

LLN Project: Progression between Further and Higher Education in Primary Care Management

Overview

Two Foundation Degree modules have been drafted following a series of meetings with representatives of Hampshire and Southampton NHS Primary Care Trusts. These are entitled 'Operational management in primary care organisations' and 'Primary care policy and practice'. Eastleigh College have been recruited as the 'lead' FE partner and it is expected that their Health and Social Care Department will co-host the initial modules and contribute to the teaching staff. At the point of dissemination a similar arrangement is proposed for Portsmouth University with Southdowns College. Eastleigh College and the headquarters of Hampshire PCT are in close physical proximity, and the new modules are helping to extend their working partnerships.

Work Schedule

The project is ahead of schedule, after a delayed start as a result of the delayed confirmation of financial support. The proposed modules are written for consultation, a date for university validation has been set for later in 2009 and the Winchester Business School has adopted the new subjects in its post 2009 Health Management degree. The modules should be operational from the second semester in February 2010.

Future Plan

Having been approved and amended by the Head of Primary Care at Hampshire PCT (Julia Bagshaw), the agreed next steps are for 'mini-workshop' sessions with both the Eastleigh and Winchester Practice Managers' Forums and the Hampshire-wide Primary Care Business Reference Panel. These sessions are due to be completed by the 15 September. In addition four expert informants have been identified for further consultation: the Institute of Healthcare Management local representative (at New Milton), the Head of PCT Organisational Development Commissioning (at Eastleigh), the regional manager for Chilvers McCrae private practices (Fareham), and the Winchester and Eastleigh NHS Trust 'lead' manager on primary and community health care. So far the main changes to the draft modules have centred on the need to include smaller general medical practices, dental services, emergent locality groups and community interest companies, and administrative supervisors. As a result the revised curricula will have a stronger emphasis on implementing change, clerical teams and business strategy in local health systems. The forthcoming meetings will cover the issue of future funding levels and responsibilities.

Issues

The level of fees and co-contributions is expected to be an issue that needs to be resolved in the mid-term, given PCT financial projections of nil growth for five years. Alongside the Winchester- led PVI project it is hoped that a local employers' forum may be the vehicle through which issues such as this may be effectively addressed. Sustainability is also an issue in relation to the employment tenure of some of those currently developing LLN projects, including the present FD modules. These are of medium impact; and there are no other outstanding issues.