The Hybrid Worker project was managed by Surrey Skills Academy under the umbrella of Surrey County Council. The Training and Development team were solely responsible for managing this project.

The Surrey Skills Academy provides a service for Adult Social Care, acting as a ‘single point of information’ for access to a wide range of training and learning opportunities including courses, information and signposting to partner and other organisations.

What we wanted to achieve

The aim of the Hybrid Worker project in North West Surrey was to provide more comprehensive support to individuals in receipt of both health and social care services and to promote workforce integration.

We aimed to structure the project in a way that would allow it to be easily adapted and transferred throughout the country.

We looked to create 17 skilled and confident “hybrid” workers who could meet an individuals’ social care needs, perform healthcare tasks, carry out basic clinical observations and provide reablement.

The hybrid workers would be part of an integrated team (SCC and NHS). The programme would provide them with an induction, training, supervision and assessment of competencies.

Most participants came from Surrey’s reablement team. This team were looking to up skill their workers to enable them to take on more of the basic clinical and occupational therapy tasks undertaken by both District Nurses and Occupational Therapists. This would benefit service users and would eventually lead towards more integrated working across health and social care. Thus creating a more streamlined service with less duplication of functions.

There is a general recognition that a better interface between health and social care would both save costs, as it reduces inefficiencies, and give clients a better service. To achieve this we aimed to address the following problems and issues;

- inconsistent care pathways for individuals in need of care and support
- disjointed care in the community (a number of professionals visiting the same individual in the case of reablement assistants)
- high possibility of care breakdown
- duplication of assessments and support plans
- lack of integrated support and multi-disciplinary working
- lack of emphasis on developing self-care skills for individuals
- poor workforce image with social care.
What we did

We worked with North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to identify a care organisation who would like to take part in our pilot. We set out to recruit a minimum of two care workers from a care home up to a maximum of four.

The participants were drawn from reablement teams across Surrey (15 participants) and one private nursing home (two participants). Overall 17 participants attended the training.

We devised and delivered clinical and Trusted Assessor training for the 17 participants. In addition to this, we provided additional training to cover governance processes and pathways training, cross-sector culture workshops to improve multidisciplinary working.

Clinical skills covered by the course included:

- wound care, urine testing, blood glucose monitoring, stoma care, catheter care, temperature, pulse, blood pressure, respiration, height, and weight.

Trusted Assessor Training included:

- Assessment and Intervention Task Analysis Observation skills
- Safety & Risk - Trusted Assessor Model
- Raising beds and chairs, principles and measuring
- beds and chairs equipment
- rails for stairs, external rails, principles and practical
- practical demonstrations for; toilet equipment and grab rails and how to measure for them
- toileting case studies
- bathing, principles and equipment
- equipment demonstration.

In addition to this, we provided additional training to cover governance processes and pathways training, cross-sector culture workshops to improve multidisciplinary working.

We then assessed the competencies that the participants would be using going forward in their new roles.

What we achieved

There was 100% attendance amongst those that participated on the training.

- two new training courses were successfully delivered
- 16 participants passed their competency based clinical skills training (assimilation only) with the expectation that there will be further assessment in a real work environment.
- 14 participants achieved their trusted assessor training which equates to three University credits.

We delivered the following:

The Trusted Assessor training went well and all managers felt that they could implement the new skills of the staff that took part in the near future. This would result in a reduced use of Occupational Therapists attached to the reablement teams. As a consequence of the training, the participants will be able to measure and order new pieces of equipment.

There was a shared vision from the managers that they wanted to enhance the job roles for their staff. SCC’s reablement services are in the process of working out how best to utilise their employee’s new skills.

What we learnt

We found that all of the participants were enthusiastic and committed to the programme. The managers were keen to nurture the skills that the participants learnt, particularly the...
clinical skills so that these could be used in the future.

The managers of the reablement assistants were of the opinion that the learned skills should not be lost. They were prepared to invest in their staff to do refresher courses in the future as there was no doubt that these enhanced roles would be required.

The reablement course was a success for the reablement assistants as the learners will be able to implement what they have learnt after finishing the course. However, the care home felt that this was not an applicable course for the two care assistants.

Although the care assistants were not ready to undertake enhanced skills at the moment, the management would continue to work with both of them to ensure that they had the necessary background knowledge, and skill competencies, to undertake an enhanced role in the future.

We felt that the clinical skills taught would benefit from being integrated into the learner’s job roles; this was true in both the private and SCC settings. If the project were to be run again, a new job role would ideally need to be established first, with training being run in line with the job description. This would enable the course to be scalable and transferable. Further assessments, particularly on clinical skills, will be required in order that the learning can be fully utilised. It is hoped that the project will enable similar courses to be rolled out and appropriate job roles and career pathways to be developed.

There were some key learning points from the project and we are confident that any problems we encountered could be rectified in future models.

For more information please visit
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The Care Certificate was introduced to ensure there is a consistent standard for the induction training of new health and social care workers.

Skills for Care has produced guidance to keep employers informed of new ways of working and different approaches to the development of the workforce to meet changing needs.

Skills for Care recommends

Skills for Care has provided various opportunities to help develop workers and keep them informed on new ways of working across health and care services.