

Case Study: Preparing student nurses for NMC revalidation

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust invests heavily in a Quality Champions initiative and encourages staff of all levels to sign up and develop quality champion projects meaningful to their area of work and as a way of identifying improvements to service.

In May 2016 the Trust's Senior Nurse for Professional Practice (SNPP) and Practice Education Facilitator (PEF) identified an opportunity to become part of the Quality Champions initiative by investing in our newly qualified workforce and increasing the level of support during the transitional period from student nurse to registered practitioner.

In 2015 the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) stated that the purpose of revalidation was to encourage a culture of sharing, reflection and improvement. They also suggest that revalidation encourages nurses and midwives to engage in professional networks and discussion about their practice. This is supported by NHS Employers (2012:1) when they suggest that 'research demonstrates a correlation between nurse engagement and patient care'. Research found that engaged employees are more productive.

In order to prepare our future newly qualified workforce a comprehensive teaching session was devised to inform staff of the requirements needed to revalidate.



Key Outcomes

- The SMART Aim of the Quality Champions project was to increase the knowledge of our newly qualified registered nurse workforce around revalidation
- The pre-session questionnaire (Appendix 1) highlighted the students' levels of knowledge around 2 key themes; their preparedness for revalidation and their awareness of the themes of the new Code (Appendix 2)
- Pre-session, the team found that 69% of the student group felt unprepared for revalidation
- This changed post-session to 100% of the group feeling that they were prepared
- Pre-session, only 40% of the group could list the themes within the new Code
- This increased to 88% post-session
- The teaching session was evaluated using the Trust's standard evaluation tool (Appendix 3) and key learning points from the students' perspective were identified. These included the revalidation process, the NMC Code and professionalism, documents required to revalidate, the importance of revalidation, working within own scope of practice and individual responsibility and accountability
- 100% of the group reported to be 'completely satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the session delivered
- 97% felt that the session was extremely relevant to their current role
- 91% of the group felt that the content delivered was important to their area of work

Background

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust is a major acute trust serving the people of Wigan and Leigh. Innovative and forward thinking the Trust is dedicated to providing the best possible healthcare for the local population in the Wigan Borough and surrounding areas. The Trust aims to continuously provide safe, quality care to all patients. Over £220 million is spent each year on a diverse range of reputable general and specialist acute services. The Trust has 3 hospital sites, a state of the art outpatient centre and dedicated ophthalmology centre. The Trust currently employs 5052 staff.

At Wrightington, Wigan & Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, the vision is to be in the "Top 10% for everything we do" and the Trust recognises that that can only be achieved through staff who are committed to driving improvements in the quality and safety of services for patients. Therefore, at the beginning of 2012 a programme was set up encouraging staff to sign up to be Quality Champions.

The Quality Champion programme is the most high profile part of the Trust's strategy to build a quality and safety culture, presented visually in the WWL Wheel (Appendix 4) which is based on the tenets of SAFE, EFFECTIVE and CARING. It is explicitly communicated to staff that nothing is more important than safety.

An in house training programme was established to provide Quality Champions with skills and knowledge in improvement methods. Staff of all disciplines and grades are welcomed to the programme. Quality Champions are able to choose the improvement they wish to work on, so long as it is aligned to the Trust's objectives. The SNPP and PEF are part of the Professional Practice Team and identified an opportunity via the Quality Champions programme to collaborate in increasing the knowledge of our newly qualified registered nurse workforce around revalidation.

