

# LEARNING NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR NURSES AND MIDWIVES

## A GUIDE FOR WARD MANAGERS AND TEAM LEADERS



### HSC TRUSTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The NMC Code of Conduct (NMC 2008) indicates that all nurse and midwife registrants have a responsibility to take part in appropriate learning and practice activities to maintain and develop their competence. All Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in Northern Ireland have developed systems to support work place learning, which will include carrying out learning needs analysis (LNA).

This booklet has been developed to help you as a ward manager or team leader to use a structured LNA approach to inform the development of personal development plans with your staff.

### WHAT IS LEARNING NEEDS ANALYSIS?

Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) is a process of gathering and interpreting information regarding the learning and development needs of your staff. This is important to ensure the identification of appropriate and effective learning and development activities for your staff in order to contribute to improving the delivery of patient and client care.

### WHY DO I NEED TO DO IT?

Using a structured approach to LNA will help you identify the development needs of your staff in line with the Trust's service objectives. This will also help you deliver your current services and make plans for new services.

### LEARNING NEEDS ANALYSIS?

To begin the process of LNA, as ward managers and team leaders, you need to have a clear vision of your current services and potential developments and must consider:

- The overall service objectives of your organisation and your service group/directorate/division and how your team contributes to this
- The knowledge, competencies and skills required to meet existing service or new service expectations
- Development of new roles

### DRIVERS THAT IMPACT ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS

External and internal drivers will influence the shape and nature of service developments and may include:

- Government drivers and policies
- Changes within Trusts to meet the Modernisation Agenda
- Reports on the Health and Social Care Services and local inquiries
- Implementation of best evidence
- Implementing National and Regional Guidance
- Regional Supervision Standards
- RQIA reports
- New developments in the field of practice
- Practice audits
- Critical incidents
- Patient/client surveys and complaints
- Risk analysis and governance reviews

### LEARNING NEEDS ANALYSIS PROCESS

A structured approach to LNA helps to identify the development needs of the nursing and midwifery workforce. A simple and recognisable way to consider this is as a process that involves

- Step 1:** **Assessment** of the knowledge, skills and competence of individuals in the team
- Step 2:** **Planning** the learning opportunities with each team member
- Step 3:** **Implementing** the agreed development activity
- Step 4:** **Evaluating** the outcome and improvements in patient or client care and personal development

As ward managers and team leaders you need to take the above drivers into account as you think about your current nursing and midwifery care delivery and take forward or input into changes in your area to improve patient and client experiences. This may result in service development and innovations and new role developments or role expansion. This will influence the professional development of your team members.

## STEP 1: ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING NEEDS

**Firstly** you need to identify the knowledge and skills required by the nursing or midwifery team in your area to deliver safe and effective care.

**Secondly** you need to assess the knowledge and skill set of each team member you currently have.

**Thirdly** you need to compare these two sets of information in order to identify deficits and the learning and development needs of individual team members. In relation to the above find out about any tools or information that will help you in your analysis.

As a manager or team leader, as part of your daily work, you informally assess the competence of your staff using observation and assessment skills. This is a very important part of your role and can be used as the starting point for identifying the current skill set of your team. You will also be required to use the Knowledge and Skills Framework to carry out annual reviews of each member of your team in relation to their job profile and agree a Personal Development Plan (PDP).

The NIPEC Development Framework Competency Profile may help with this and can be viewed at [www.nipecdf.org/compro/](http://www.nipecdf.org/compro/)

## STEP 2: PLANNING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A flexible and innovative approach to planning learning is required to make best use of the wide range of learning opportunities available. The NIPEC Development Framework Learning Activities Section may also help with this see [www.nipecdf.org](http://www.nipecdf.org)

In designing the Personal Development Plans (PDP) for your staff you need to:

- Consider the learning and development expected from the planned learning activity
- Consider the types of training/learning activities that could help your staff member to achieve the expected learning and development

## STEP 2 (CONTINUED):

### PLANNING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- The agreed training or learning activity should take account of factors such as: the staff member's learning preferences; resource implications; overall fit with other team members; availability; achievability; and, service need
- How the staff member will demonstrate achievement on completion of the development activity

### STEP 3: DELIVERING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

This involves making arrangements for your staff member to undertake the training or learning activities agreed in their PDP and agreeing a framework for on-going monitoring. This will involve both yourself and your staff member agreeing responsibilities for aspects such as: time to undertake the activity; organising the activity; securing funding, if required; and, feedback processes.

### STEP 4: EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPING ACTIVITY

Staff training and professional development is costly. It is therefore important to find out if the activity has been effective in terms of personal and professional development and the impact learning has had on improvements in patient/client care.

This could be done by:

- Student and manager evaluation (post development activity)
- Noting improvements in performance and level of competence (formally or informally).
- Trust evaluations of service delivery.
- Practice audit reports.
- Critical incident reports.
- Patient surveys/complaints
- Improvements in best practice through sharing learning

## A LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY TO MAXIMISE THE BEST USE OF RESOURCES

The learning needs analysis process is a very important part of your learning and development strategy. You will continue to change and refine it to better meet the training and performance needs of your area though a range of formal and informal learning activities.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information contact the NIPEC enquiry e-mail address at [enquiries@nipec.n-i.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@nipec.n-i.nhs.uk)

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