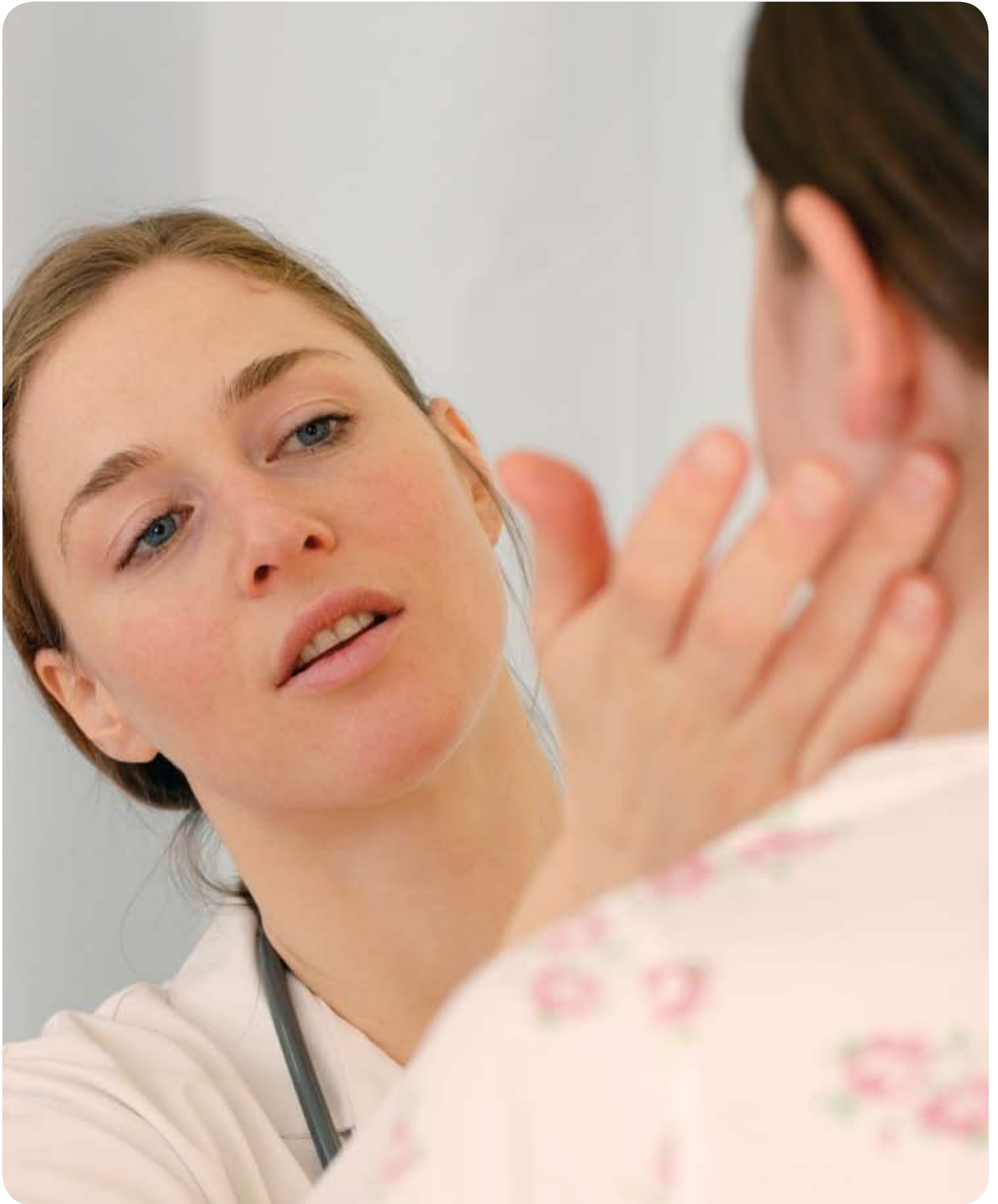


The matrix quality standard for information advice and guidance services

What it means to the healthcare sector



better **skills**
better **jobs**
better **health**



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Introduction

The sustainability and development of the current and future UK workforce is high on government agendas across each of the four nations. This is demonstrated by the wide range of employability schemes and projects; programmes such as Investors in People; significant funding available to enhance skills and competences through initiatives such as Skills for Life, Train to Gain in England and Apprenticeships.



Within the healthcare sector, workforce planning and development is also high on agendas – even more so as the UK continues to experience significant social, economic and technological change. In a healthcare environment, having the right skills in the right place at the right time is fundamental. It can make the difference between a good or bad patient experience and even – at the extreme end of the scale – between life and death.

Ensuring that those working in healthcare are maximising their skills not only benefits patients, service users and employees – it also makes sense from a business perspective. Organisations that invest in the skills of their people typically report that employees are more productive, better motivated and demonstrate higher levels of loyalty. There are benefits for recruitment and retention too. Contented employees are far less likely to seek alternative employment and the best talent will always opt to join an organisation in which they can fulfil their potential.

Whilst the healthcare sector has made great strides in encouraging employees to access and progress through the career framework; improve skills and competences; and encourage personal and organisational development; there is always more that could be done.

The need for high quality Careers Information and Advice has never been greater. It is equally important that such information and advice is consistent, uses resources efficiently, matches skills with needs, and motivates your employees.

The standard that meets each of these conditions is the **matrix** Standard. Additionally, it is user friendly, highly practical, cost effective and complements other quality awards.

For those organisations that adopt the **matrix** Standard the benefits are far reaching. These include opening up new funding streams – something that will be particularly welcome during the economic downturn when many are being forced to redraft their strategic plans to reflect revised forecasts.

This guide explains what **the matrix quality standard for information advice and guidance services** is and why it benefits healthcare organisations and employees. Its sister publication – *Implementing the matrix quality standard for information advice and guidance services – a guide for healthcare employers* focuses on the how; providing practical help and advice on implementing the **matrix** Standard and including quotes and examples from healthcare organisations that have already successfully introduced it.

