

CLIC Clinical Nursing Skills Programme Evaluation

Commissioned by the
Cumbria Learning and
Improvement Collaborative (CLIC)

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HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
EVALUATIONS (HASCE)



Executive Summary

The Health and Social Care Evaluations team (HASCE), based in the University of Cumbria, was commissioned to evaluate the CLIC Clinical Nursing Skills Programme and its impact on nursing practice. The evaluation team was involved for the duration of the Programme length, ensuring that the impact of this innovative approach to CPD could be captured in a rigorous and robust way. In particular, the evaluation aimed to assess:

- The impact of the Programme on day-to-day practice;
- The extent to which the Programme helped to embed continuous improvement in and across the workplace;
- Whether the Programme was more effective for particular demographics, such as role, age, or locality;
- The distinctiveness of the collaborative approach to training within the Clinical Skills Programme.

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, based around four stages of data collection and analysis:

- A baseline quantitative survey at the start of the evaluation project;
- Two tranches of qualitative data collection and analysis, comprised of:
 - one focus group of clinical educators on the Programme;
 - five semi-structured interviews with Programme participants;
- A second quantitative survey at the end of the evaluation project, drawing together main findings of the three previous stages and testing for representativeness.

The main strength of this evaluation design is that it allows for a broad overview, complemented by in-depth and detailed first-hand accounts of individual experiences and perspectives from practitioners involved in both delivering and learning. As with any evaluation of this size, there are inevitable limitations to the chosen methods and data available. For example, the evaluation report was finalised before all training had concluded; however, participation rates in both the Programme and evaluation surveys provide a more than representative account of its value.

The Clinical Skills Programme was created to meet key challenges facing nursing across Cumbria, including:

- The need to provide consistently high quality care within a challenging economic context;
- The need to embed a culture of continuous improvement within the health and social care section across Cumbria;
- Limited collaboration between health and social care organisations, sometimes resulting in a lack of clarity of roles across boundaries and inefficient use of nursing resources, duplication of commissioning and an inequity of access to funding for training;
- From April 2016, the requirement for nurses to revalidate to maintain their registration necessitated a demonstration of 35 hours of CPD undertaken.

Overall the evaluation study found that the CLIC Clinical Skills Programme has been a great success, achieving its identified aims and generating ideas for further developing and improving this. The findings demonstrate the success of the Clinical Skills Programme in impacting on day-to-day practice, and bringing or maintaining skills as up-to-date.

- The results show a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the CLIC Programme with regards to continuous improvement of skills and practice; the main benefit was reported as ensuring skills and knowledge are current and up-to-date.
- The analysis suggests that involvement in the CLIC Clinical Skills Programme has encouraged both the participants' educational development, and their motivation to make positive changes to professional practice. Having access to current knowledge was repeatedly noted as a key strength of the Programme.
- The distinctiveness of the Programme was apparent, and was attributed to the enthusiasm and passion that had emerged from the skills training and its collaborative practice. The contribution of the Programme structure to reducing professional isolation and enabling work across professional boundaries was a key driver to facilitating improvements in day-to-day care practices.
- Collaborative learning was a key aspect of the Programme design and the evaluation generally showed clear positive outcomes from using this approach. At

a strategic level, however, some Trainers questioned the commitment from senior clinicians and the Programme steering group.

The report makes five recommendations based on its findings:

1. The evaluative study has identified the support of the follow-up reflective sessions as excellent, and a first-rate way of encouraging knowledge and skills gained into practice. It is recommended that this rapport is strengthened and continues.
2. A more differentiated approach is considered for future Programmes as some areas may need more/less training/encouragement. For example, nursing professionals working in difficult geographical areas or un-social shift patterns may need extra support; whilst conversely, those in more established settings, with a well-developed in-house Programme may require less.
3. Future provision to consider the diverse career stages of the Participants, modifying the training into 'basic' and 'more advanced' sessions. A further noteworthy vision which emerged from the data was the prospect of disseminating what was seen as an excellent Programme more widely to include other professional colleagues. This may well occur naturally if the sessions were audience-specific categorised.
4. Irregularity in care provision to be addressed and minimised through the uniformity of care offered by the CLIC Clinical Skills Programme.
5. Mapping patient feedback to specific clinical skills is an area for a future evaluation to attend to.