

GUIDANCE NOTE ON WORKFORCE PLANNING FOR CARE PROVIDERS

A SIX STEP PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

This short guidance note has been produced by the Department of Health – South West to provide a focussed approach to workforce planning to support care providers implement personalised services, responding to the fact that in the future “service users and/or their advocates, will decide how they are supported, where they are supported, and who supports them.”¹ It provides a simple step by step process which supports the guidance note published by Skills for Care “Taking Steps: a detailed guide to workforce planning for providers of adult social care” (2010).

The English Community Care Association’s report “Personalising Care: A route map to delivery for care providers” (2010) highlights that personalisation will have a significant impact on providers, that “is not a fleeting initiative”, that it will “bring about a changed marketplace and cultural changes”. It states that personalisation “will have practical implications on care businesses, affecting finance administration, human resources, training and marketing strategies”. Critically the report notes that personalisation “presents opportunities for care providers, ensuring better outcomes for service users and increased opportunities to engage staff, attract new business and work more flexibly”.

The power to choose services will shift to the service user, and this will create a changed social care marketplace. This will bring uncertainty and opportunities. It is in this context that the need for effective workforce planning becomes critical to ensure that your business has a sufficiently flexible workforce to meet the changed market conditions and business direction quickly.

It is predicted that the new marketplace will be more diverse, and offer specialised ranges of services. It is also possible that there may be more service users supported by Personal Assistants (PA’s) or moving to supported living settings. At the same time, the demographic profiles indicate that there will be a gradual but prolonged increase in the number of people with very complex conditions and high levels of dependency.

The National Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy recognises the need for local authorities to work in partnership with care providers to address workforce issues. “It is vital that local workforce development strategies are co-produced, co-developed, co-provided and co-evaluated with private and voluntary sector partners, as well as users and carers, with a focus on raising skill levels and providing career development opportunities”.²

¹ English Community Care Association’s report “Personalising Care: A route map to delivery for care providers” (2010) pg 19

² Local Authority Circular 2008, para 36, page 8, available at http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_082139.pdf

STEPS TO PRODUCE A WORKFORCE PLAN

Producing a Workforce Plan requires Local Authority Commissioners to share information with you to enable you to use the 6 step workforce planning approach set out below. Under each Step there are two columns. The first column sets out the purpose of the action and what information you require. The second column sets out what you need to do.

STEP ONE – DEFINE THE PLAN	
<p>This step sets out what you are seeking to address by producing a Workforce Plan. You may need to revisit this after you have assessed the impact of Step Two and Three.</p>	<p>Be clear on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of Plan • Staff groups covered • Timescale • Others involved
STEP TWO – ASSESS IMPACT OF SERVICE CHANGE	
<p>This is critical step, which involves a strategic review of your business in the context of the changes. The impact of Personal Budgets on service user choice, both in making big decisions about what care they need to purchase, who to provide it, and for day to day decisions, will affect what you provide. Increased use of assistive technology, and wider availability of advice to help people choose will impact on your business.</p> <p>Consider how you could expand what you offer, eg, by offering services to a different client group; or by offering new services. These could include community out-reach, training, management and employer support services to those employing their own PA, respite and intermediate care services, reablement services, assistive technology support direct to individuals or to other care providers, etc. You may decide to concentrate on providing a smaller range of services or activities or focus on specialist services for people with particular conditions, eg, dementia services, end of life care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify current service costs and performance measures. • Identify the drivers for change – external and internal • Identify the barriers to change – external and internal • Do a review of your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats • Think about future scenarios for your business, and risks/benefits of each. Identify potential future costs. • Consider the cultural shift you want, and identify the barriers to achieving this. • Consider ways to engage staff in thinking about the future – do they have any ideas on how to improve efficiency and services, how to free up time to do activities with clients? <p>Having reviewed your strategic service priorities, you may need to review your business plan. Alternatively, you may simply decide to find ways to deliver your services that are more efficient.</p>

In determining your future business focus, the information for Step 3 will prove very important. You may also want to consider undertaking some market research of consumer preferences in the catchment areas for your operation.

**STEP THREE – ASSESS DEMAND FOR YOUR WORKFORCE
(IE, NUMBERS AND SKILLS TO MEET SERVICE USER NEEDS)**

This step requires good information from your Local Authority commissioner who is responsible for ensuring availability of services to meet demand. How is demand projected to change, and how will different ways of meeting that demand impact on what people may want to purchase from your business?

Information you need from your Local Authority will include:

- Projected increases in demand for the localities that you operate within
- Overall summary of current supply
- Anticipated gaps in services, and expected demand for these
- Projected change in proportion of spend on institutional care
- Proportion of long term care home placements made straight from hospital, and expected reduction through improved reablement provision.
- Number of people registered with GP's as having dementia and as a % of the expected local 65+ population with dementia
- Demographic growth/changes in the locality over a 10-15 year time horizon
- Projections of the number of people receiving a Personal Budget over the next 3 years
- In line with the point above, regular information on trends in how people are choosing to spend their budget.
- Are there any support arrangements for investment in assistive technology?

This type of information is likely to become known as a "Market Position Statement".

This information will take time to develop. Ask your Local Authority commissioner when this information may be available.