Our thanks are extended to ENTO for their help and collaboration in helping Skills for Health produce these publications and tailor them to the healthcare sector. We are grateful also to the healthcare providers that agreed to be interviewed and share their experiences of adopting the **matrix** Standard.

Annette Clark
Careers Information,
Advice and Guidance Manager.
www.skillsforhealth.org.uk

What is Careers Information and Advice?

Effective Careers Information and Advice supports individuals and signposts their progress at every stage of their professional development. Its purpose is to ensure that people are informed about what options are open to them; both in terms of taking up a career in the healthcare sector or, if they are already working in the sector, in relation to how they can move forward in their job or their learning.

Careers Information and Advice helps to:

- facilitate entry to the workforce and progression along the career framework
- support a better understanding of the routes into all parts of the healthcare sector
- support learners at whatever stage they are in their learning journey
- reduce the barriers to whatever method of study the learner chooses
- offer support and appropriate guidance at entry and during progression within the sector.

At the same time enabling individuals to:

- make informed decisions about their learning and development
- explore or plan their short, medium and long-term work, learning or career objectives
- take the next appropriate step in learning and development.

Careers Information and Advice is key to ensuring that the learning undertaken is appropriate to the needs of individuals, enabling them to progress through their career path and gain nationally recognised qualifications along the way.



Examples of Careers Information and Advice interventions and good practice

Careers information could include details of:

- professional opportunities and career progression
- learning opportunities e.g. internal training opportunities, external training opportunities and providers, e-learning at work, work shadowing etc.
- qualifications and qualification providers
- progression routes and learning pathways
- sources of support e.g. funding, childcare, careers advice.

Careers advice could include:

- support to help individuals make the best use of the information and resources available to them
- one on one specialist advice and support to help staff members seize the right training opportunities and plan their individual career progression.



Examples of Careers Information and Advice interventions and good practice (continued)



Careers Information might incorporate:

- explanatory leaflets
- telephone conversations with qualified staff
- websites with information and links to external resources
- intranets with personalised information
- posters alerting users to what's available
- resources and reference materials
- e-mails with up-to-date training information
- newsletters with today's important news
- conversational/signposting information
- interactive workshops, seminars and group sessions
- drop-in sessions (job surgeries) for face to face, personalised career information.

Careers Advice might incorporate:

- support in the use of individual learning opportunities and career development
- support in the sourcing of evidence for a KSF Post Outline
- help with preparation for appraisal and personal development reviews
- assistance with the creation of personal development plans and the measurement of progress
- support of practical activities such as CV writing and interview preparation
- referral or signposting to other forms of support such as external coaching or mentoring
- assistance in reviewing and selecting appropriate learning routes to address individual needs and/or to maintain competence as a role develops
- support and advice on decisions relating to a career change, e.g. from health care assistant to nurse.



Examples of good practice within the delivery and management of:

Careers Information

- proactively offering targeted information and following it up
- delivering information before the start of, during, and towards the end of a learning programme
- making information available through a variety of channels
- ensuring line managers are aware of all sources of information
- adapting formats to meet any special requirements – including information on support for wider social and welfare needs
- ensuring that the information available is accessible and up to date
- routinely seeking feedback from recipients to check that the range of information available meets their needs
- regularly evaluating processes to ensure they are delivered as effectively as possible
- capturing instances and outcomes of successful practice through the use of reporting systems which clearly show the path followed by each staff member
- using good examples as the basis of case studies
- maintaining an awareness of learning routes and career progression.

Careers Advice

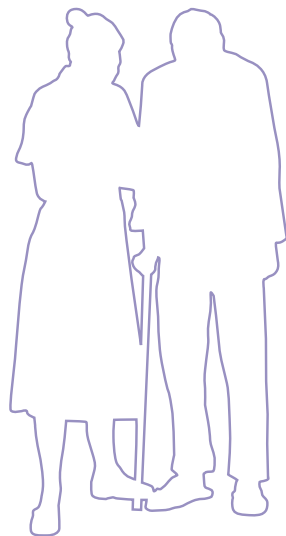
- a range of advice and support offered by qualified staff from different departments and/or organisations and not restricted to formal/isolated advice sessions. Participants could include learning and development/training staff; NVQ centre staff, education officers/managers; workforce development specialists, union learning representatives and HR staff.
- access to guidance based on individual career management needs and on personal development/learning needs
- training to enable non-specialist staff to give appropriate levels of advice
- operating systems that allow all communications to be recorded and followed up for tracking purposes
- signposting of non-programme issues e.g. where social needs affect progress in learning
- an objective but holistic approach to work based learning in order to meet individual and organisational needs
- advice combined with preparatory support for individuals and organisations embarking on work based training
- awareness by line managers of all guidance providers and the full range of services on offer.

Why is good quality Careers Information and Advice so important in the healthcare sector?

The healthcare sector requires an active, productive and flexible workforce in order to meet a number of challenges that lie ahead. These include:



- **the changing nature of demand for healthcare services** – incorporating the effects of demographic changes; the increase in public and patient expectations; a growth in community based care and ongoing technological advances
- **the changing nature of the supply of healthcare services** – including changes driven by improvements to technology; changes in the composition of the workforce; adjustments in working patterns; and improvements to productivity. This also incorporates the drive to promote more and better self care and better use of the workforce
- **the changing nature of professional practice** – incorporating the need to develop new skills; placing a greater emphasis on team working; including changes in accountability, leadership and independent practice; and taking into account changes in the relationships between clinicians and managers.



