

## **Response to “Our NHS: A Learning and Development Framework for Involving People in Healthcare” (NHS Education for Scotland)**

### **1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Scottish Health Council was established in April 2005 to promote improvements in the quality and extent of Patient Focus and Public Involvement in the NHS in Scotland. It supports and monitors work carried out by NHS Boards to involve patients and the public in the planning and development of NHS services and in decisions that affect the operation of those services.
- 1.2 The Scottish Health Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. Moreover, we particularly welcome the Framework which will, not only support the development of the NHS in Scotland workforce to meet the Patient Focus and Public Involvement agenda, but hopefully it will also significantly raise the profile and importance of public engagement and involvement in healthcare. We also welcome the overall aim of the Framework which will introduce a Patient Focus and Public Involvement responsibility into all posts in the NHS.
- 1.3 The Framework has been shared with Scottish Health Council staff and our National Council. This response has been compiled using the feedback and views received.

### **2 GENERAL COMMENTS**

- 2.1 (a) The Scottish Health Council would welcome further discussion with NHS Education for Scotland as the various elements of training to support this Framework are implemented whether it is in the commissioning, identification or delivery of training. In particular, we would welcome direct input to some of the training aspects which are specific to the role and remit of the Scottish Health Council, for example involving people, engagement in service changes, methods of engagement, National Standards for Community Engagement, etc.

(b) This section mentions that the Framework will be of interest to providers of education and training in relevant areas. The Scottish Health Council would like to see a much stronger emphasis of this within the Framework. There is an opportunity to strengthen the connections between providers of education and deliverers of care. It appears that there is a need to embed the principles inherent in the 4 key elements in initial preparation of registered and non registered NHS staff to enable skills and knowledge to be built upon in future personal development training.

Similarly, whilst the Framework is intended as a 'tool' with NHS undertaking much of the required training and education, it is not clear how NHS Education for Scotland and/or the NHS will engage with learning and development providers especially private training providers.

- 2.2 Although the various acronyms used within the Framework are fully documented in a glossary, to aid readability it is recommended that full terms be used especially in respect of, for example, "HEIs, LGBT, PDR, PDP and IOM". Also, the use of the term "seldom heard" is recommended as opposed to "hard to reach" groups of the community.
- 2.3 There is ongoing debate around whether to use the term "patients" or "service users". Regardless of the outcome, there is a need for some consistency in relation to this since the document alternates between the two.
- 2.4 We are aware that NHS Education Scotland has engaged with Boards to look at vocational qualifications, and this element of broadening the skills base within the NHS has not been emphasised in the framework.

### **3 SPECIFIC COMMENTS**

The following comments and suggestions relate to specific sections of the Framework.

#### **3.1 Focusing on Patients (paragraph 2.1)**

This section lists the groups of staff which the Framework is designed to support. With regards to executive staff (final bullet point), it would be helpful to include in the role description that executive staff are also responsible for the governance of Patient Focus and Public Involvement within NHS Boards.

#### **3.2 Involving People (paragraph 2.2)**

(a) This section describes the ways in which people may be engaged in designing and developing health services. It would be useful to include the important role that Public Partnership Forums have in terms of supporting the involvement agenda.

(b) Included in this section is reference to the Scottish Health Council. Given our significant role in terms of the Patient Focus and Public Involvement agenda it is recommended that there is a specific paragraph dedicated to the role and remit of the Scottish Health Council. In particular, this should mention our assessment of Patient Focus and Public Involvement and the support we can provide to the NHS in Scotland in its delivery.

### **3.3 Model of Education Provision (paragraph 3.1)**

(a) Outlined in section 3.1 is the structure of education provision. It includes the policy drivers from the Scottish Government Health Directorates which influence staff learning in relation to involving people in healthcare. The Scottish Health Council welcomes the recognition that is given to the valuable role which the voluntary sector provides (given its experience and background) in relation to the provision of learning and development. Similarly, there would be merit in incorporating reference to the role that patients and carers can offer in supporting learning from a patient experience perspective.

