The Solution

Over the past 12 months in the East Midlands we have worked on an innovative model of collaborative working, with three hospices (LOROS, Cynthia Spencer, Northampton and St Barnabas, Lincoln) working together with a training provider (Well Training) to develop a bespoke programme which meets that challenge. The formal face to face learning is a five day programme, delivered over a period of six months and hosted at the three different hospices. Nine staff have engaged in a combined programme which leads towards:

- a certificate in teaching and learning
- an assessor qualification
- a quality assurance qualification

Outcomes

Each individual staff member was able to identify their own programme outcomes depending on their needs, a number working towards all three qualifications, with others opting to achieve just one or two. The flexibility of the programme has meant that the needs of the organisations are being met, by building capacity for assessment and quality assurance practices required to deliver vocational education.

Background

Nationally there is a significant drive for more hospices to be engaged in the delivery of vocational education. This can be daunting for hospice teams as the requirements of the assessment process can be complex to navigate, particularly if you are trying to achieve this on your own. For the past 18 months in the East Midlands we have been working on a collaborative model of engagement with the hospices in the region.

This has enabled sharing of ideas and resources, receiving topical updates, giving staff a chance to share challenges and seek support. During the last 9 months a new collaborative venture has emerged to help meet one of those challenges.

The Challenge

The role of practice educators within hospices is a crucial one, they are instrumental in developing their own workforce, but they also make a significant contribution to the development of the wider health and social care workforce in their locality. The staff who carry out this role are highly qualified and experienced professionals from various specialisms including nursing, social work, chaplaincy and many others. One of the challenges faced by practice educator is the lack of access to suitable teaching and learning programmes, particularly in relation to assessment and quality assurance practices required to deliver vocational education.

Overall Benefits

- Greater confidence of staff in assessment and assuring vocational programmes
- Bespoke development leading to individually identified outcomes
- Collaborative working and sharing of practice
- Improvements in the quality of planning and delivery of education provision
- More systematic process for quality assurance across programmes
- Flexible and creative support of staff from Well Training made this approach a positive experience for all

Practice Educators: The Dual Professionals

Author: Mandy Motley, Director of Education and Workforce, LOROS Hospice Care for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Working together with other hospice education providers has been an excellent opportunity to network, to share best practice and challenges as students, as well as educators.

Gill Homden, St. Barnabas Hospice

The challenge of studying for the assessor award has helped me to build confidence in my role and has been of great value to my continuing professional development.

Donna Walker, LOROS Hospice

Embedding the theories and principles of key aspects of education and training through completing this programme has ensured that my practice as an End of Life Care Facilitator is up to date, effective and that in turn has a real impact on learners practice and the care that they offer to people at the end of life.

Hayley Cole, Cynthia Spencer Hospice

Donna Walker, LOROS Hospice

Gill Homden, St. Barnabas Hospice

Hayley Cole, Cynthia Spencer Hospice