



Improving education, training and service re-design in healthcare services Clinovia implements Skills for Health competences

Clinovia is a leading independent healthcare company with more than 30 years experience in providing acute, complex and chronic medical treatments to patients at home. In October 2006, Clinovia acquired a phlebotomy service which provides phlebotomy clinics and domiciliary services across central and west London.

This acquisition presented an ideal opportunity to review existing service, education and training programmes. In the past, training for phlebotomists has tended to reflect local and regional needs. Practitioners are not currently required to be healthcare professionals and therefore are not subject to national regulations. Clinovia recognised the importance of developing a standardised set of practices using nationally recognised competences to help address this.

The aims of the service and programme review were to:

- Benchmark existing training programmes against Skills for Health competences for blood taking and venepuncture.
- Further develop education and training programmes based on competences.
- Use competences to develop best practice guidelines and protocols to standardise practice.
- Provide an educational and training programme to roll out to other Clinovia staff to develop the phlebotomy business.



Clinovia turned to Skills for Health to help it develop a new framework for the phlebotomists' role based on the Skills for Health competences. Working with the Skills for Health website and their London regional team, Clinovia began to learn how to make best use of the frameworks and tools.



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“ Skills for Health’s assistance in developing a competence based approach to workforce and service development has been invaluable. Our new clinical skills programme for venepuncture has helped us support our practitioners and raise the standards of our service to an even higher level. ”

Kay Ferris, Director of Education and Training, Clinovia



Skills for Health has developed a bank of national workforce competences (NWCs) and National Occupational Standards (NOS) which describe the skills and knowledge required to carry out a task or function effectively. Competences are designed to underpin and be integral to accredited and non-accredited education and training programmes.

One of Clinovia's main aims was to develop competency based job descriptions and person specifications linked to recognised competences and the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework.

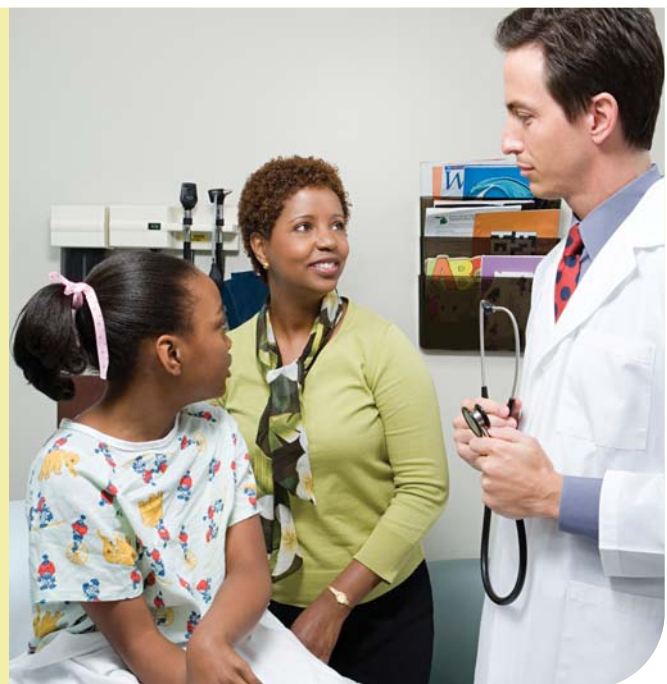
The team began with an audit of services provided in all of the clinics with which they are allied, currently about 30 practices. They reviewed the existing education and training programme and held a training workshop, supported by Skills for Health. The event helped Clinovia's education and training department and senior nurses leading the phlebotomy service learn more about how best to utilise implementation tools and competences.

Using the Skills for Health database of competences, the team defined job roles and updated job descriptions, ensuring that each was competence based. Competences are now used to inform Clinovia's education and training package for all practitioners who take blood including registered nurses and new phlebotomists. The competences also offer learning outcomes and provide a framework of assessment across the patient pathway.

Example competences identified and used:

Role based competences:

- Responsibility, accountability and liability.
- Describe anatomical structures and physiology.
- Obtain venous blood samples.
- Insert intravenous needles for the collection of blood at donation sessions.
- Obtain venous blood samples using invasive techniques.
- Take samples of blood fit for laboratory analysis.





The competences are part of a range of electronic tools available on the Skills for Health website which can help managers design roles, services, education, and training and forecast future needs. They are a powerful tool for those who want to structure their teams' and individuals' learning and development around patient needs and they can all be linked to the Knowledge and Skills Framework.

Clinovia's clinical training package, education and training programmes have now all successfully been standardised. Training registered nurses or new phlebotomists is based on the new education and training package, ensuring new and existing employees are working to the same standards. It also now applies to nurses who take blood, bringing a consistent competence based approach to other clinical roles.

Implementation and evaluation of the programme will be ongoing but early signs are positive. Standardisation of protocols is being completed and updated in line with the competences work. Clinovia has audited current working practices in the clinics thereby providing a benchmark for further reviews in future. This in effect becomes a circular process with improvement, review and audit built in.

Clinovia's competency based training and education package will sit alongside similarly informed job descriptions and person specifications. The team are applying this model to other new services. For example, Clinovia have worked with Baxter Renal Services to develop an education and training package and associated training programmes for automated assisted peritoneal dialysis. Healthcare support workers will be trained to assist patients with this therapy in their own homes.

Benefits

- Raised levels of service delivery to patients.
- Improved continuity of service for patients.
- Increased motivation and confidence in staff who are clearer about what is required of them, supported by additional training.
- Better retention and recruitment of staff.
- Standards protocols will be evidence based i.e. minimum amount of time to take blood.



Since competences describe what individuals need to know and do, regardless of who is performing the task, they have many and varied uses.

The application of Skills for Health competences has provided Clinovia with the means to manage more robustly the redesign of services and the necessary supporting education and training programmes.



“ We believe that Clinovia is one of the first organisations to use a competence based approach to develop phlebotomy services and we are delighted with the early signs of success we have seen. Incorporating the competences has moved beyond the education of one part of the workforce and is also influencing our standards, policies and procedures in other parts of the organisation. ”

Kay Ferris, Director of Education and Training, Clinovia



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Clinovia Ltd, a member of the BUPA group, is Britain's most experienced community based healthcare provider. We support the NHS, social and educational organisations by providing high quality, tailored home healthcare services.



Skills for Health continues to support the development of competence based approaches to the design and redesign of roles and services. As part of this we are helping health care organisations strengthen their professional development programmes.

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