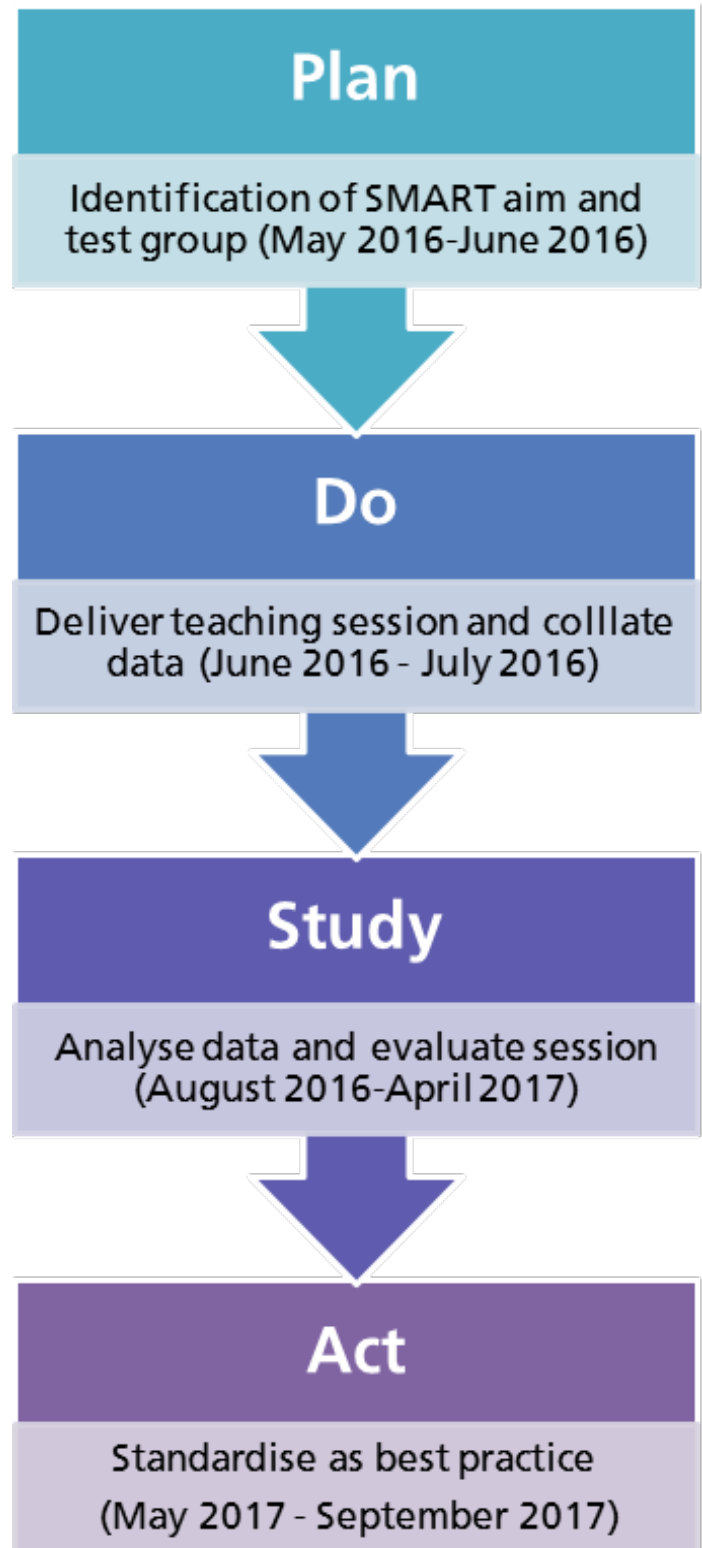
Considerable work had been done to support existing staff with the process of NMC revalidation; however, based on local intelligence it was felt that newly qualified nurses lacked the knowledge required.

Key Aims

- Development of a SMART Aim: 'By October 2016, 100% of the September 2016 qualifying student nurses will have the knowledge to enable them to meet the mandatory requirements of NMC revalidation'.
- To link the project to Trust priorities and values: Staff Investment, Staff Engagement, Accountability, Patients First and lastly Communication
- To enhance the preceptorship period of our newly qualified nursing workforce.

Key Stages of Set-up

The project originally started in June 2016 and following the identification of the SMART aim a PDSA cycle was developed to drive the project forward.



