Darzi puts workforce centre stage

Lord Darzi’s Next Stage Review A High Quality Workforce, is set to put education and training at centre stage in order for the NHS to meet the challenges for the future of healthcare.

Darzi’s Next Stage Review outlines a vision for the NHS that will deliver better care for all sectors of the community. A High Quality Workforce focuses strongly on education and training as the vehicle for ensuring that we invest in developing our healthcare professionals, so that they get the right support to continuously improve their skills.

This has major implications for workforce development:

- Ensure development is available to enable clinicians to achieve their three roles of practitioner, partner and leader; for example our South Central-wide preceptorship scheme for newly qualified nurses.
- Better use of allied health professionals to play a greater part in transforming care.
- New integrated roles and career pathways, for example the Modernising Scientific Careers higher specialist register.
- Increased numbers of occupational groups like midwives and emergency care practitioners to meet service demands.
- Greater emphasis on developing skills in preventative health, as well as greater emphasis on inter-professional and lifelong learning.
- Greater integration of health and social care services.
- More staff able to work in primary care and community care settings.

Lois Whittaker, Director of NESC, said: “There is a lot of work to do, but the future looks exciting, as we develop new career pathways to reflect the eight clinical pathways, greater vocational learning, including apprenticeships and NVQ’s and embedding leadership development at all stages of peoples’ careers. Given that we are an education and training organisation, Darzi really has put what we do at centre stage. We intend to make the most of this opportunity.”

NESC will continue to communicate about the effects of Darzi as the practical implications of the review start to unfold. To join the debate email: lois.whittaker@nesc.nhs.uk

Peripheral line training reduces HAI s

A new competency assessed course on inserting peripheral lines is starting to have an impact on hospital acquired infections (HAIs).

The training for nurses and doctors was initiated by Portsmouth Hospitals Trust and is now being piloted in seven South Central acute trusts.

The trusts have agreed a standardised training package with room for some local flexibility. As well as co-ordinating the steering group, NESC has funded mannequins to support simulation training and the equivalent of a band six nurse for one year in each trust.

Clinical skills trainers and infection control nurses are delivering the training and early results show that this is now starting to have an impact on HAIs.

Joan Potterton, Head of Education and Practice Development at Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, said: “We have used this programme to extend our established IV cannulation training to junior doctors. 123 doctors were recently trained and assessed as part of their induction. The programme has been very positive. We have had no MRSA bacteraemia for the past three months.”

Fleur Kitsell, Head of Innovation, Development and Wider Workforce at NESC said: “This is exactly the type of focused training that NESC can and should be leading to help improve patient care across South Central.”

Contact: eleanor.guegan@nesc.nhs.uk
The time pressures that most of us experience, balancing work and home life can make days spent on training courses seem like a luxury we can’t afford. A mix of tutorial days with colleagues, interspersed with e-learning as a kind of “online homework” can ease the time pressures, without leaving us feeling unsupported.

Blended programmes usually contain a number of classroom interventions, alongside a structured suite of online materials that might include video scenarios, interactive quizzes and text-based documents; add in an element of reflection, in the form of a learning diary and the complete package can enhance the overall learning experience.

Alison Wright, E-learning Programme Manager at NESC, is clear about the advantages: “As well as easing the ‘time burden’, learners have flexibility in fitting their online study around the rest of their lives, safe in the knowledge that there’s always someone to ask when you’re stuck, whether it’s an assigned tutor or a peer on the programme. Tutorial days act as a good discipline because they are like a series of staged milestones along the learning journey.”

NESC has successfully piloted a blended learning programme (see panel) and it’s likely that more will follow.

Flexible learning in action

In 2005 the PEP (Putting Evidence into Practice) short course was developed and piloted by a team of academics from the School of Health of Sciences and Social Work, University of Portsmouth and NHS librarians in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The evaluation showed such positive results that NESC has injected further funding to roll out the programme across South Central.

Learners had the task of building their knowledge, skills and confidence in using an evidence-based practice (EBP) approach to work. The course included five face-to-face teaching days, plus online materials to consolidate learning and test understanding. Each participant was assigned a personal tutor who they could call on to share their experiences of the electronic elements.

Uptake of the online resources was tracked and the results showed a majority of people engaged enthusiastically between the teaching days. One learner commented: “Aside from everything I learned on the actual course, I enjoyed the opportunity to get together with peers who are learning too, not feeling as if I am the only one with a lack of knowledge in this area, plus, of course, being able to network.”

Allied health professionals and healthcare scientists who would like to take part in the course can find out more about PEP at wwwebp4nhs.org.uk. Forthcoming dates include Milton Keynes (October), Portsmouth (November) and Southampton (January).
New training MOT –
bringing shared statutory training a step closer

A new pilot scheme is set to cut down the costs and resources required to deliver essential training. If staff can demonstrate their competence in a statutory training topic then they do not need to attend face-to-face training.

