

Case Study 5: Community Pharmacist



Mary

Mary is a 42-year-old mother of three boys. She registered in 1984 and since then has had a varied career working in both primary and secondary care. At the time of writing her CPD entry Mary was employed as a part-time pharmacist by a supermarket chain.

Her CPD entry arose when the store manager decided to put one of the counter assistants through an NVQ dispenser course. The trainee was very nervous about this change in her role and, although she wanted to do it, it was obvious that she was going to need a lot of support. Mary had previously been an NVQ assessor and it was decided that she would be the best person to act as a mentor for the new trainee.

The NPA was running a course for trainees which explained NVQs. The trainee needed to go before starting her own NVQ but was very nervous. Mary decided to go along to the day course with the student to 'hold her hand' and to update herself about the NVQ process.

Mary prepared well for this training event and therefore she got the most from it. The student benefited from her being there and with Mary's help the student was able to complete the NVQ successfully.

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Record Sheets

reflection

Name of entry:

NPA introduction to NVQ

Date Identified:

3/11/2003

What do you want to learn to be able to do?

I need to know how to mentor somebody through an NVQ. Specifically I need to know how the NVQ works, which competences are required, what paperwork to use, how the NVQ will be assessed, who to go to if there are problems and what timescale we need to work to.

How have you identified this learning objective?

student contact

What methods did you use to identify this objective?

Choose...

Competencies
Feedback from colleagues
Personal Interest
Talking to colleagues/peers/peer review

Who is driving this?

Top down: NHS or other employer or contracting organisation
Laterally: colleagues/peers
Bottom up: users of your services/products
By you

What skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours will you need to develop?

Choose...

I'm looking for facts about the NVQ. I also need some guidance on how to mentor somebody through an NVQ.

To which areas of competence does this learning objective relate?

Choose...

A competent pharmacist, working to high professional and ethical standards, and providing an excellent role model for future pharmacists.
A pharmacist who maintains a clear patient focus at all times and makes all decisions with patients' needs paramount.
A pharmacist who has a broad perspective: keeps abreast of issues in pharmacy outside her own immediate sphere of interest.
A person who communicates clearly, confidently and assertively and who makes no assumptions about the knowledge or understanding of others.
A person who treats all others consistently and with respect; who has realistic expectations of others, and is viewed by others as approachable and open-minded.
A person who openly acknowledges the contribution of each member of the work team: engenders an attitude of goal-sharing and common purpose amongst staff.
A person who respects the roles and abilities of others in the team: uses their knowledge and skills by effective delegation and inclusion.
A person who manages time well, prioritising effectively, honouring commitments to others and making her time available to staff.
A person who treats the development of team members as a priority, giving support and advice to assist them in their development.
A person who empowers team members to take responsibility for their own learning, and who engages in discussion with the learner.
A person who sets aside time to plan training and who sets clear objectives with the learner's input.
A person who uses a wide range of events as coaching opportunities and takes account of the needs and learning style of the learner.
A person who encourages self appraisal and who regularly provides constructive and honest feedback.
A person who allows the trainee plenty of opportunity to demonstrate competence.
A person who is skilful at assessing evidence of competence from diverse sources.
A person who reviews progress regularly and positively.

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planning

Urgency: By when will you need to meet this learning objective?

1/12/2003

Importance: What will be the impact of your learning on you, users of your services, colleagues and organisations to whom you are contracted?

It's really important that we get another dispenser into the store. We only have one and if she is away the service really suffers. The learning will help me get the student through her NVQ. That will have a knock on effect of providing a better quicker service and will reduce stress levels. This will benefit my colleagues, the patients and the organisation.

Impact on you:



Impact on the users of your services/products:



Impact on colleagues:



Impact on organisation



What activities could you undertake to meet this objective?

| Description | Action Category | Advantages/Disadvantages | Selected |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Go on the npa course for nvq | Short courses | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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action

| Description | Date completed | Time taken | Add to CE record |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Go on the npa course for nvq | 01.12.03 | 8 hours | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

What have you learnt as a result?

This was a really good course which reminded me all about the NVQ. I was given the opportunity to ask all my questions. The most important things were about what to do if we feel we are getting behind and how the assessment procedures work. I'm keeping all my notes and handouts in my drawer at work for quick reference.

evaluation

Has your learning objective been met?

Fully

Partly

Not at all

Please describe an example of how you have applied what you have learnt

I mentored the student all the way through her NVQ which she has now passed! I was able to help in lots of ways especially in answering her questions about how to gain evidence. I looked at my notes regularly and was able to answer her questions.

Please describe any feedback you have had from those on whom your learning was to have an impact or those who have been able to observe your performance

The student said she wouldn't have done it without me. I'm not sure about that but I know that in the early stages I was able to get her started. The manager is going to train up another dispenser next year and I've been asked to mentor the next one as well.

Mark entry as completed

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Reflection

Mary thought about her own learning needs before going on the training event. By answering the first question “What do you want to learn to be able to do?” and the optional question on CPD online asking, “What knowledge, skills, attitudes or behaviours do you need to develop?” Mary was able to go to the course with a list of issues she needed addressing. By doing this she made sure she got the most from the course.

The second question asks, “How did you identify this learning objective?” Mary simply put ‘student contact’. This isn’t enough information to describe to the reviewer how this learning objective relates to her role and why she is learning this now. A more in-depth answer might have been:

“We have a student in our pharmacy who is going to undertake the NVQ dispenser course. She is very nervous and in order to help her through the NVQ I’ve been asked to be her mentor. If she successfully completes the NVQ we shall have another dispenser in the department and the workload can be shared.”

Mary has cited all the competences for a pre-reg tutor as being related to this learning objective. It is often the case that people attribute many competences to each objective. It’s almost as if they are trying to prove that they are undertaking learning which will develop all of the competences associated with their job. This is unnecessary. Mary should have chosen only the competences strongly associated with her learning objective. She needed to be realistic about the outcomes of her learning and which competences truly applied.

Planning

In the planning stage of her entry Mary has only put down one activity to meet her learning objective. Even then she has not considered the advantages or disadvantages of doing this day course. When planning you should consider as many realistic options as you can think of and then work out the advantages and disadvantages for undertaking each. If this is done carefully it’s often the case that you choose to do something that was more appropriate than your initial choice or some additional activities to supplement it.

Action

Mary went to the course and because she prepared well beforehand she was able to ensure all her points were covered. She was also able to describe concisely what she had learnt.

Evaluation

The evaluation for this cycle was straightforward. By undertaking the learning Mary was able to fulfill her role as mentor for the student and apply her learning directly to any issues arising. The feedback from the student was abundant!

Summary

This entry shows how preparing for a training event will increase your chances of success.

Remember

- **Write concisely but write enough to ensure the reviewer knows exactly what happened.**
- **Choose competences that relate strongly to the learning objective. Putting all the competences down is over-ambitious.**
- **Try to think of as many realistic ways of achieving your learning objective and then compare the merits of each.**

You may find alternative ways, which are more specific, easier for you to do, less time-consuming or costly, more effective or more appropriate in some way. Asking other people for their ideas can be enlightening!