(b) There is a need to look at how the content of this Framework could apply to the voluntary sector, Public Partnership Forum members, etc in order to introduce a quality assurance aspect in respect of the delivery of training. The Scottish Health Council has conducted some work in this area and would be keen to discuss public involvement training for some parts of the voluntary sector with NHS Education for Scotland. This would be in the context of making sure it was consistent with that being delivered to NHS staff.

### **3.4 Levels of Competence (paragraph 4.3)**

This section references the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) as a way of making sense of the numerous and varied Scottish academic and vocational qualifications. It also highlights that the learning examples and the Learning and Development Framework for Involving People in Healthcare can be mapped to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework at different levels.

Whilst this is to be welcomed, particularly in an attempt to ensure that similar training frameworks are co-ordinated and moreover unnecessary duplication is avoided, the Scottish Health Council recommends that the relationship between the Development Framework for Involving People in Healthcare and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework is strengthened. This should be with clear links which show actual credit levels which would go some way to ensuring that the Development Framework for Involving People in Healthcare linked with all mainstream qualifications in Scotland and as part of a learning pathway.

### 3.5 **Core skills for involving people (paragraph 4.4)**

The table within this section which outlines the core skills for involving people set against examples of staff development is somewhat difficult to read when displayed in vertical columns. Its accessibility could be improved through a different format and layout.

### 3.6 **Mapping to Knowledge and Skills Framework (appendix 1)**

Appendix 1 maps out the involving people in healthcare competencies in association with the Knowledge and Skills Framework. Whilst these competencies seem reasonable in relation to the core dimensions and indicators, the Scottish Health Council recommends (i) amendment to the wording of some of the evidence required and (ii) additional examples of evidence in some of the core dimensions. These are detailed below.

#### **Core Dimension 4: Service Improvement**

##### Level 1

Include an additional example which reads: "Awareness of the role and responsibility of the Scottish Health Council". This would apply equally to each of some of the other 5 dimensions and in varying stages to each of the levels.

##### Level 2

(a) Amend second example to read: "Implements policy by involving patients and public, Scottish Health Council at an early stage whenever changes are being considered (instead of introduced) or services developed."

(b) Amend third example to read "Involves service users as well as team in developing options for changes to be made."

##### Level 3

(a) Include an additional example to read: "Produces public consultation/engagement plan with the public and in conjunction with Scottish Health Council involvement".

(b) Amend the example associated with indicator (f) to read: "Makes recommendations and suggestions for change of service based on evaluation and public involvement".

(c) Page 26 include as an example "Provides feedback to the public".

#### Level 4

(a) Include an additional example to read: “Contributes to the annual Patient Focus and Public Involvement assessment in conjunction with the Scottish Health Council”.

(b) Include an additional example to read: “Involves patients, the public and carers in the annual Patient Focus and Public Involvement assessment”

In addition to the above, it is recommended that there are examples, within most of the 6 core dimensions, relating to awareness of the role of the Scottish Health Council. This should range from a basic awareness of the organisation and its responsibilities through to an understanding of its role particularly in relation to Patient Focus and Public Involvement assessment and involving the public in service changes. A more developed competency should be included where staff can evidence a working relationship as well as taking a pro active approach to working with the Scottish Health Council. We would be keen to work further with NHS Education for Scotland on the development of this.

### **3.7 Acknowledgements (appendix 4)**

It would have been helpful if the full membership of NHS Education’s Training and Advisory Group who had contributed to the development of the Framework had been listed. This would have highlighted the lay input to its development.

## **4 CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

4.1 With regard to the specific questions posed by NHS Education for Scotland as part of the consultation on the Framework, the Scottish Health Council is of the view that it will satisfy all purposes outlined, for example, ranging from informing personal development plans through to supporting a needs analysis and commissioning education and training.

It would be useful if a user friendly précis to accompany the Framework could be developed for staff giving specific guidance about how it links to existing Knowledge and Skills frameworks being used across the NHS in Scotland.

4.2 The Scottish Health Council feels that the working title of the document “Our NHS: a Learning and Development Framework for Involving People in Healthcare” reflects the purpose of the Framework and its role in developing staff awareness of Patient Focus and Public Involvement.

**RICHARD NORRIS**

**Director**

14 August 2009