Developed by the Hampshire Partnership Trust and funded by NESC, the new Essential Training MOT is designed to assess existing knowledge and individual competency in four key areas: health and safety, food hygiene, moving and handling (theory) and fire safety awareness.

Staff who successfully complete the assessments, (electronic or paper) have their certificate in the topics renewed for the appropriate period. This makes substantial savings in terms of costs: venues, trainers, travel and time away from place of work.

The scheme brings the integration of commonly agreed training and competencies between different employers a stage closer.

“The idea has really caught on, especially as staff can access the MOT from any PC with an internet connection,” said Allan Jolly, Head of Personal Development and Training at Hampshire Partnership NHS Trust.

“It takes around 15 minutes to complete all four topics, which compared to face-to-face training, saves thousands of pounds and dramatically increases the time staff can spend in their workplace. If other trusts signed up to this, the benefits across the region could be spectacular.”

“In principle, it does not make sense that different organisations insist that the content, delivery method, or competencies required by healthcare staff relating to statutory training are different. If we can agree these, there is no reason that the benefits of the MOT cannot be experienced by any organisation,” said Allan.

Staff have responded positively to the MOT as their existing knowledge and skills are recognised and they are not inconvenienced by having to attend unnecessary training. Trainers have also welcomed the idea as it frees their time to focus on other aspects of their role.

To find out about the Essential Training MOT, email emma.wilton@nesc.nhs.uk

Libraries move to integrated system

NHS libraries in NHS South Central are moving to a single shared library management system, along with libraries in NHS South West, resulting in cost savings and less duplication of effort.

The bonus for staff and students means there’s just one library catalogue and only one library card, all of which means that if you move around on placement or attachment, the same system will always apply.

A ‘SWIMS’ card is the key to all the libraries in NHS South Central and NHS South West, over 100 in total.

Libraries in South West and Hampshire, Isle of Wight and South Buckinghamshire already use SWIMS and Berkshire and Oxfordshire are set to join the scheme before the end of the year.

To find books and journals held in any of these libraries, check the catalogue at www.swims.nhs.uk
Community staff get skills boost

Rapid up-skilling of the community workforce through a new NESC funded programme is part of a wider response to deliver more efficient and effective primary care.

The Community UpSkilling the Workforce Programme (CUSP) is delivered by Oxford Brookes and Bournemouth Universities and supports the development of a modern, progressive, integrated community workforce across bands 5 – 7 and the advanced practitioner role.

“The programme is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of primary care trust practitioners including nurses, occupational therapists and physiotherapists, who require a rapid skills update,” said Elaine Bowden, Education Commissioning Manager for NESC. “The programme is also a stepping stone to more advanced roles and further studies, like non-medical prescribing and modular courses such as management of minor injury/illness and long term conditions.”

On completion of the programme each student can demonstrate that they have the techniques required to carry out a physical examination, take a detailed history from a patient and be confident with the decision making process regarding treatment and/ or referral of clients.

For more details, email:
Shsc_cusp@brookes.ac.uk
Bedwards@bournemouth.ac.uk

Strategic Education Partnership meetings set to continue

NESC will host two sets of Strategic Education Partnership (SEP) meetings a year for senior leaders in education and training following positive feedback from the summer SEP meetings.

Five meetings were held across NHS South Central as part of engaging stakeholders in a strategic debate on health and education. Of the 67 representatives, 33 gave formal feedback with 24 rating “good” or “very good” on how useful the forum was; and 28 rating “good” or “very good” on whether the forum discussion could support education developments in their organisations.

Strategic Education Partnership meetings will be held twice a year in October and April in order to fit in with the NESC business planning cycle. Meetings will be held across three patches to enable some local as well as regional and national discussion.

SEPs will be interprofessional and directly involve education providers. HR directors, directors of nursing, medical directors and education and training leads from the health and education sectors will be invited to attend.

“The SEP meetings are an opportunity to get real input from NHS organisations and education providers to NESC’s plans, as well as share learning and best practice from across South Central,” said Lois Whittaker, Director of NESC.

“Engaging with stakeholders is critical to ensuring that NESC delivers what organisations need in terms of education and training, and that we operate as efficiently as possible.”

NESC lead directors have been asked to co-ordinate representatives from their organisations.

Wider Workforce Skills Survey Underway

A skills survey of staff in bands 1 – 4 across South Central is set to provide a useful snapshot of current capability, to inform future decisions about staff training.

“The government’s Skills Pledge encourages all NHS organisations to make a public commitment, so that bands 1 – 4 staff are able to access the minimum of an NVQ level 2 qualification and to develop literacy, language and numeracy skills,” said Emma Wilton, Widening Participation Manager at NESC.

“This survey is the first step of the process. We’re giving staff in bands 1 – 4 the opportunity to let us know what qualifications they have, so we can work out what we have to do to support their training and development.”

The survey should be complete by the end of December. For further information email emma.wilton@nesc.nhs.uk.