“ Properly integrated and used, Careers Information and Advice and quality standards such as the **matrix** are tools that make a real contribution to achievement of key quality Standards, strengthening the evidence we are able to provide as part of our self-assessment reviews. Integrating effective Careers Information and Advice processes which are benchmarked against nationally recognised guidelines is not, of course, the answer to everything. But the evidence gained from across our SHA region is that it is an essential part of any strategic approach to workforce development and planning in health service organisations. ”

Pauline Yarker,
Quality Manager,
NHS North East

“ We wanted confirmation for ourselves that we were delivering a quality service. Having a service that is endorsed by external (to the NHS) standards enables us to market our service better. ”

Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust

Each of these changes will inevitably affect the career structures of healthcare staff and necessitate constantly evolving learning and development opportunities. Careers Information and Advice has been recognised as key to the successful implementation of these changes. It helps to:

- facilitate the development of necessary work based skills and competences (KSF)
- align current and future organisational priorities with the learning and development needs of individuals
- create an environment in which every member of staff can contribute to service delivery, safety and quality of care

- support recruitment, retention and employability
- support social inclusivity, diversity and equality
- add value to the range of national and local development programmes by improving retention rates
- improve access to, and movement through, career frameworks
- underpin sector activity aiming to extend participation and employability.

Whether organisations refer to Careers Information and Advice as Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance, IAG, Careers IAG; help and support for staff; or information and advice for employees – whatever terminology is used, the **matrix** Standard principles remain the same.

“Embedding Careers Information and Advice into all of our learning and development services ensures that staff undertake the right training and courses and, most importantly, are given the skills to succeed. Not only is staff motivation increased but we ensure that resources are targeted and used effectively to meet organisational need. Together with our activities for widening participation, these processes form a key part of achieving our Trust’s priorities and improving patient care.”

Vera Byfield,
Head of Learning and Development,
Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

“As part of our action plan for re-accreditation, we need to build on our current evaluation processes by finding ways to measure the impact of our activity on the organisation, as well as the individual. Whilst this poses quite a challenge for us we know that being able to illustrate return on investment will only strengthen an already well utilised and highly regarded Training Information, Advice and Guidance service.”

Sharon Baines,
Training and Development Manager for
UHL and TIAG Adviser,
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

What is the **matrix** Standard?

The **matrix** Standard is a nationally recognised quality standard for any organisation that delivers Careers Information and Advice on learning or work. It is a straightforward, practical tool that helps organisations to streamline and link together all of their different Careers Information and Advice activities into a coherent whole, making them easier to plan, develop and quality assure.



Achieving the **matrix** Standard gives national recognition that you are providing a high quality service; that your Careers Information and Advice practices and procedures are working effectively across the organisation; and that learning and development are priorities. The way that the **matrix** Standard is assessed is based on achieving excellent end results that anyone working in or visiting your organisation will consistently hear, see and experience.

The **matrix** Standard also complements other quality standards such as Investors in People (IIP), the Training Quality standard and the Department of Health's Improving Working Lives Standard (IWL) and Improving Working Lives Practice Plus.

There are eight elements to the **matrix** Standard – four relating to 'delivering your service' and four to 'managing your service':

1. People are made aware of the service and how to engage with it.
2. People's use of the service is defined and understood.

3. People are provided with access to information and support in using it.
4. People are supported in exploring options and making choices.
5. Service delivery is planned and maintained.
6. Staff competence and support they are given are sufficient to deliver the service.
7. Feedback on the quality of the service is obtained.
8. Continuous quality improvement is ensured through monitoring, evaluation and action.

Typically, when adopting the **matrix** Standard, organisations find that much of what they are already doing meets its requirements. The standard doesn't prescribe systems or ways of working, but helps employers establish where their strengths and weaknesses lie. The process helps to raise key questions about how your Careers Information and Advice service operates and how it is delivering what your organisation and your staff need and expect, whilst offering appropriately focused solutions.

“ We were attracted to the **matrix** Standard initially because it provides a logical framework which we could apply to our internal information, advice and guidance service within the new WILSON's Internet Café on the hospital site. ”

Mary Darroch,
OD and Staff Development Manager,
Gateshead Health Foundation Trust

“ The **matrix** Standard provides, in effect, a 'code of practice' which can be widely recognised by all staff, both those who provide Careers Information and Advice services and those who access them. ”

Annette Connor,
JIF Co-ordinator and IAG Manager,
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

“ Our initial thoughts about the potential benefits of Careers Information and Advice and the **matrix** Standard were confirmed to us following a thorough scoping exercise, which looked at the provision and processes of learning and development within the context of effective workforce planning and development. The scoping study not only highlighted the value of external partnership working but also the potential impact of building up internal mechanisms that would support the ever changing landscape of health service priorities.”

Pauline Yarker,
Quality Manager,
NHS North East

“ **Matrix** provided us with a benchmark of standards and key indicators against which we could assess our current learning and development services. It highlighted what we were doing well and it identified where there were gaps. This led us to setting up some new systems and protocols aimed at improving the quality of what we were doing. The whole process challenges you to think about what you do and the way you do it. It was a very positive experience for us because it challenged us in a creative way.”

Melanie Warner,
Head of Learning and Development,
NHS Tower Hamlets

“ Our corporate logo, ‘Choose’ reflects the high priority given to becoming both an employer and provider of choice. The choice agenda has given us a focus: is everything we are doing up to scratch? The quality cycle that is built into achieving and maintaining quality standards (including IIP and the **matrix** Standard) along with signing up to the Skills Pledge is an indication of this employer’s ongoing commitment.”

Clive Spencer,
Training and Development Manager,
South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust

“ Ask any trade union learning project that has already secured **matrix** Accreditation and they’ll tell you the process has helped them raise their standards and improve their service. Securing **matrix** Accreditation is not hard if you are committed to providing the best possible Careers Information and Advice; whether that’s to members – or potential members – of your union branch, union employees, or whoever your project is designed to help.”

Michael Dodd,
Northumberland Development Education
Achievement and Learning project Union
Learning Representative,
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

“ At first we viewed gaining the **matrix** Standard primarily as a way of generating another income stream. Once we could ‘tick the box’ of gaining this standard, the door would be opened to an important funding stream. Whilst financial considerations remain an important factor, somewhere along the journey of gaining **matrix**, the process itself became so much more. It became a change catalyst which, after much hard work by all the team, brought a real sense of achievement for the whole department and a higher profile across the Trust.”

Wendy Johnson,
Head of Clinical Education,
Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust

“ In going through the accreditation process for **matrix**, we learned that we were already working to a high standard, but were able to focus on the few weaknesses identified and particularly target those areas to ensure improvement.”

Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust

Who does the **matrix** Standard apply to?

Any healthcare organisation that delivers Careers Information and Advice on learning and work can benefit from achieving the matrix Standard. It is suitable for organisations of any size – public or private; it relates to those operating in the mainstream or wider healthcare settings; and it can be achieved for the whole organisation or for part of it.



For example, the **matrix** Standard has already been successfully applied in a variety of health and social care settings, including: training and development departments in Acute Trusts; a learndirect centre within a Trust; TUC Learning Services for Learning Representatives within a Trust, healthcare library services, primary care and social services.

The **matrix** Standard is relevant to your organisation or department if it does any of the following:

- **gives information about learning and development opportunities to staff and/or patients/service users**
With the introduction of Agenda for Change and the KSF in health; Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) carried out in your organisation might involve informing people about training provided by your organisation; signposting to an external learning provider; or providing information on other development options, such as e-learning, shadowing, secondment, coaching or mentoring

- **guides people about the right learning and development for them**

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and helping staff and volunteers meet the needs of their job role can involve helping them explore individual learning styles and matching these to the most appropriate development option

- **provides information about jobs or careers**

This may be as part of a Personal Development Review (PDR) or Personal Development Plan (PDP) where an individual wants specific information to help choose how to develop their current job role further or take on another role with a different job profile

- **advises people about job or career progression**

Exploring how an individual might progress in their current role – or discussing aspirations to further develop that person for an alternative role – can take place at appraisal, PDR or outside that process

“The provision of information, advice and guidance has always been a key part of our widening participation strategy and, more recently, has clearly helped with contractual arrangements in relation to implementing and making the most of the Joint Investment Framework.”

Pauline Yarker,
Quality Manager,
NHS North East

“No matter how large or small an organisation is, the **matrix** Standard offers a quality process that can impact on the development of the whole organisation.”

Annette Connor,
JIF Co-ordinator and IAG Manager,
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

- **provides people applying for a job with relevant, up to date information**

This may be about the skills needed for the role they are considering and how the job differs from their current work. Information might be requested about your organisation, job or career structure, learning and development opportunities, or the recruitment and selection process in your organisation

- **supports people who are moving on from their current role**

Perhaps relocating elsewhere in the country or abroad, preparing for retirement, retraining, taking maternity or paternity leave, considering a secondment or facing redundancy

- **holds or hopes to obtain an external contract such as JIF or Train to Gain**

This means that you may be providing many of the areas outlined above. Funding bodies such as LSC require Careers Information and Advice to be part of your delivery. Acquiring the **matrix** Standard ensures that learners are receiving a quality assured service when embarking on their learning journey through to progression in their learning or career.

The **matrix** Standard is equally valuable to organisations that provide an **external service** – delivering Careers Information and Advice to external clients such as a careers service, a learning centre, a recruitment agency, a trades union or a business training provider; an **internal service** – offering staff support or assistance in areas such as skills training, management development, appraisals, promotion, succession planning or redundancy programmes; or **both**. The healthcare sector usually follows the internal service model, often achieving their accreditation on a departmental basis e.g. the training or HR department. Organisations will be asked to consider the most appropriate pathway to suit their delivery.



What are the benefits of obtaining the **matrix** Standard?

Organisations that have implemented the **matrix** Standard consistently report that the journey has delivered business benefits above and beyond an improved Careers Information and Advice service.



Resources:

Improving Working Lives/ Improving Working Lives Practice Plus – www.dh.gov.uk/en/Managingyourorganisation/Humanresourcesandtraining/Modelmployer/Improvingworkinglives/index.htm

Training Quality Standard – www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/

Investors in People – www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/Pages/Home.aspx

Train to Gain – www.traintogain.gov.uk/

For example, the **matrix** Standard sits easily with, and enhances quality standards such as: **Improving Working Lives, Improving Working Lives Practice Plus, Training Quality Standard** and **Investors in People**. Adopting the **matrix** Standard can also **open up new funding streams**. In England, organisations delivering government funded training such as **Train to Gain** are required to ensure that their Careers Information and Advice provision is quality assured by the **matrix** Standard.

Adopting the **matrix** Standard also provides the underpinning systems required to access additional external funding streams such as the Joint Investment Framework (JIF). The JIF is a three year rolling agreement – brokered by Skills for Health between Strategic Health Authorities and the Learning and Skills Council. It brings an additional £100million per annum into the healthcare sector for employee training and development.

As well as opening up new funding opportunities, organisations that have achieved **matrix** Accreditation and are using or have used the framework report the following outcomes:

- **improved systems** – the processes and systems that support the provision of Careers Information and Advice are made more efficient and effective. The monitoring and data collection of learning and development activities is enhanced
- **resources are better deployed** – time, energy and money are channelled more effectively, informed by clear thinking about what is really needed – and where and how
- **growth in internal capacity and productivity** – people are better equipped to contribute more to the organisation, being clearer about their aim and objectives and understanding where their role fits into the wider business plan

“The benefits of gaining **matrix** have been a cumulative effect, which built on an already well established service. The increased profile which accompanied Accreditation was an unexpected benefit for the training and development team, and, along with a range of marketing strategies, has resulted in our services being more readily used than ever. Not only do individual members of staff access our services themselves but managers also make regular referrals to us.”

Sharon Baines,
Training and Development Manager
for UHL and TIAG Adviser,
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

“The value of the **matrix** Standard is that it is a constant reminder for us to look at our practice with fresh eyes and ensure that it’s the very best it can be.”

