



## Improving the Skills of NHS Staff

Fuse Learning has helped an NHS Primary Care Trust (PCT) to improve the skills base of its lower to middle grade staff as part of a programme of personal development. The programme, which was developed with the PCT, focused on key skills needed by administrative staff based on their training needs analysis.

Our experience shows that NHS training has generally tended to focus more on staff at bands 5 and above, even though an estimated half of staff are in bands 1-4. There is, therefore, an opportunity to improve efficiency by putting more emphasis on improving the skills of this sector of the workforce, throughout the Health Service. This was the basis of our proposal to work with the PCT.

The Training and Organisational Development Manager of the PCT explained: “This training programme formed part of our response to a training needs analysis (TNA), which showed there were skills gaps across the organisation including bands 1-4. This meant that we were not getting the best out of our people. As a result of the TNA, and an analysis of individual staff Personal Development Plans, we embarked on a programme to address the needs identified”.

“We worked closely with Fuse Learning to develop the programme, which was aimed specifically at the needs of our staff at band 4 and below. Subjects which were identified included communications skills, customer care skills, team working and prioritising work. We promoted the elements of the programme through flyers, emails and through face-to-face communication between line managers and their staff, with as many people as possible being encouraged to attend.

“The programme has been very successful, so much so that we will be repeating it, with some minor variations, over the coming months to ensure that new staff, and those who missed out before, are able to benefit.”

Fuse Learning Client Services Director, Michael Packman, explained: “We recognise that NHS bodies, in both the primary and secondary sectors, are faced with a dilemma. On the one hand it is more important than ever to have a well-trained workforce at all levels. On the other hand, learning and development funding is suffering, as cuts are being made in order to protect essential services.

“However, investing in learning and development helps to ensure that administrative and support staff are skilled, motivated and able to work productively. Hence, there is a hidden cost in trying to make savings in this area.

“We are fully aware of the financial constraints affecting the public and private sectors alike, but our cost-effective, tailored programmes ensure that organisations reap the maximum return on investment.”

