

Training budgets for revalidation: Will pigs fly?



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As you will be aware, the revalidation for nurses process began in earnest in April this year. This was a direct recommendation of the Francis Report that was published in 2013 following the Mid Staffordshire Inquiry (Francis, 2013). Personally, I welcomed the new process as a means of restoring the general public’s faith in the profession of nursing, which was severely damaged by the Mid Staffordshire Inquiry.

TREND-UK was involved in events around the country during 2015 to inform nurses working in diabetes care about the new “code”, process and requirements to complete the necessary paperwork to enable nurses to maintain their registration to practice.

While travelling around the country delivering the revalidation presentation, TREND-UK was acutely aware of how nurses, in general, were worried about going through the revalidation process. However, we have also been involved in delivering a new presentation on “Competency in nursing” during 2016, which has meant that we have met some nurses who have already completed their revalidation process and maintained their registration to practice.

The majority of nurses that I have spoken to were initially very concerned about the process, but once going through the process they realised that it was not as daunting as they had thought it would be. The Nursing and Midwifery Council have set up an excellent website, www.nmc-uk.org/revalidation, that is straightforward to navigate and provides all the information and guidance to successfully revalidate.

Nursing staff at the RCN’s annual congress in Glasgow in June this year called for employers to provide individual training budgets for qualified nurses to help with revalidation. RCN members tabled an emergency resolution during the event calling for the budgets. Gill Coverdale, Professional Lead for Education at the RCN said:

“Revalidation is an opportunity to improve patient care and keep patients safe by providing a clear system

for ensuring registered nurses remain fit to practice and up to date. However, although revalidation is the responsibility of each and every nurse and midwife, employers are encouraged to support them for this system to properly work. Personal training budgets would be a positive signal to nursing staff that they will receive this support, and that their continuing development at work is a priority for all providers of health care. Getting revalidation right is not only good news for nurses, it is good news for patients too.”

While I understand that this may have seemed like a good idea at the time, I don’t believe that a budget is necessary to enable any nurse to collect the necessary evidence to be able to revalidate. The requirements state that every nurse should have evidence of 35 hours of continuing professional development (CPD), 20 hours of which should be participatory. Now, please correct me if I am wrong, but that only equates to 6.66 hours per year of participatory CPD. The big issue here is getting time during the working week to attend at least one study day a year for the 3-year period, as the rest of the CPD can be completed by reading journals, completing e-learning modules and so on. I find it hard to believe that any NHS manager would not support one of their nurses attending at least one relevant study day per year.

Do you know of any manager that has refused you attending at least one study day per year? I know I value my nurses being up to date in their speciality, and although we are a small team, each one of them gets the opportunity to attend up to five relevant study days each year. I don’t believe a training budget will resolve the difficulty of getting nurses away from wards for training, other than if it is to backfill with an agency nurse. We rely on agency nurses too much already, which is costing the NHS millions of pounds every year. Would it be so difficult to attend a relevant study day in your own time once a year if it meant you could continue to keep up to date and earn a living? Please let me know what you think. ■

Francis R (2013) *Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry*. Available at: <http://bit.ly/1idZ55P> (accessed 04.07.16)