

# Sharing Good Practice

**As part of the Institute of Medical Illustrators' (IMI) scheme for continuing professional development, worksheets will be published at regular intervals in this Journal. These are designed to provide the members of IMI with a structured CPD activity that offers one way to earn credits. It is recognized that this worksheet requires some time spent undertaking the exercises. The answers to the questions, along with any notes and reflections you make or other publications you find, should be kept in your CPD portfolio.**

This worksheet requires the availability of an Internet connection only, and a list of sources of information including websites and articles of interest related to sharing good practice have been included. This sheet is very much a general collaborative reflection exercise that could be used to develop a research project, write a joint paper, design a presentation, or any other mutually advantageous task.

The team and multi-professional aspects of CPD are emphasized in the Department of Health document, CPD: Quality in the New NHS, published in 1999:

'The choice of CPD activity should take account of different learning preferences, such as peer group or individual learning. CPD plans should clearly identify where team or multi-professional learning offers the best solution, and take full advantage of opportunities for learning on the job.'<sup>1</sup>

'(CPD should be) focused on the development needs of clinical teams, across traditional professional and service boundaries.'<sup>2</sup>

Other authors also stress the value of reflection, and the need of support to do so successfully:

'...the differences between an experienced and a starting professional lie partly in the capacity to reflect and thus to learn from experience, that is to define follow-up actions. Other people's support is frequently necessary for this reflection to be successful. This support could come from colleagues (that is, peer students), managers, clients or external experts who give formative feedback.'<sup>3</sup>

An aspect of core skills and knowledge includes:

'Work(ing) effectively in teams, appreciating the roles of staff and other agencies involved in the care of patients'<sup>4</sup>

This activity takes an interdisciplinary approach to look at common skills as part of an exercise in sharing good practice. Although the exercise talks about two people it could be expanded into a team-based approach.

## TASK 1: WHAT DO YOU DO? (1 HOUR)

Ask a colleague in the hospital, preferably someone not working within the medical illustration department, to complete this task with you. This kind of shared reflection is a valuable exercise for both you and your colleague.

Find a quiet area where you will not be disturbed but can easily write and talk. Each take a sheet of paper and draw three columns. Label the middle column 'Common skills', and write the job title of each person in the outer columns (*Figure 1*).

Under the headings write a list of what your job involves, what you think the other person's job involves, and what you both do in common. Take time to think of as many things as possible. Give yourselves about 15 minutes then compare what you have each written.

- Are there things they have put on their list for your job that you do but hadn't thought about?
- Do you have more skills in common than you thought?
- Did you really know what they did, and did they really know what you did?

Clinical photographer	Common skills	Other health professional

Figure 1.

Hopefully you both had a good understanding of what each other's job entails. However, if there were key areas missing, how likely is that patients are not able to understand what you do?

Choose a common skill from the central column; each of you should write a short paragraph (maximum 50 words) explaining this to a patient. When both of you have done this, compare notes. [No cheating: keep your ideas to yourself until you are both ready to compare!]

- Have you both covered the same points?
- Do you both take the same approach?
- Are the differences due to the differing patients you see or something else?

In discussion, develop a joint paragraph that both of you agree. Repeat this for several other common skills, or for one of the things only you do and one of the things only they do.

Taking into account what you both do and how you interact with other staff or patients, agree which common skills you could both benefit from working on, for example, communicating with patients or maintaining patient privacy. Once you have chosen the common skill or skills to work on, you should agree a timetable or schedule for a follow-up discussion.

This task requires both of you to take some time during your regular work to look at how you do these skills in practice, through recording what you do and reflecting on it. A good way to do this is to use a notebook: on one side of the page write what happened, and on the other side your reflections about what happened.

Examples of reflective questions include:

- What is the consequence of this action?
- How will this affect people?
- Why are we doing this?
- Is this the best way to do it?
- Can we tell when someone we are dealing with is not at ease?
- Why did I feel good about this moment?
- What was it that worked well? Did I do something different?
- How did this benefit the patient or client?

There are a number of books that can help you with the area of reflection. Examples include 'Reflective Practice in Nursing' by Burns and Bulman<sup>5</sup> and 'Learning journals and critical incidents: Reflective practice for healthcare professionals' by Ghaye and Lillyman.<sup>6</sup>

When you meet again (this should preferably be on a regular basis), look at each other's notes. Do you do things the same way or handle things differently? Looking at each of your reflections, what did you find worked well and what caused problems? Is there something your colleague is doing that you could try in your practice, or from yours that they could try, or are you doing the same thing but using different descriptions or terminology?

**TASK 2. COLLABORATIVE WRITING (1 HOUR)**

**TASK 3. EVIDENCING YOUR PRACTICE – REFLECTION**

**TASK 4. EVIDENCING YOUR PRACTICE – FOLLOW-UP**

As you meet to share and discuss each other's reflections and thoughts, write about your mutual reflections. As a further follow-up, you could undertake research into an area of mutual concern and write a paper or make a presentation to the departments involved of what was learned and what could be further disseminated as good practice.

In order to explore different ways of working, and to learn more about each other's professional practice, it will be necessary to complete Task 3, meet and perform part of Task 4, then go back to Task 3 etc., repeating as many times as necessary.

## REFERENCES

1. Department of Health. *CPD: Quality in the new NHS*. London: HMSO, 1999. <http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/01/20/12/04012012.pdf> Accessed 6 June 2006.
2. *ibid.*
3. Koper R. Learning technologies in e-learning: an integrated domain model. In: Jochems W, Van Merriënboer J, Koper R, eds. *Integrated e-learning: Implications for pedagogy, technology and organization*. London: Routledge Falmer, 2004, p73.
4. Department of Health. *Working together – Learning together: A framework for lifelong learning for the NHS*. London: HMSO, 2001. <http://www.doh.gov.uk/lifelonglearning> Accessed 6 June 2006.
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