

Case Study – Cardiology department job descriptions and training plans

Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospital, Slough

Cardiology services at Heatherwood and Wexham Park consist of a cardiology department, coronary care unit, cardiac rehabilitation, rapid access chest pain service and general cardiology outpatients. In addition, at the beginning of September, a Cardiac Angiography Suite that provides inpatient and outpatient angiography was opened. The CCU at Heatherwood and Wexham Park is an eight-bedded acute unit and admits patients with various coronary heart diseases. Day cases for transoesophageal echo and DC cardioversion are also admitted at Heatherwood and Wexham Park. Cardiology outpatients are seen across the four sites that make up the Trust.

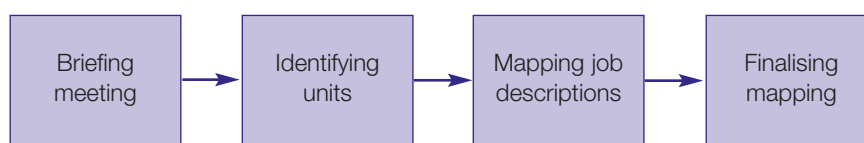
The situation

Nurses on the unit carry out a range of clinical skills including invasive and non-invasive monitoring and assisting with temporary pacing. The cardiac angiography suite that initially opened to provide diagnostic outpatient angiography has now expanded to provide inpatient service as well. This area is staffed by trained and untrained nurses, technicians and a radiographer, supported by administrative staff.

The aims

- to provide structured development for various staff groups in the CCU by mapping their job descriptions to the CHD competence framework and using the framework to provide support and guidance to the staff members including HCA and F grade staff.
- to review the job descriptions in preparation for Agenda for Change.
- For the pilot, to get experience in mapping job descriptions and to identify gaps and overlaps in the job functions ensuring job descriptions meet the needs of the service and the patients.

The action



At the first meeting with Rekha Wadhvani, the *Skills for Health* technical consultant, the process was discussed and draft job descriptions of two staff members at different grades were mapped. Rekha then mapped the

job description of another staff member and reviewed the job description for a nurse consultant. It was decided to include competences from phase 1 and phase 2 of the CHD framework development projects to give a more complete mapping of the job descriptions.

At the next meeting the mappings with the job descriptions were reviewed together and gaps and overlaps were identified and clarified.

Finally the mapping and the job descriptions were revised.

The results

The three job descriptions were mapped on one template, which gave an overarching view of the jobs and made it easier to identify the gaps and overlaps in the functions. The mapping highlighted the fact that there was a need to assess the existing skills and knowledge base before and during interview to ensure the incumbents are not repeating units in which they are already competent. This will also indicate the areas in which they need to develop – they don't know what they don't know! – e.g. teaching skills and management as well as clinical activities.

Also issues with the framework were identified and feedback was provided to the technical consultant.

The future

It is planned to use the CHD competence framework in several ways in the future:

- a package of support materials has begun to be developed for the new HCA which includes units from the framework as identified by the mapping
- a similar package for F grade staff is being developed which will be more individualised to the person
- the framework will be used for creating new job roles/profiles within the cardiology service
- the framework will also be used to review existing job roles/profiles to ensure they are reflective of the job requirements.

Contact details

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