This newsletter is also available online at www.nesc.nhs.uk
**NESC supports food, nutrition and hydration programme**

NHS South Central has teamed up with the NHS Core Learning Unit to promote a new e-learning programme aimed at improving personal care.

The Food, Nutrition and Hydration in Health and Social Care programme reminds learners why nutrition and hydration are so vital, and explains the reasons why people can become malnourished and/or dehydrated in a care setting.

It also sets out to help learners identify practical ways to avoid this, as well as key best practices and benchmarks. The module is targeted at nurses, health care assistants, housekeeping and catering staff, carers, volunteers, in fact anyone involved with hands-on service user care. The programme takes around two hours to complete.

Food, Nutrition and Hydration in Health and Social Care is just one of several nationally developed and quality-assured e-learning programmes provided by the NHS Core Learning Unit (www.corelearningunit.nhs.uk).

SHA areas have agreed to sponsor different programmes, depending on local interest and need. For more information about all programmes, contact your local learning and development lead.

**Streamlined and online**

Greater choice and more relevant content is the promise from NESC’s new e-learning strategy which aims to encourage staff to increase their personal use of e-learning, e-libraries and knowledge support services.

The strategy was developed following scoping and consultation and focuses on delivering meaningful programmes that co-ordinate with national e-learning initiatives, like eLfH (e-learning for health), while still being responsive to local needs.

“The whole concept of e-learning has undergone a difficult journey, from hero to villain and back again, but now, as it reaches a more mature phase, its use, alongside other training methods, is invaluable,” said Alison Wright, E-learning Programme Manager.

“There is often a misconception that e-learning is all about cost saving. In practice, it’s to do with delivering the right choice of training packages, in an appropriate way and at a time that suits the learner. Get that right and everybody benefits.”

Part of NESC’s role in delivering the strategy will be to continually check all aspects of e-learning and libraries, to ensure consistency, monitor quality and assure the relevance and availability of materials.

To find out more, contact alison.wright@nesc.nhs.uk

**NESC lead director supports communication**

A “NESC lead director” has been identified in NHS trusts and PCTs across South Central to help support a clear and co-ordinated approach to communication.

“NESC communicates on many levels in organisations relating to various streams of education and training,” said Lois Whittaker, Director of NESC. “It is not the intention to replace the direct operational relationships that exist, rather to ensure that one individual in each organisation has a reasonable idea of the whole picture.”

For more information or to clarify who is the NESC lead director in your organisation contact lesley.loughridge@nesc.nhs.uk.

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**Work in progress to increase placements**

Work is underway to increase clinical placement opportunities in NHS South Central, in particular for allied health professions and midwifery.

“The reorganisation of PCTs and, in some cases acute and mental health trusts across NHS South Central has led to reduced opportunities for many professional groups requiring placements to complete their education programmes,” said Janine Ling, Head of Quality, Practice Learning at NESC.

This is particularly challenging for occupational therapy, physiotherapy, radiography, podiatry, paramedics, emergency care practitioners and midwifery.

Learning environment leads are working together to find innovative solutions to these challenges and to address the shortage areas as pro-actively as possible.

For more information contact janine.ling@nesc.nhs.uk
Go to www.internurse.com select “Athens sign in” and enter your NHS Athens username and password.

Free access to internurse.com

Internurse.com is a database containing the full-text content of core British nursing journals and is a helpful one-stop shop for busy nurses, health care assistants and nursing students looking for articles on a topic but without time to do a full literature search.

The available titles are:
- British Journal of Cardiac Nursing
- British Journal of Community Nursing
- British Journal of School Nursing
- British Journal of Healthcare Assistants
- British Journal of Neuroscience Nursing

NESC Journal set to pilot in the New Year

NESC has received positive feedback from its journal NESC Education which was presented to focus groups and mailed to stakeholders during the summer. The journal is aimed at educators and trainers across NHS South Central as a vehicle for sharing best practice, learning about new ideas and presenting case-study innovative solutions.

NESC will now pilot a revised journal in the New Year. If you would like to be involved or would like more information please contact: caroline.crabtree@nesc.nhs.uk

New support posts for inter-professional learning

Six new patch-based education support posts have been funded by NESC in order to support mentors and promote inter-professional learning in a practice setting.

Posts are being hosted by Southampton University Hospitals Trust on behalf of the Southampton locality; Buckinghamshire Hospitals Trust on behalf of Buckinghamshire; Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre on behalf of Oxfordshire; Heatherwood and Wexham Park on behalf of Berkshire and Milton Keynes PCT on behalf of Milton Keynes and South Central Ambulance Service.

Portsmouth locality are currently reviewing their structures and may host a post next year.

Each post will have common “core components”, but host trusts will develop their own job descriptions and work plans to enable the posts to be relevant to the needs of the community.

The posts are funded until the end of March 2010, when their effectiveness will be evaluated.

We want to hear from you!

If you would like to contribute or comment on this newsletter please email caroline.crabtree@nesc.nhs.uk

This newsletter and other NESC news is available online at: www.nesc.nhs.uk