Angela Dale,
Workforce Development Manager,
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS
Foundation Trust

- **improved performance** – people have the skills, awareness and confidence to deliver the best service, whatever their job role
- **employer of choice** – employers investing in information, advice and guidance stand out from the crowd as organisations that value their staff and provide opportunities for progression and career development
- **valuable feel-good factor** – people are able to make more proactive contributions to their own development, leading to increased staff motivation and retention and so helping to reduce recruitment costs
- **robust relationship between strategy and operations** – with improved clarity and coherence in planning, the organisational strategy is fully aligned with delivering excellence in Careers Information and Advice; both internally and externally
- **feedback** – organisations providing work based advice services to the **matrix** Framework report increased feedback as people realise that they are dealing with a quality organisation that will act on that feedback
- **continuous improvement as a way of life** – there is a higher level of rigour and professionalism in monitoring, reporting, evaluating and developing activities, which contributes to a culture of excellence
- **improved team working** – people delivering Careers Information and Advice share a common focus and clarity about what is required, leading to better communications and enhanced team spirit
- **clear payback** – the investment in Careers Information and Advice support is easier to monitor, and the added value it brings is more readily calculated
- **funding potential** – a stronger business case for attracting funding is demonstrated, based on service improvements and the achievement of a prestigious, nationally recognised standard.

“ We have been successfully accessing funding as part of the Joint Investment Framework. Amongst other things, this funding has enabled us to hold a joint learning and development conference with our local hospital trust which was aimed exclusively at staff in bands 1 to 4. ”

Melanie Warner,
Head of Learning and Development,
NHS Tower Hamlets

“ It supports effective use of resources through the JIF programmes and can also open the door to other external sources of funding. ”

Pauline Yarker,
Quality Manager,
NHS North East

Key employment agendas across the four UK nations

Governments across the UK have set out their vision of how they want to take forward Careers information, Advice and Guidance



Resources:

World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England – www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/leitch_review_index.htm

Opportunity, Employment and Progression: making skills work – www.dwp.gov.uk/welfare-reform/making-skills-work.pdf

Preparing for Success – www.delni.gov.uk/preparingforsuccess

Skills for Scotland – www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/197204/0052752.pdf

Skills that Work for Wales – http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/skillsthatforwales/?lang=en

Careers Wales – <http://careerswales.com/>

The government in England has set out the requirements of a truly integrated employment and skills system, designed to deliver a seamless journey for those moving from benefit to training and on to sustainable employment.

The importance of Careers Information and Advice is further reinforced in **World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England** (July 2007) – which identifies the need for current, accessible Careers Information and Advice, based on accurate Labour Market Information – and in **Opportunity, Employment and Progression: making skills work** (Nov 2007) which calls for a system where everyone is able to tap in easily to information and advice to help them progress in their careers.

In Northern Ireland, **‘Preparing for Success’** outlines a new comprehensive strategy and implementation plan for the delivery of Careers Information and Advice services. It examines the challenges involved, articulates a vision for the future, and maps the actions required to deliver it – dividing the vision into five themes:

1. Careers education.
2. Access to careers information.
3. Improving careers advice and guidance.
4. Improving quality.
5. Improving professional development.

Following the vision for skills outlined in **‘Skills for Scotland’**, the Scottish Government has pledged to work with Jobcentre Plus to integrate job and Labour Market Information with learning information, advice and guidance to

better help those wishing to learn or find a job. This will be designed to deliver:

- a ‘no wrong door approach’ to skills and employment services
- a new Skills Health Check tool
- a refreshed Training for Work to support skills development
- information sharing to improve customer journeys and resource planning
- information capture and sharing between key partners about potential redundancy situation through Partnership Action for Continuing Employment
- focused on encouraging and supporting individuals to access learning and employment and bringing together delivery agents.

‘Skills that Work for Wales’ identifies the need in Wales for ‘first class advice and guidance’ and suggests that it is time to re-examine how best to deliver all aspects of high quality careers advice and guidance in Wales – including a review of the model for **Careers Wales**, examining how the service needs to be structured, resourced and prioritised to deliver its new agenda.

In order to support these national agendas, employers, potential and existing employees and those who advise them, require:

- access to high quality, accessible Careers Information and Advice
- resources
- expertise.

The following diagram illustrates the key elements of the Careers Information and Advice agenda in the healthcare sector:



“As a Registered **matrix** Practitioner who has assessed a large NHS trust against all the elements of the **matrix** Standard, I am very aware that **matrix** not only aligns itself readily with key developments such as the Knowledge and Skills Framework, but also complements and adds value to the quality and breadth of its impact. Mapping the requirements of the **matrix** Standard to the Knowledge and Skills Framework ensures that the development of Careers Information and Advice provision remains in line with, and complements, national NHS requirements.”

Pat McDermott,
Registered **matrix** Adviser and Assessor

The value of workforce development

There are key points at which Careers Information and Advice supports workforce development and/or an individual learner's progression.



Resources:

* Skills for Business Network
Employability Strategy (2007)

1. **Entry to the sector** – accurate and accessible Careers Information and Advice helps to ensure that entry is at the right point and to a role that is appropriate to the individual and the organisation.
2. **Induction** – new members of staff receiving the right level of support, Careers Information and Advice at the outset are better placed to understand their roles and the learning needed to take forward their careers.
3. **Learning progression** is made easier as staff receive ongoing Careers Information and Advice and are able to progress within their existing roles and perform them more effectively – as well as moving forward with their learning towards other roles when appropriate.
4. **Careers** and career development is enhanced amongst staff receiving the appropriate Careers Information and Advice. It helps ensure that they are more aware of the key stages in their development, which will enable them to progress in higher level learning and/or in their current work roles.
5. **Skills for Life** is supported by good Careers Information and Advice, which identifies needs and helps to ensure that staff have the right skills in numeracy, literacy and information technology to be able to function appropriately at the level required within their job roles. By enhancing this process, effective information and advice also helps to deliver the aims of the Skills Pledge in England.
6. **Employability** is improved as a result of good Careers Information and Advice. **'Employability defines the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours required by individuals to seek, obtain and sustain employment at all levels in the labour market'**.^{*} Enhanced awareness of employability skills also aids an individual's career progression and their capacity to adapt to changing circumstances. Clarified employability skills give healthcare employers support in improving selection, retention and career progression.
7. **PDPs** are more effectively delivered and understood when elements of Careers Information and Advice are used in the delivery process.

