



Improving patient safety through the Effective Practitioner initiative

The Effective Practitioner initiative supports nurses, midwives and allied health professionals (NMAHPs) to provide person-centred, safe, and effective care through work-based learning. NHS Education Scotland (NES) has led this development alongside practitioners, their managers, educators and service users. The supporting infrastructure across Scotland includes NHS board leads, line managers, supervisors, mentors, and practice educators and practice education leads.

The initiative helps practitioners to focus on what is important to each individual and enabling a positive experience for all. Participants can access a dedicated web based resource containing an extensive range of learning activities. The web resource also signposts staff to learning activities which staff can dip in and out of, as and when they need it to support their practice and

career development. Using day-to-day experiences in the learning process is an important part of the Effective Practitioner initiative and work based learning is both supported and promoted.

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Effective Practitioner enhancing the safety of patients

Effective Practitioner is important for Patient Safety as it makes it easy for practitioners to keep up to date and to access learning as part of their practice. It provides ways to self assess their practice; address learning needs; reflect and record their learning. It helps to enhance how they learn as part of practice and assists clinical decision making skills.

“Baseline evaluation has identified that the Effective Practitioner is regarded as a way which can help prepare:

- a more educated and competent workforce
- higher quality and safer care
- more effective practitioners.”

Stakeholder interviews March 2012

“There’s something in this for everyone whether you’re two years qualified or 20 years qualified - it’s about making what you do count.”

AHP Practice Education Lead

“I’ve never met a truer saying that you learn a new thing every day, and certainly in healthcare that can be very true.”

Staff Nurse, Critical Care

“ We continually strive to ensure that Effective Practitioner is responsive to the learning needs of nurses, midwives and allied health professionals to enable them to deliver safe patient care. ”

Ann Rae, Educational Projects Manager,
NHS Education for Scotland

Here are three examples of learning activities which can be found in the web resource:

Activity 1: Patient Safety

- Explore the activities that have been embedded in your clinical area in order to meet the targets of the Scottish Patient Safety Programme.
- Find out how these activities have benefited patients/clients. What helped to embed these activities?
- What do you see as the benefits to patients?
- Is there any learning from this that can be applied to other areas of patient safety?
- Record your learning in your professional profile.

Activity 2: Concern, Cause and Counter measure

The '3Cs' is a useful tool for identifying quality improvement initiatives within your practice. The 3 Cs – 'Concern, Cause, Counter measure' asks for staff suggestions about their current concerns about their service and what and how they would like to change.

- Facilitate a team discussion on current concerns. Some suggested prompts are:
 - What are the concerns and why are they important to address?
 - What do you feel your patients/clients want that they are not currently getting?
 - Prioritise the identified concerns and agree with your colleagues the one that should be a priority.
- Identify the causes for this concern – why is this happening?
- For each cause, identify 1 or more realistic counter measures (changes) that could be put in place.
- Take responsibility or agree with a colleague who will take responsibility for implementing the counter measure(s).
- Agree how you will record the impact of the counter measure.
- Review how the counter measures are operating in one month – have they improved the delivery of the service and removed/alleviated the concern?

Activity 3: Communication

Carry out an interaction with a patient in which you are discussing their health needs, including:

- listening to their story
- asking about aspects of their life which may affect their health
- explaining things clearly in a way the person can understand.

Good communication across healthcare professionals and with patients and carers is a key dimension of safe care.

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“The Scottish Government has set ambitious Health Service targets including the elimination of avoidable harm to patients. Education has an essential role to play which should not be overlooked just because it is difficult to quantify the impact of staff education on patient outcomes. Patient Safety education scenarios build on the established success of patient stories in using narrative and qualitative data as powerful levers for improvement. The scenarios in our portfolio demonstrate the impact of educational interventions on healthcare staff whilst caring for their patients.”

Professor Philip Cachia
Chair,
NES Patient Safety Multi-disciplinary Group,
Postgraduate Medical Dean

The web resource is available at:
<http://www.effectivepractitioner.nes.scot.nhs.uk/>

Other useful link:
www.scottishpatientsafetyprogramme.scot.nhs.uk

For further information contact:

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NES Patient Safety Multi-disciplinary Group
See link below