A SINGLE SOLUTION TO KEY NURSING CHALLENGES

Nursing Times Learning is helping senior nurse managers at University Hospitals of North Midlands Trust to address three of their most pressing challenges.

Nursing challenges

The new system of nurse revalidation introduced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council has given primary responsibility for policing nurses’ compliance to employers. It requires line managers to confirm nurses and midwives have fulfilled all their revalidation responsibilities before renewing their NMC registration every three years. This presents practical challenges for managers at all levels – team leaders need to know their staff will be ready to revalidate, while directors want to be sure the organisation isn’t at risk of losing nurses who fail to revalidate and are removed from the register.

The profession also faces a recruitment crisis; caps on the number of student nurses universities were allowed to train in recent years have resulted in an inevitable shortage of nurses and midwives. This means healthcare providers need to ensure they are an employer of choice that values its nurses and midwives and supports their professional development.

But the issue keeping many nurse leaders awake at night is patient safety. While they know their nursing staff have gained nursing or midwifery qualifications, they don’t have a true picture of individuals’ current skills and knowledge.

The Nursing Times Learning solution

University Hospitals of North Midlands Trust (UHNMT) has taken a subscription to Nursing Times Learning for all its nurses and midwives to help it to meet these challenges. This integrated learning and revalidation package is designed to support nurses’ professional development and revalidation and enable employers to see exactly how their staff are progressing. It consists of:

- **Learning Passport:** a personalised online portfolio in which nurses and midwives can store evidence of their revalidation and professional development;
- **Nursing Times Learning units:** high-quality online learning on a growing range of fundamental aspects of practice, written by national nursing experts and presented in convenient bite-size chunks;
- **Nursing Times clinical archive:** over 5,000 double-blind peer reviewed articles on all aspects of nursing;
- **Manager Dashboard:** a user-friendly tool enabling managers to keep track of their revalidation progress and professional development, while directors can check on staff across the entire organisation;
- **Nursingtimes.net:** unlimited access to the Nursing Times website for news, opinion and more to keep staff updated on the events and policies that shape nursing and healthcare.
Trust priorities

Formed after the dissolution of Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust, UHNMT employs approximately 4,000 registered nurses and midwives and provides a range of general acute services for three-quarters of a million people in the North Midlands and three million across neighbouring counties and North Wales. Operating out of four sites across Staffordshire, the trust wanted to offer high-quality education and professional development to all its nurses and midwives. It turned to Nursing Times Learning to help it to achieve this.

The senior nursing team recognised that the trust needed to improve staff morale; the organisation was recovering from the trauma that engulfed the now disbanded Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust with the publication of the Francis Report in 2013. It also needed a learning and development tool to attract and recruit highly skilled nurses and midwives and enable existing staff to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

Partnership working

Nursing Times was identified a key partner in this process. Buying access to Nursing Times Learning for the trust’s nurses and midwives would ensure they all had access to high-quality online learning and an online portfolio system to support them as they prepared for revalidation. With revalidation and professional development evidence stored in the Nursing Times Learning system managers would also be able to see whether any staff needed additional support in order to revalidate.

The Nursing Times team helped the trust to create its organisational hierarchy within the system so that all managers could see information on their teams, while a dedicated client relationship manager helped to train nurses to use the system and cascade it to their colleagues. For most, a 20-minute session is enough to get them started.

Benefits

Nursing Times Learning has delivered a convenient and user-friendly learning and development portal for all UHNMT nurses and midwives. Staff can access the system anywhere they have internet access, and on desktop or laptop computers, tablets or smartphones. It has yielded a range of benefits:

- **Improved morale**: staff feel that they have been invested in, boosting organisational confidence;
- **Improved skills and knowledge**: the user-friendly online learning units present current evidence, with case scenarios to translate learning into practice;
- **Access to best-practice information**: the clinical archive contains a wealth of information to inform and inspire staff to continually improve their practice and offers source material for literature reviews, journal clubs and reflective accounts;
- **Revalidation support**: the Learning Passport is designed around NMC revalidation requirements, making the process as easy as possible for nurses and midwives to revalidate.

“We are confident we will get the most out of the Manager Dashboard as a large trust. It will give managers a good view of their clinical area and provide a barometer of the trust – it also works well with our appraisal system and is a great visual piece of equipment for us.”

– Liz Rix, Chief Nurse

To find out how Nursing Times Learning can help you to meet your key challenges, get in touch with our friendly and knowledgeable team to arrange a demo. Call us on 020 3033 2626 or email corporate.Enquiries@emap.com

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“‘It’s been a very positive experience with Nursing Times. If I have had queries or questions, the team have resolved it quickly. From an economical point of view it has been well worth the investment for our staff.”

– Kate Hackett, Senior Nurse for Education and Workforce Development