Projections on Personal Budget roll out are particularly important in terms of giving you an idea on how quickly and by how much demand is likely to change, and therefore how agile your business needs to be in order to respond. Regular information on trends in spending patterns is important to enable you to respond at the right time. Developing your services in line with the needs and expectations of your actual and potential customers is essential so that you can gradually change and develop your portfolio of services, and adjust your workforce.

Key issues to consider:

- What does this information suggest for demand for your services?
- What opportunities does it present?
- What risks does it present?
- Do you want to grow your business, stay the same, or diversify into different types of services?
- Are there new services that you could be providing? And what would they cost? What is your break-even point to justify investing in new services?
- Will assistive technology enable efficiencies in staff numbers and operating methods?
- What issues would this present for your workforce in terms of job roles, skills, numbers required, working patterns, cultural shift, level of supervision, travel etc?

You will now need to revisit Step 2.

STEP 4 – ASSESS WORKFORCE SUPPLY

This step requires you to understand the make-up of the workforce that you employ, and to consider the future supply of people, both internally and in the external labour market.

Key information you need to collect about your **internal** workforce is:

- Level of turnover by staff role and/or team
- Level of turnover in first 6 months, first 12 months
- Level of sickness absence by staff role and/or team
- Promotion patterns
- Age profile and retirement profile
- Skill levels by staff role
- Recruitment profile – number of applicants for jobs, types of people applying, appointment success rate per advert.
- Understand the current culture of your workforce, and consider how this may need to change.

If you have completed the individual employee data fields on the National Minimum Data Set, you will be able to produce graphs for some of the numerical based information set out above.

Key information you need to know about the **external** workforce is:

- Current unemployment rate by age
- Types of skills of college leavers
- Likely competition for staff from other businesses.
- National Minimum Data Set report for my locality to enable benchmarking of my key workforce performance indicators with those of other providers.

Internal workforce:

- What problems have you identified?
- What may be the root cause of those problems? (keep asking yourself “why?” until you are satisfied with the answer).
- If you are planning to grow or diversify, what is your prediction for increased staff numbers?
- Will changes to operating methods enable you to change staff numbers?
- What is the potential to change the skill mix to enable you to meet outcomes from Step 3? What would be the cost of this?
- What types of hours flexibility do you ideally need? Do you have a strong business case to support this change?
- Will retention be an issue once the private sector emerges from recession?
- What is the prevailing culture of your organisation, and how would you like it to shift?

External workforce

- How difficult is it to recruit staff from the local labour market?
- How long do new employees stay with you?
- What is your reputation as an employer?
- What may you need to do to attract people from different routes – eg, direct from college, offer apprentice opportunities?
- What scope is there to offer new types of contract to develop future workforce flexibility?
- Are you making sufficient use of flexible contracts, such as annual hours, part-time hours etc?
- What scope is there to access people with specialist skills – eg, aromatherapy, massage etc on an “as required basis”?

STEP 5 – DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

Consider all the information you have collected:

- What does it mean for meeting your business plan?
- Do you need to change your business

- What are the workforce priorities that you need to address?
- What actions would support you achieve those priorities? (eg, training and development, supervision practice,

<p>plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over what timescale do you want to achieve the changes? • What would happen if you did not do anything? <p>Identify what support may be available to help you, from the Local Authority, from your Provider representative body, or from Skills for Care. Check out potential funding routes to support training development.</p> <p>A template for producing an Action Plan is contained at Appendix 1. However, there are many other ways that you could present an Action Plan. The key issues to be addressed and your priorities for action should be included within your Business Plan.</p>	<p>governance, working patterns, etc...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the expected resistance or acceptance from staff? • Consider range of methods to engage staff in the issues to be addressed and jointly find solutions before finalising your workforce plan. • For each priority, consider the impact of not making progress on your financial sustainability and service quality. • Have you considered the risks identified from each scenario at Step 2? <p>Identify how you will measure success in achieving your actions, eg, reduced turnover, reduced sickness, ability to fill vacancies quickly, improved client satisfaction ratings, tangible evidence of improved quality outcomes for clients, reduced pay bill cost, growth in service diversity that is enabling your business plan objectives to be realised.</p>
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STEP 6 – IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

<p>Once you start implementing the plan, you need to review your progress. In particular, are you achieving the success criteria that you set out? Has anything happened that you did not intend – good or bad?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you on track? • Have any new priorities emerged due to changes in predicted demand for your services or the supply of staff? • Do you need to achieve improved efficiencies? • Are the skill and behavioural changes planned being implemented? If not, what are the barriers? Is it a case of “won’t” or “can’t”? <p>Do you need to change the Action Plan or take some management action?</p>
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APPENDIX 1

EXAMPLE TEMPLATE FOR CREATING A WORKFORCE ACTION PLAN

* Risk Rating =
 0 – no risk
 1 – compromise SU care
 2 – compromise SU care & damage of reputation of service
 3 – risk to financial viability of the service

Ref	Action	Responsibility	Outcomes	End Date	* Risk of not doing
1.	Explore reasons for high turnover in some units and groups – eg, new staff, Team Leaders. Use Focus Groups to seek current staff views. Develop action plan.		Reduction in turnover, may lead to reduction in sickness		2/3
2.	Identify number of staff who require further healthcare training and cost, and partners for delivery/quality assurance.		Sufficient staff with health care skills to meet projected demand.		2/3
3.	Ensure consistent approach to quality assurance, and promotion of best practice across the services.		Clear methodology used to check QA		2/3