Staff development is made a priority in NHS Constitution

The government has launched the NHS Constitution, which outlines the principles and values of the NHS in England. The aim of the consultation is to reaffirm the existing rights to NHS services, but it also contains pledges that the NHS is committed to achieving. Subject to parliamentary approval, all NHS bodies and private and third-sector providers of NHS services will be required by law to take account of the constitution in their actions. It will be renewed every 10 years, with the involvement of the public, patients and staff.

With regards to NHS staff, it is written in the constitution: “They must be treated with respect at work, have the tools, training and support to deliver care, and opportunities to develop and progress.” The NHS commits to provide all staff with personal development, access to appropriate training for their jobs and line management support to succeed.

NHS staff also have responsibilities to the service: “You should aim to take up training and development opportunities provided over and above those legally required of your post.”

Alan Johnson, the Health Secretary, said: “The content of the constitution is based on discussions with thousands of NHS staff and patients across the country and will form the basis of a new relationship between staff and patients – a relationship based on partnership, respect and shared commitment where everyone knows what they can expect from the NHS and what is expected from them.”

The constitution was one of a number of recommendations outlined by the health minister Lord Darzi in his NHS Next Stage Review final report High Quality Care for All.

To download the NHS Constitution, visit tinyurl.com/8gplsm.

BMJ Learning website opens up to staff and trainees in South Central

NESC has funded full access to BMJ Learning for all of the region’s NHS staff and trainees. BMJ Learning is a continuing professional development and postgraduate training website run by the British Medical Journal. It offers more than 470 online modules to keep staff and trainees up to date with training, practice, appraisal, revalidation and examination preparation. The modules are targeted at GPs, GP trainees, hospital doctors, medical trainees, practice nurses and managers and other clinical professionals. Modules take an hour and deal with everyday issues in primary care and hospital medicine.

Paul Raybould, Marketing Manager for BMJ Learning, said: “BMJ Learning provides evidence-based and independent resources to help health professionals with their postgraduate training and professional development. It covers core medical specialties and is designed in a variety of interactive formats to aid learning. All users have a personal plan and record so they can print appraisal reports and certificates of completed modules.’ Free access is available to those in the NHS South Central area with an NHS Athens account. Log in via Athens at learning.bmj.com to get started.

Research-informed training delivers impressive results

The University of Portsmouth’s Expert Centre has improved student learning through research-informed teacher training. Educators in health-related sciences at the centre can experience clinical simulation, and learning is underpinned by research, which informs curriculum development and assessment.

Research into a recent clinical simulation course aimed at practitioners educating others has demonstrated the impact of rigorous design on the student learning experience. The centre is also working with Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust and South Central Strategic Health Authority in the development of leadership and communication skills with an emphasis on improving patient care.

NESC has invested £23.7 million in 74 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning established by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in 2005. Professor Lesley Jane Eales-Reynolds, director of the Expert Centre, said: “We are doing something unique here. Most institutions carry out training evaluation, but what we do is rigorous research.”

NESC SETTLES INTO ITS NEW HOME

NESC staff formerly based in Winchester have moved down the road to new offices in Southern House in Otterbourne. Go to www.nesc.nhs.uk for up-to-date contact information.

CHRONIC FATIGUE ‘MISUNDERSTOOD’ BY PRACTICE NURSES

A lack of training about chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is hampering practice nurses’ ability to offer support to sufferers, according to research from the University of Manchester. Nurses surveyed by the researchers said they had very little formal training about the condition or knowledge about its treatment and negative attitudes towards patients. However, the nurses were keen to learn more about this condition. The report concluded that more training is needed, and that it must first address negative attitudes.

470 The number of training modules available on the BMJ Learning website