

AHPs Delegate

Allied Health Professions support workforce delegation, accountability, and clinical supervision project.

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England

Purpose

- To better understand the needs of non-registered staff, newly registered AHPs and AHP service leads in relation to safe and effective delegation.

Mixed methods approach (focus groups and surveys)

- 137 total participants:
 - ✓ 50 AHP support workers
 - ✓ 44 newly registered AHPs
 - ✓ 43 AHP service leads
- 10% target sample size achieved for two-thirds of the workforces.

“To establish the lived experiences of newly registered AHPs (first 2 years of registration), AHP support workers and AHP service managers for the safe and effective delegation of clinical tasks from newly registered AHPs to AHP support workers, undertaken at the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust and Bolton NHS Foundation Trust by 30th April 2023”.



Findings across both workforces

Clinical supervision

Variable for support staff, more consistent for newly registered.

Across professions for support staff.

Newly registered had no formal supervision responsibilities for support staff.

Competencies

Variable for support staff but common for newly registered.

Mostly locally developed and some good professional body examples for both.

Care Certificate and Preceptorship.

Local policies and processes

Many in place to ensure safety.

Support workers keen to highlight own responsibility.

Newly registered fearful of making mistakes.

Appropriate delegation

Varied experiences but mostly appropriate.

Support workers confident to voice when inappropriate.

Lack of understanding of support worker roles.

Findings for newly registered AHPs

Developing delegation skills and experience

Delegation not taught in HEIs

Placement and post-registration experiences

Not felt to be covered in trust preceptorship programme

Communication

Need for effective communication to be understood

Miscommunications

Working relationships

Personality and rapport

“My manager sat me down and talked me through how to delegate...I have been very well supported in terms of delegation”.

“As a student I found it really difficult to delegate tasks as I felt disrespectful. These people know their jobs better than me”.

“I don’t think (Preceptorship) has had an impact. It is a good programme, but (delegation) is not talked about properly”.

“I’ve asked someone to do something and then they’ve pulled me in and said, ‘I didn’t like how you spoke’...it was a bit of an awkward conversation”.



Service leads experiences/perceptions not always aligned

Conclusions

- 6 core needs to enable safe and effective delegation across these workforces.
- All newly registered staff feel uncertain and lack confidence in their delegation skills.
- Formal competencies for AHP support workers lack in the majority of areas.
- Lack of understanding of AHP support worker roles with variations in responsibilities which affect safe and effective delegation.
- Clinical supervision is taking place but varies in structure, frequency and duration.
- Newly registered AHPs under-estimate the value of their supervisory support to the AHP support workforce.

Clinical supervision	Competencies
Local processes and policies	Appropriate delegation

Developing delegation skills and experience	Communication
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“Small changes can make a huge difference”.