



## Skills for Health

We are a not-for-profit organisation based in the UK operating both in the UK and internationally. Our prime focus is in developing the skills and capability of healthcare staff to improve quality of care and productivity.

Working with employers at national, regional and individual level, we contribute to improving clinical outcomes, the quality of patient care and staff productivity by developing better skills and staffing structures. Our aim is to deliver real and sustainable improvement for our clients.

We are the UK leader in this area, licensed by the UK government as the Healthcare Sector Skills Council. This means we have sole responsibility for developing and maintaining all of the UK National Occupational Standards for healthcare. These articulate the knowledge, skills and values that all staff must have to do their job successfully.



## What we do

We help health organisations achieve their business goals by examining – and optimising – how teams and individuals operate. We enable you to make best use of expensive professional healthcare staff, and develop a more balanced team.

We believe a key component to improving productivity, efficiency and quality is improving the skills of the support workforce – who typically act as assistants to a qualified healthcare professional, such as a nurse or therapist.

### *There are four major aspects to our work:*

- *workforce planning*
- *service and care pathway design*
- *skills development*
- *education and training*





## Workforce planning

Effective workforce planning is a vital consideration. Determining future staffing requirements is important for major capital developments, financial planning, when redesigning services and for recruitment, retention and redeployment strategies.

We recognise that workforce planning is often relegated to a minor role becoming just an afterthought. However, considering the workforce combined with effective planning at a very early stage will have a major positive influence, vastly improving the quality and efficiency of building design, care pathways development, service planning, and recruitment strategies.

### Our proven method

We've developed a systematic, objective approach to determining your workforce needs. Our 'Six Steps Methodology to Integrated Strategic Workforce Planning' is recognised as the method of choice by the UK National Health Service (NHS). It's also used throughout social care and local government.

We can implement our approach across any workforce, from small teams to large organisations. This can range from actually preparing an organisation's workforce plans to enabling organisations to do this effectively themselves with appropriate training, mentoring and quality assurance.

We have over 10 years' experience in healthcare workforce planning at national, regional and local levels. In the last five years alone, we've trained and developed more than 5,000 healthcare staff in workforce planning techniques.





## Service and care pathway design

Our experience shows that many organisations focus heavily on inputs – on such things as how many more doctors or nurses are needed. Unfortunately, this restricts solutions to traditional staffing structures and doesn't always lead to high-quality services or deliver the best value for money.

### Getting the best from your teams

Applying Functional Analysis, we work closely with clinical staff and managers to map patient care pathways, identify the skills needed to provide the best patient care while optimising value for money. We can also align each skill against national standards of competence that describe best practice and support role redesign.

Our aim is to help you to make better use of your entire healthcare team. Our approach can incorporate the design and introduction of new roles, such as assistant and advanced practitioners. It also helps target the necessary skills development that will:

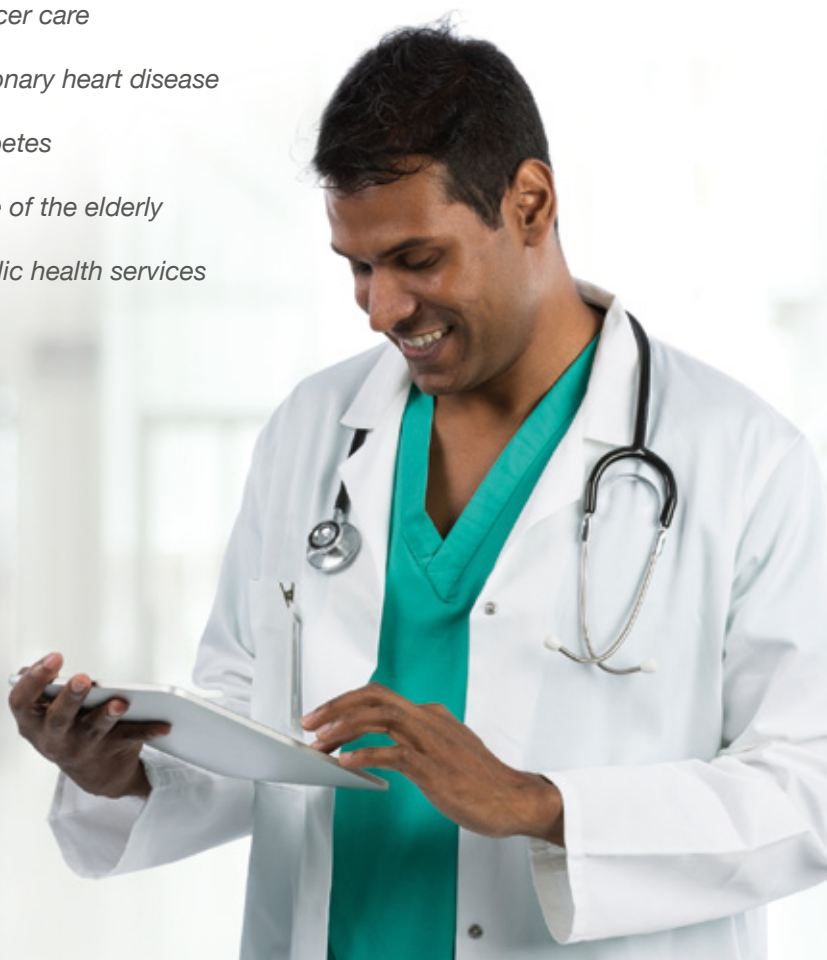
- *improve the quality of your service*
- *control costs*
- *achieve your business objectives*