Effective support of individual staff has the potential to:	The effect on the organisation:
Make a vital contribution to the business development strategy	By supporting the overall business strategy, including aiding of the planning process, the quality of patient care will be improved
Raise the profile and reputation of the organisation	Improve recruitment and retention. Impact positively on teamwork, morale and staff confidence
Remove barriers to achievement and progression	Achievement and progression in the learning of staff are key performance indicators for improving the quality of patient care
Attracting and retaining staff on learning and development courses	Ensuring that the right person is on the right course at the right time will reduce drop out, improve upskilling results and lower costs simultaneously
Gather intelligence about training needs	Ensuring that strategies are in place to cope with the changing nature of demand for healthcare services
Assist managers at personal development reviews/appraisals	Managers are able to rely on professional expertise in developing their staff
People have the skills, awareness and confidence to deliver the best service regardless of their job role	Good quality patient care is delivered

“ We were keen to work with the **matrix** Standard as we knew that it would open doors for us to enable us to bid for a contract with our local nextstep partnership – enabling access to income generation, CPD and a local network of IAG providers.”

Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust

“ I would advise other Trusts to do it. An unexpected benefit for us has been the recognition that we have received for our work across the Trust.”

Clive Spencer,
Training and Development Manager,
South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust

“As a registered NVQ provider, the Trust was one of the first in its region to be able to sign up to a Train to Gain Contract. This opened up a valuable funding stream from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). IAG is a requirement that is automatically embedded into this contract and so is central to being able to access this type of funding.”

Vera Byfield,
Head of Learning and Development,
Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Trust

“When funding streams do arise, particularly those external to the NHS, the likelihood is that it is those organisations with **matrix** that will be in the strongest position to make the most of them.”

Annette Connor,
JIF Co-ordinator and IAG Manager,
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

“It has provided us with a very practical framework for development and improvement that has quality at its centre. The Standard provided us with a benchmark. It gave us the knowledge to know what we could attain. And without it I don't think we would have recognised what we have actually achieved.”

Jayne Toplis,
General Manager,
Staff Training & Development,
Basildon and Thurrock University
Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

“It was excellent to have the opportunity to look at our own practice around the development of advice and guidance and ensure our procedures are robust. It was an honest view, unbiased and gave suggestions for improvement. It proved we were doing a good job and giving a good service to staff. That encouraged us to improve on it!”

Sheila Bull,
Lifelong Learning Manager,
Kent and Medway NHS and Social
Care Partnership Trust

“Our Trust has signed the Skills Pledge and having a quality assured Careers Information, Advice and Guidance service has enabled us to signpost individuals to the appropriate pathway to obtain level 2 numeracy and literacy qualifications. Through our Careers Information and Advice service, we have also been able to fully utilise Train to Gain and JIF funding to upskill our workforce and so improve the patient experience.”

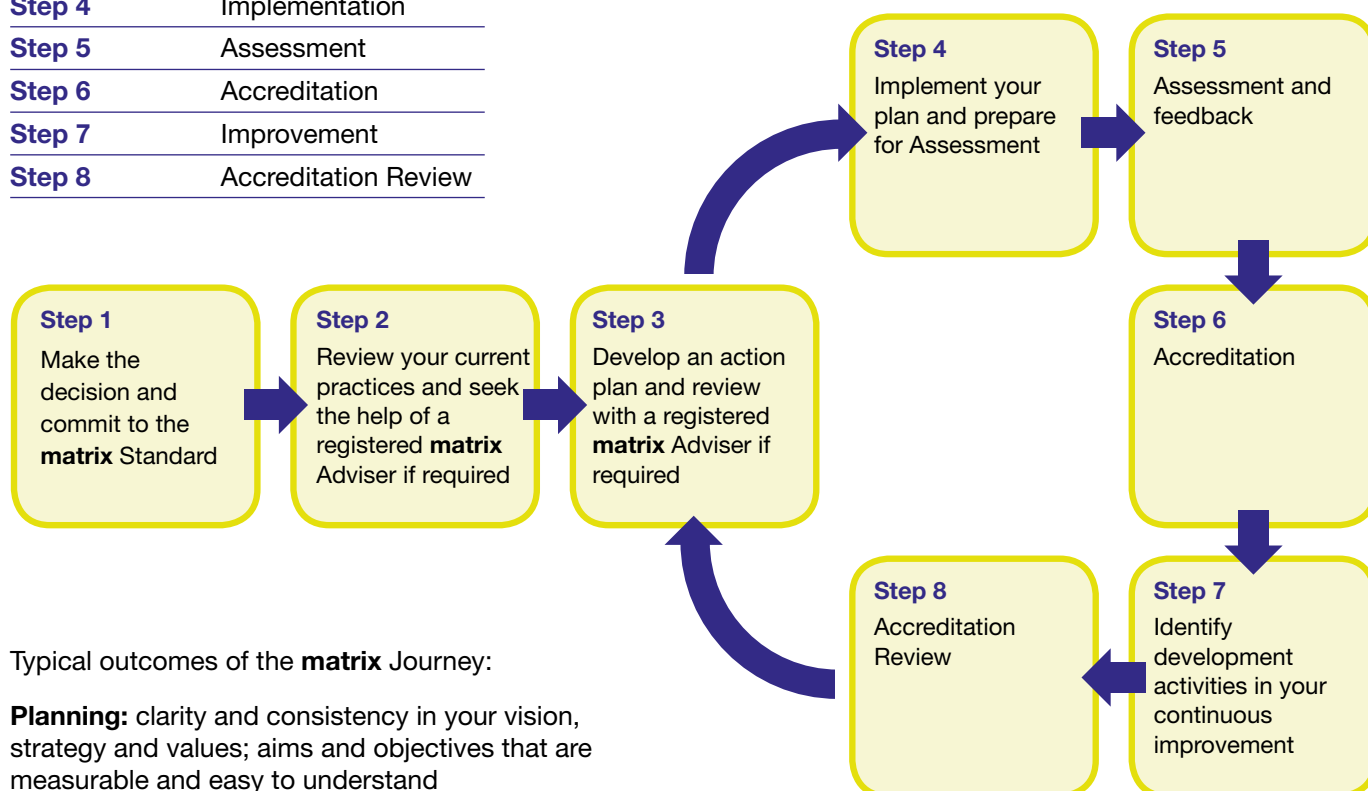
Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust

“The improvements we made to our quality systems as a result of the **matrix** process have become embedded in what we do now. So whether we're commissioning services or considering how our services impact on patient care, quality is our main focus.”

