

Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust

Framework Assesses and Anticipates Staffing Needs



With a successful apprenticeship scheme already in place, Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust wanted to develop a competence based career framework for Healthcare Support Worker (HCSW) staff. This would enable the Trust to be clearer and more responsive, both when assessing staffing needs, and in identifying required skills and training.

The Challenge

Producing a Staffing Snapshot

The first phase of work focused on gathering baseline information to establish the current HCSW staffing situation. The Trust was very keen that the project underpinned and supported the current work of this group of staff. Skills for Health assisted education leads to conduct organisation-wide research on HCSW progression, education, training, and supervision.

“We wanted to achieve an agreed competence framework for this particular group of staff, Bands 2-4, as they underpin a lot of the work we do.” Karen Dickinson, Head of Education Training and Development, Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust

This ensured they could be clear on what training was required where, and enabled them to incorporate other mandatory training such as the new Care Certificate Standards.

Though predominantly based in the mental health and learning disabilities teams, research revealed Healthcare Support Workers were also employed in substance misuse services, psychological interventions, and the brain injuries unit. In total there were 918 HCSWs across the Trust, making up approximately 31% of the organisation’s 2937 strong workforce.

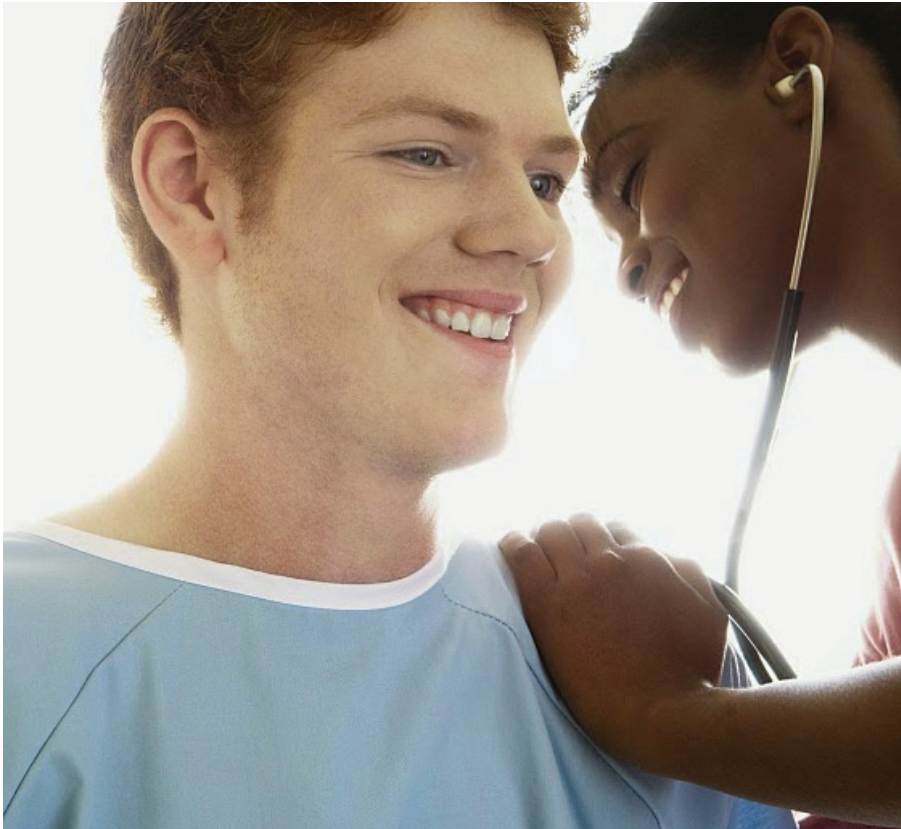
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Karen Dickinson

Head of Education Training and Development,
Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust



The Outcomes

Framework for the Future

Although the project is still ongoing, with only two workshops completed by end of 2014, the team have taken some lessons on board from their experiences so far. In particular, despite big aspirations, they now recognise the value in breaking that down and focusing on tangible outcomes, such as recruiting a set number of apprentices within a smaller timeframe. But it's also important to appreciate the successes along the way.

Skills for Health's input was vital to the progression of the project; listening to the team's needs, signposting to available support, and linking them into a network of communities across Mental Health Trusts. This experience was cited as one of the highlights of their journey and a key element in enabling them to do meaningful work.

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How they did it

Workforce Workshops Reveal Commonality of Competences

Phase two followed several months later. The Trust knew it would need staff and management involvement as soon as possible and so launched a series of inclusive workshops running from late 2014 into early 2015.

"What was encouraging was that the Healthcare Support Workforce was represented and they did participate."
– Karen Dickinson

One outcome from support worker involvement was the realisation that there was already a great deal of consistency across the HCSW competences, despite the diverse range of roles in the Trust. For example a HCSW in a community

primary care team essentially needed very similar competences as a support worker in the acute mental health ward. There is a core of common competences but in some cases additional ones are needed.

Steering Group Support

Throughout this project the team participated in Health Education Yorkshire and Humber's multi-Trust steering group, an experience they feel has been well worthwhile and look forward to continuing.

"We've all got very different projects, but it's been good to have that community of networks across Mental Health Trusts and be able to meet up, share things, work together, and avoid duplication. Hopefully going forward that will be a legacy for the future."
– Karen Dickinson

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