

NHSU
Learning Cultures
Research Project

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This session will cover:

- An overview of learning cultures research
- Indicators of a learning culture
- Discovery Interviews as an action learning approach to changing cultures of learning in the NHS
- Share knowledge about action learning in the NHS

NHSU Learning Cultures Research Project

Research conducted on behalf of the NHSU
between July 2002 and February 2003

Aims of Research

To inform the NHSU of steps to be taken to support the development of a culture within the NHS that encourages and enables effective learning to take place

Objectives of Research

To provide evidence about:

- Who guides learning in NHS
- Current culture/s of learning in NHS
- Variations between staff groups
- Effective models of engagement for NHSU
- Indicators of a learning culture
- Change initiatives

Research Methodology

- Literature Review
- Primary Research:
 - 66 semi-structured interviews with NHS staff with strategic responsibilities for learning
 - 4 Pinboard sessions with 46 NHS staff with frontline responsibilities
- Delphi Consultation
- Blue skies session with NHSU DIT

Key Findings 1: Who guides learning

- Individual motivation
- Management play key role
- Organisational factors
 - learning strategies, induction programmes, PDPs, appraisal
- Government level
 - policy statements promoting structures of learning

Key Findings 2: Current attitudes, behaviours and cultures of learning in NHS

- Limited empirical evidence
- Positive culture of learning
- Rhetoric in context of negative experience
- Barriers to learning
- Management block access to learning opps and block implementation of ideas from learning
- Staff value possibilities for enhanced patient care

Key Findings 3:

Variations between staff groups

- Little published evidence of learning opportunities for non-professional staff
- Wide variations between professional and ancillary staff groups in terms of experiences of and attitudes to learning
- Lack of awareness amongst ancillary staff of structures of learning
- Wide variations between strategic and frontline staff

Key Findings 4: Effective models of engagement for NHSU

- Work with existing structures and agencies
- Work with NHS staff at grass roots level

Key Findings 5:

Indicators of a learning culture

- Notion of a learning culture is highly abstract and fluid
- Some concrete indicators
 - induction
 - appraisal
 - PDPs for ALL staff
- Other softer measures

Key Findings 6: Change Initiatives

- Change within large people based organisations happens slowly
- First stage of change - level of discourse
- Relevance of action learning projects

Softer measures that indicate the existence of a learning culture in the NHS

- Equal opportunities for ALL staff
- Improvements to patient centred care
- Valuing diversity
- Devolving responsibility to NHS frontline staff
- Team working and partnership
- Minimizing error

Discovery Interviews as an action learning approach to changing cultures of learning in the NHS

What do we know about
Discovery Interviews?

Discovery Interviews

- Involves staff in learning about what is important to patients
- Qualitative depth interviews with patients
- Feedback loop to care providers
- Based on principles of action learning
- Continuous quality improvement
- Plan - Do - Study - Act (PDSA) framework

Team Learning

- Presentation of findings to multi-disciplinary teams
- Teams include support and ancillary staff, administrators, secretaries, receptionists and managers in addition to clinicians and nurses
- Reflection and dialogue
- Implementation and review

Strengths of Discovery Interview Approach

- Fulfils statutory duty for consultation with service users (Section 11 of 2001 Health and Social Care Act)
- Existing resources to support use of Discovery Interviews eg Modernisation Agency and Tool Kits
- In keeping with Government policies on lifelong learning - Skills Escalators

Discussion

- What barriers might there be to using the Discovery Interview approach to change cultures of learning in the NHS?
- How might these barriers be overcome?
- What other approaches might be used?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of these alternative approaches?