Melanie Warner,
Head of Learning and Development,
NHS Tower Hamlets

The **matrix** Journey

Step 1	Commitment
Step 2	Review
Step 3	Development
Step 4	Implementation
Step 5	Assessment
Step 6	Accreditation
Step 7	Improvement
Step 8	Accreditation Review



Typical outcomes of the **matrix** Journey:

Planning: clarity and consistency in your vision, strategy and values; aims and objectives that are measurable and easy to understand

Resources: effective management and leadership; the right mix of skills, knowledge and personal qualities

Information: relevant, up to date and easily accessible by those who need it; people are kept informed and made to feel valued and appreciated

Marketing: effective in reaching the right people; promotional activities and materials that are appropriate for the user

Feedback and Continuous Improvement: gathered from staff, service users and other organisations to inform future planning; appropriate and timely improvements based on feedback from a variety of sources; quality as a way of life

Next steps

We hope this guide has provided a useful outline to why your organisation should work with the matrix Standard



If you are interested in learning more about gaining the **matrix** Standard for your organisation, you can download this publication's accompanying guide – *Implementing **the matrix quality standard for information advice and guidance services** – a guide for healthcare employers*, which provides practical help and advice and includes case studies from healthcare organisations that have successfully introduced the **matrix** Standard.

If you have any queries, or to find out about Registered **matrix** Advisers in your area, please contact ENTO by either:

- calling the **matrix** Standard enquiry line on **0870 770 2468**
- visiting the website at **www.matrixStandard.com**
- emailing the **matrix** Standard team at **info@matrixStandard.com**
- writing to **ENTO, Kimberley House, 47 Vaughan Way, Leicester, LE1 4SG.**



Glossary of terms

Apprenticeships

A structured programme of training and workplace learning which leads to a formal set of qualifications. Apprenticeships can be healthcare specific or may cover generic skills which are used in the sector such as occupational health and safety, business and administration, supply chain management, cleaning, catering and accounting. Modern Apprenticeships were renamed Apprenticeships in 2004, but are still referred to as Modern Apprenticeships in Wales and Scotland.

Career Framework (CF)

A map of flexible career pathways for planning career progression. The Career Framework can help individuals plan their own career development and organisations profile and plan the workforce they need at a departmental or organisational level in order to deliver best patient services now and in the future.

Career Pathway

A route available to individuals to enable career progression.

Careers Information and Advice (also referred to as Information, Advice and Guidance or IAG)

Services and activities that help people make informed choices about what actions to take regarding learning, work and training. These services can happen at any age and at any point in people's

lives to help them manage their own jobs and careers. They incorporate the help and support given in the workplace by organisations in the wider health sector.

Careers Information and Advice Services

Services that are available to support individuals and employers by offering Careers Information and Advice. These include: **Careers Scotland**, **Careers Service Northern Ireland**, **EGSA** (Northern Ireland), **Careers Wales**, **Connexions** and **nextstep** in England. In England, the adult services are scheduled to be reformed in 2010 – moving towards an **adult advancement careers service**. Additional services also exist within further and higher education.

For specific healthcare related Careers Information and Advice covering the whole sector – independent, NHS and voluntary – the **Health Learning and Skills Advice Line** offers a free personal and confidential service for anyone considering healthcare as a career and for those already working in healthcare sector (telephone **08000 150 850**). The NHS also offers information – and on some occasions advice – through **NHS Careers** in England; **NHS Scotland** and **NHS Wales Careers**. Information in Northern Ireland is available from the **Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety**.



Resources:

Careers Scotland – www.careers-scotland.org.uk/home/home.asp

Careers Service Northern Ireland – www.careersserviceni.com/Cultures/en-GB/Homepage.htm

EGSA – www.egsa.org.uk/

Careers Wales – www.careerswales.com/

Connexions – www.connexions-direct.com/

Nextstep – www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/GetLearning/DG_071762

Adult advancement careers service – www.iagreview.org.uk/

Health Learning and Skills Advice Line – www.careers-advice.org/hlas

NHS Careers – www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/

NHS Scotland – www.infoscotland.com/nhs/gatewaypage.jsp?pContentID=94&p_applic=CCC&pMenuID=2&p_service=Content.show&

NHS Wales Careers – www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/home.cfm?OrgID=462

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety – www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss.htm



Resources:

Competence tools – <https://tools.skillsforhealth.org.uk/>

ENTO – www.ento.co.uk/

Investors in People (IiP) – www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

Investors in People Scotland – www.iipscot.co.uk

Joint Investment Framework (JIF) – www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/qualifications-learning-pathways/for-your-development/funding-routes-including-jif.aspx

Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) – www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4090843

Competences

A competence describes the performance criteria, knowledge and understanding needed for an individual to carry out a work function effectively. They are defined by employers and form the basis of National Occupational Standards. Organisations and individuals can be supported by assistance from the **competence tools**.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Continuing Professional Development is the term that describes a commitment to structured professional skills enhancement and career development.

ENTO

ENTO represents individuals across all sectors whose job requires them to deal with people in the workplace. This includes anyone providing information, advice and guidance; HR personnel; recruitment consultants; trades unions and union learning representatives; and health and safety at work practitioners. ENTO is also responsible for promoting and managing the **matrix** Standard.

Improving Working Lives (IWL) and Improving Working Lives Practice Plus

The Improving Working Lives Standard sets a model of good HR practice against which NHS employers and their staff can measure their own organisation's HR management.

Each organisation is kite-marked against its ability to demonstrate a commitment to improving the working lives of its employees.

Investors in People (IiP)

The Investors in People Standard is a business improvement tool designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people.