## Ten years of success

Over the past decade, clients of Skills for Health have experienced the value of looking beyond traditional staffing structures to implement healthcare initiatives more effectively and economically.

We have helped governments and employers in the UK – and around the world – to identify the skills, staff responsibilities and training needed to carry out innovative health programmes in many areas including:

- *cancer care*
- *coronary heart disease*
- *diabetes*
- *care of the elderly*
- *public health services*

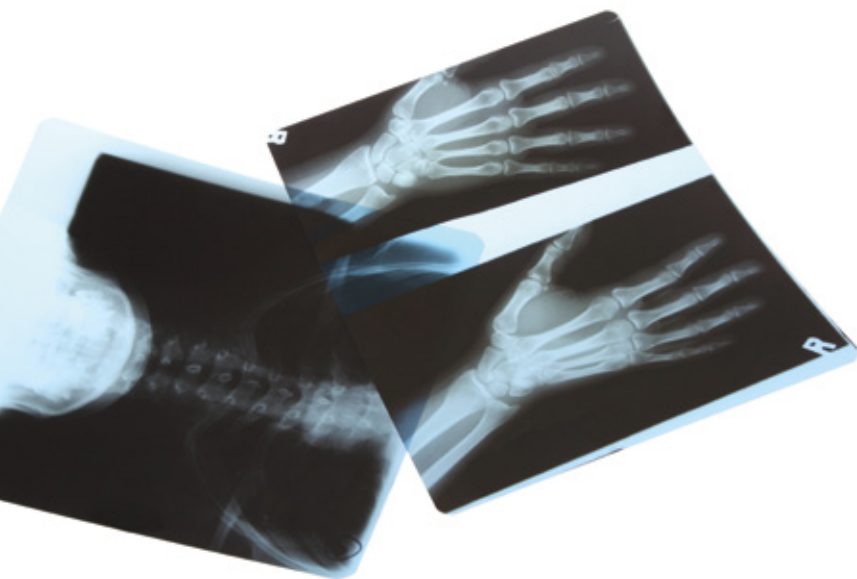


## Skills development

Investing in the development of the health workforce can be expensive. Ensuring optimal return on that investment is very important. We have extensive experience of helping organisations in many countries to identify and articulate the learning and development needs of their workforce, develop appropriate investment strategies and procure the correct training.

We can assess the competency of your current workforce set against your organisation's needs, taking into account both your operational and strategic requirements. We determine and quantify any skills gaps – and develop plans to address these effectively.

How do we achieve this? By using a number of purpose-designed techniques, including functional or care pathway analysis, career frameworks, team and individual learning needs assessment. We can use either UK (where appropriate) or design local Occupational Standards to benchmark competency and skills requirements.







## Education and training

Once we've identified the required skills, we can inform the design of the necessary learning and development programmes and the investment strategy.

We examine the benefits of using existing programmes and qualifications, or we can design bespoke programmes tailored to your organisation's needs. This can include using work-based learning, e-learning, simulation-based learning and blended learning (e-learning combined with traditional classroom teaching).

### Training through The National Skills Academy for Health

Through our own National Skills Academy for Health we offer a range of training and development programmes – particularly for support staff.

We're the largest supplier of e-learning programmes to the UK's healthcare workforce. We help health and social care support workers meet the national minimum training standards – which we also developed.

We also work through an extensive range of partner organisations – including leading UK colleges, universities and Royal Colleges – to find the most appropriate, high-quality training to suit the needs of all staff.





## Questions?

For more information on our services,  
or to discuss any healthcare workforce  
development issues, please contact:

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