit for purpose. This is an open consultation for everyone working in Chemotherapy services and all views are welcome. There are separate consultations on the revised NOS for Chemotherapy and the revised NOS for Chemotherapy Pharmacy.

▶ **The consultations will open on 11 January 2011 and will end on 7 March. To take part please visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/consultations for more.**

Developing the right education for your staff to deliver “huge benefits”



For your staff to deliver services to the highest standards they need access to the right education and training.

By using Skills for Health's online tools you can create an education framework that links training to Nationally Occupation Standards, improves access to training, supports transferability of skills and is rooted in patient need and the critical care environment.

The recently published report, *Critical for Care*, shows how Cheshire and Mersey Critical Care Network developed a framework to enable staff to meet the NICE recommendations for Critical Care.

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The first module of training, Essentials of Critical Care, developed with Edge Hill University, starts in January 2011.

Gary Masterson, Consultant in ITU & Anaesthesia, Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "This project has allowed us to define our service's education and training requirements, which has proven to be of huge benefit when developing training programmes for new staff."

Sarah Clarke, Acting Director and Lead for Nursing & Service Improvement, Cheshire & Mersey Critical Care Network said: "We firmly believe that this will lead to fewer clinical incidents, improved outcomes for patients as well as resulting in more confident and competent staff."

▷ **To read the report click here.**

▷ **To find out more about how Skills for Health can help you develop the right education for your staff, contact your country or regional director. Visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/nations-and-regions for details.**

900 employers attend Skills for Health UK skills events

Recent Skills for Health skills events drew large numbers of delegates across the UK.

Over 900 employers from across the health sector attended the 'roadshows' and vocational qualifications events, often despite adverse weather.

The events demonstrated how Skills for Health can help employers improve health service quality and increase productivity.

Delegates, who came from NHS and independent sector, were enthusiastic with comments including: "Very helpful, open and encouraging presenters", "Extremely valuable" and "Brilliant to attend every workshop. Thank you".

Every one of the events was oversubscribed.

Keep an eye out on our website at www.skillsforhealth.org.uk and in the Newsletter for future events.

▷ **If you would be interested in future events please contact your country or regional director. Visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/nations-and-regions for details.**

1-2 February: Workforce innovation for health and social care - joint conference with Skills for Care

The event is for anyone looking for innovative ways to support the health and social care workforce.

The event in Glasgow is an opportunity to meet other strategic thinkers from around the world and share best practice, which will:

- offer ideas on how to develop the workforce
- provide case studies on "how to make it happen"
- demonstrate how to inspire change and innovation
- show how to apply innovative ways of working, ensuring that they are effective and provide high quality care.

Delegates praised last year's event as: "An inspiring and rigorous day" and "a very informative and exciting conference".

The two-day conference fee of £199 includes one night's hotel accommodation and conference dinner.

▷ **To find out more visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/NWWConference or email zarina.sutton@skillsforhealth.org.uk**