Joint Investment Framework (JIF)

A three year rolling matched funding agreement brokered by Skills for Health in 2007 between the Learning and Skills Council and the Strategic Health Authorities in England. The JIF brings £100 million per annum of additional funding to support training and qualifications at NHS Bands 1 to 4 and qualification levels 1 to 4.

Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF)

The NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) is a competence based framework used to support personal development and career progression with the NHS in the UK. It defines and describes the knowledge and skills which NHS staff need to apply in their work in order to deliver quality services and provides a single, consistent, comprehensive and explicit framework on which to base review and development for all staff and design new roles to respond to changes in service delivery.



Labour Market Information (LMI)

Labour Market Information is the term used to describe research, data and other intelligence about the skills, knowledge and competences of existing staff and of potential staff within the wider 'labour pool'. It aims to provide an understanding of skills in relation to recruitment, employment, and the education and training environment.

Learning Pathway

A route available to a learner enabling the progressive development of skills and knowledge.

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC is a non-departmental public body in England. Its aim is to improve the skills of England's young people and adults. The LSC will be dissolved in 2010 when its responsibilities will be taken over by the Skills Funding Agency.

Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN)

Key employability skills that underpin all others and are central to unlocking the full potential of the healthcare workforce at all levels. When information and communication technology (ICT) skills are also incorporated, these skills are typically referred to as **Skills for Life**.

Registered matrix Advisers

Registered **matrix** Advisers aim to help organisations review current practices and develop an action plan that works towards Accreditation. Registered **matrix** Advisers are independent of ENTO, and are consequently ideally

placed to offer impartial advice on implementing and working with the **matrix** Standard.

Registered matrix Assessors

Registered **matrix** Assessors gather evidence on site that demonstrates whether an organisation is meeting the requirements of the **matrix** Standard. All Assessors are quality assured and work to the same rigorous competence framework. An Assessor cannot be personally selected and will not be the same individual who acted as a **matrix** Adviser to an organisation.

The matrix Standard

The **matrix** Standard is the national quality standard for any organisation that delivers information, advice and/or guidance relating to learning and work. The **matrix** Standard consists of eight elements; four focused on how organisations deliver their service and four focused on how they manage their service.

Personal Development Plan (PDP)

A plan of action for healthcare sector employees outlining an individual's personal goals and aspirations and planning how they are going to achieve them.

Personal Development Review (PDR)

A review of an individual working in a healthcare organisation, which is linked to how they meet the specification of – and are competent to work within – their agreed 'job outline'. Ultimately, competence is linked to pay.

Resources:

Labour Market Information (LMI) – www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/page/labour-market-intelligence

Learning and Skills Council – www.lsc.gov.uk/

Literacy, Language and Numeracy (LLN) – <http://lln.skillsforhealth.org.uk/>

The matrix Standard – <http://www.matrixstandard.com/>



Resources:

Skills for Health –
www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/

Skills Pledge –
<http://ln.skillsforhealth.org.uk/page/resources/hot-topics/skills-pledge-guidance-for-health-sector-employers-in-england>

Train to Gain –
www.traintogain.gov.uk/

Training Quality Standard –
www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/

Skills Escalation

A ‘step on, step off’ approach to a workforce development strategy that links lifelong learning, recruitment and retention, pay modernisation, role redevelopment and career management and offers a variety of entry points, career pathways and training.

Skills for Health (SfH)

The Sector Skills Council (SSC) covering the independent, voluntary and public healthcare sectors across the UK. Skills for Health aims to help the whole sector develop solutions that deliver a skilled and flexible UK workforce in order to improve health and healthcare.

Skills Pledge

A voluntary commitment by employers to invest in the training and development of their employees.

Standards/Quality Standards

Broad statements describing the total outputs achieved by meeting specified criteria for the purpose of the quality assurance process. For practice education providers, Standards are related to information from Standards for Better Health.

Tools

A variety of tools offered by Skills for Health to help employers, teams and individuals to define, map and develop their skills. These currently include: a selection of labour market information tools; a range of workforce planning tools; and a set of competence

application tools incorporating a competence search tool; a self assessment tool; a team assessment tool; a Career Framework tool; the Health Functional Map and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework mapping tool.

Train to Gain or Train2Gain (T2G)

A service designed to help employers of all types and sizes get the training they need to succeed. Managed by the Learning and Skills Council across England, Train to Gain uses experienced Skills Brokers who work closely with individual employers to identify their skills and business needs; pinpoint the right training; agree a tailored training package; identify available funding and review progress.

Training Quality Standard (TQS)

The Training Quality Standard is an assessment framework and an assessment and certification process which has been designed to recognise and celebrate the best organisations delivering training and development solutions to employers.

Widening Participation

Widening Participation is the descriptor for the programme of activity taking place in England to address the Extending Participation agenda.

Thank you

Our thanks to the following organisations who shared their experiences with us:

sildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Gateshead Health Foundation Trust

Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

NHS Tower Hamlets

North East Strategic Health Authority

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Trust

Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust

Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

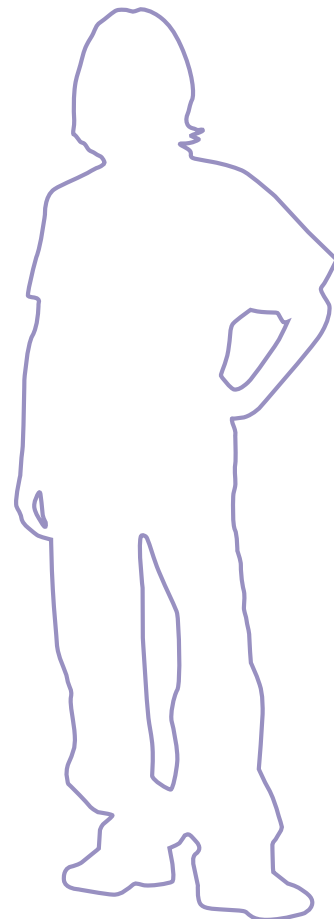
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

For any other enquiries please contact

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