



Using competences to support staff development

The Nuffield Hospital Guildford uses competences approach to enhance role and service delivery.

When managers at The Nuffield Hospital Guildford were introduced to Skills for Health competences, they decided to explore whether a competence-based approach could be used to support staff development.

Their first priority was to improve use of syringe pumps and reduce errors in their set up, monitoring and dismantling. After searching through the bank of competences on the Skills for Health online database, managers identified three relating to syringe drivers, and used these to develop a training package for all their nurses. The training was effective, straightforward to administer and led to reduced errors and improved levels of service to patients.

After this early success, managers turned their attention to work around labelling of specimens in outpatients. They used a similar approach, identified relevant competences, and then devised an in-house training programme. The result again was improved staff training leading to reduced errors in specimen labelling.

Delighted with these quick wins, the next step was to see how competences might enable managers to support role development and enhance service delivery. When a Level 3 NVQ Healthcare Assistant (HCA) approached managers about extending her role, this was an ideal opportunity to enhance the existing patient transfer service at The Nuffield Hospital in Guildford.

Not only are patients transferred from theatre to ward but some patients, following invasive procedures, are also transported from the Royal Surrey County Trust Hospital to the Nuffield Hospital along a linked corridor, a journey which takes 20 minutes. Managers again searched the Skills for Health database and found competences relating to monitoring and maintaining people from theatre to ward. With a specially devised training package delivered over several weeks, the HCA was able to upskill and extend her role. As this task would usually be performed by a trained nurse, the exercise has enabled managers to support the existing recovery team, and free up other members of the nursing team.

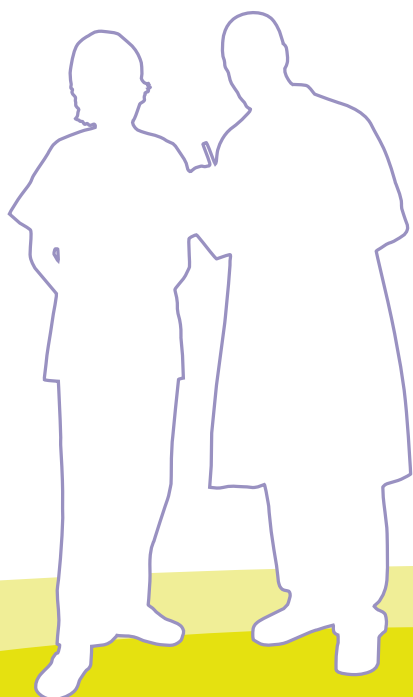
“ We like the Skills for Health competences because they are evidence-based, they are ready to deliver off the website and they save you work in the long run. We have been delighted at how easy they are to use, being so easily accessible, and at having the support of Skills for Health staff. It's simply a question of looking at the competences and picking off the ones which are relevant and just putting them into practice. ”

Carol Ingleby, Clinical Effectiveness Nurse, Nuffield Hospitals.

Skills for Health has developed a bank of national workforce competences which describe the skills and knowledge required to carry out a task or function effectively. They are designed to underpin and be integral to accredited and non-accredited education and training programmes. Since competences describe what individuals need to know and do, whoever is performing the task, they can be used in many different ways.

The Benefits

- Improved patient safety.
- Greater flexibility to develop team according to patient need.
- Expanding roles support career progression for staff.
- Better support for team and individuals.
- Useful management tool for team and service design.



Managers from **The Nuffield Hospital Guildford** report that using a competence-based approach to role and service redesign is enabling them to shape their teams and therefore support more effective services. Skills for Health continues to bring real benefits to patients through the development of competence-based approaches to the design and re-design of roles and services.

Skills for Health is the Sector Skills Council for the UK health sector (the National Health Services, independent healthcare providers and voluntary organisations). Our purpose is to help develop solutions that can deliver a skilled and flexible workforce to improve health and healthcare.

Use our interactive guides to find out more about competences and how to use them at: www.skillsforhealth.org.uk