How it Works

In order to best achieve our SMART Aim the team decided to deliver a formal teaching session on revalidation and exploring professional values. To ascertain the student nurses' existing level of knowledge, in relation to revalidation and professional values, a questionnaire was devised consisting of qualitative and quantitative data collection.

This questionnaire was sent out to the 40 student nurse from both Adult and Child fields to provide baseline measurements around the key themes of the project.

A formal teaching plan (Appendix 5) was devised based upon data collated from the questionnaire and was entitled: '**Professional Values and Revalidation**'. This half day session consisted of theory and group work activities.

At the end of the session the students were required to complete the original questionnaire to demonstrate either an increase or decrease in knowledge base at that moment in time. It was envisaged that there would be an increase in the students' knowledge base in relation to revalidation and achieving the mandatory requirements. The session was also formally evaluated using the Trust's evaluation tool.

The evidence was collated from the pre and post session questionnaires and the findings were presented to the Trust Board members and Quality Champions Committee in January 2017.

In March 2017 the students, now newly qualified nurses, will be contacted by the project managers to complete the original questionnaire for a final time. A review of professional portfolios will take place, hopefully evidencing that the individuals are applying the knowledge gained from the teaching session, and can evidence application to practice demonstrating that they are living by the Code's standards and behaviours.

Resources

No funding was required for this project; however, time was the major resource needed and how to factor this into already busy workloads. The project was supported by the Head of Professional Practice and formed part of the Professional Practice Team (PPT) work streams.

The project was managed and delivered by 2 Band 7s and in the last 9 months has taken approximately 10 days:

- Completion of the Quality Champions course (4 days)
- Planning (3 days)
- Delivery of the teaching session to the students (1 day)
- Collation of data (1 day)
- Formal updates for the board/committees (1 day)

Key Challenges

- A totally new process and new Code – work had been undertaken within the Trust to support the existing workforce with the requirements of revalidation and the introduction of the new Code. A sound knowledge base was already available within the PPT to make this relevant to student nurses.
- Possible lack of engagement from the students – the study session delivered to the student nurses was carefully planned to include theory and group work to ensure interaction within the group. Professional values were explored and real life cases of misconduct were studied and discussed to ensure the theory to practice link was evident.
- Resources in terms of time from PPT – the project was supported by the line manager of the PPT and incorporated into current work streams. Encouragement and support was given at an early stage from the Director of Nursing.

- Students' workload – full support from the local partner Universities. The time of the session was chosen during a period when the students had the least amount of assignment work and in the final placement nearing qualification.

Key Learning

Following the evaluation of the session the students were able to identify appropriate future actions which included:

- View the NMC website and in particular the revalidation microsite
- Commence evidence gathering to inform portfolio building
- Reflect on the Code
- Prepare for the preceptorship period
- Review Trust values

The PPT have learnt that to undertake this project the support and engagement from numerous partners such as Head of Professional Practice and partner Universities is essential to its success.

Sustainability

The whole ethos of the project was to give our newly qualified workforce the knowledge and skills to be able to clearly demonstrate that they are living by the Code's standards and behaviours to meet the revalidation requirements and are able to uphold the Trust's values.

Next Steps

- To standardise as best practice for all newly qualified nurses
- To continue to support existing staff with the revalidation process
- To share and celebrate successes with partner Trusts and educational networks

Supporting Material

- Appendix 1 – Pre and post-session questionnaire
- Appendix 2 – The Code
- Appendix 3 – Teaching session evaluation report
- Appendix 4 – Wigan Wheel, Trust values document
- Appendix 5 – Teaching session plan

Relevant Websites and References

Nursing and Midwifery Council. (2015) *Revalidation: your step-by-step guide through the process* [Online] <http://revalidation.nmc.org.uk/>

NHS Employers (2012) *The staff engagement challenge - a factsheet for nursing leaders and managers* [Online] http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Documents/Retain%20and%20improve/23655_NHS_Employers_Factsheet_final.pdf

NHS Employers (2012) *Staff Engagement* [Online] www.nhsemployers.org/staffengagement

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