AUDITOR GENERAL

PERFORMANCE AUDIT

SELF-ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

Managing People in the NHS in Scotland

Part 2. Team self-assessment tool

PREPARED BY AUDIT SCOTLAND

JANUARY 2001

Team self-assessement tool

Instructions for the self-assessment tools

Introduction

The tool covers five key areas of management:

- developing a culture of partnership working
- identifying the employees needed for service delivery
- employee retention and recruitment
- motivating and developing employees
- improving employee performance.

The aim is for you to think about how well you and your colleagues tackle these issues at the moment and what improvements can be made.

Using the tool

Step 1 - consider the extent to which each statement in the “Prompts” column applies to your team at this point in time.

Step 2 - use the suggested “Tasks” to help you identify evidence to support your assessment.

Step 3 - record your findings in the “Assessment” column.

Step 4 - identify and record in the “Potential Improvements” column what needs to be done in order to ensure that the Prompts statements are recognised as being more applicable to your team.

0: Developing the culture we need

We have developed a culture of partnership working for the benefit of patients and staff

1. Prompt	2. Task
T0.1 We have leaders who, in partnership, take responsibility and are accountable for ensuring staff involvement is developed, regularly reviewed and progress has been made.	T0.1 Check for a systematic approach (eg, included in performance management) to involving staff.
T0.2 All employees are involved in (ie, have the opportunity to contribute and influence) service planning and, as a result, patient care benefits.	T0.2 Check for a systematic approach to involving staff in service planning. Identify specific examples where this has contributed to a significant improvement for patients.
T0.3 By being involved, our employees are motivated and committed to the achievement of agreed service and patient care objectives.	T0.3 Check for evidence of motivation and commitment. Identify/ensure plans are put in place to act on any signs of demotivation or lack of commitment.
T0.4 Behaviours are widely demonstrated based on stated organisational values.	T0.4 Check that organisational values have been agreed and for evidence that they are an integral part of the culture. **Checklist 10**
T0.5 PIN Guidelines and best practice are adapted in local policies and practices with the full involvement and support of staff.	T0.5 Check for a systematic approach to applying good practice guidelines as they become available from the PIN Board. Initial reviews should cover: • equal opportunities • family friendly • management of employee conduct • personal development, planning and review • dignity at work, eliminating harassment and bullying.

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T0.1	T0.1
T0.2	T0.2
T0.3	T0.3
T0.4	T0.4
T0.5	T0.5

I: Determining the people we need

We have the necessary people to achieve what we have set out to do

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T1.1 Corporate goals are developed within Local Health Plan (LHP) frameworks and are shaped by our key stakeholders (patients, other health partners and agencies).	T1.1 Check that the process for developing team plans take account of stakeholders views. Check that detailed plans cross refer to LHP.
T1.2 Corporate goals are communicated effectively and understood.	T1.2 Check existing communication channels. Are corporate goals clearly articulated and understood?
T1.3 We understand how our team contributes to corporate objectives.	T1.3 Check team plans link to LHP.
T1.4 We understand our team's objectives and have developed action plans to achieve our goals.	T1.4 Check plans link to LHP. Check that action plans are SMART (Specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, timely), credible and owned by team.

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T1.1	T1.1
T1.2	T1.2
T1.3	T1.3
T1.4	T1.4

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T1.5 Based on what we have set out to achieve, we have the right numbers, skills and mix of people needed to deliver effective patient care.	T1.5 Check for a review of existing and future employee requirements, particularly in terms of: • the number of employees we have • the skills our employees have • the grade mix of employees we have • the number of employees we need • the skills our employees need • the grade mix of employees we need. **Checklist 5**
T1.6 We develop flexible solutions to counter staff and skills shortages.	T1.6 Is there a commitment to flexible working? Check there is a plan for these actions. Does it cover: • flexible working • training and development?

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T1.5	T1.5
T1.6	T1.6

II: Retaining and recruiting the people we need

We ensure we retain and recruit the best people

Retention

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T2.1 We understand employee turnover and take steps to manage turnover.	T2.1 Check for: • regular reporting of employee turnover • action plans and periodic assessment of turnover and actions previously undertaken • use of exit interviews and employee attitude surveys. **Checklist 1**
T2.2 We are supported professionally and personally during organisational change and are confident in the change process.	T2.2 Check for career transitional support, retraining, career workshops, counselling and evidence of confidence in the change process. **Checklist 2**
T2.3 We strive towards a healthy working environment and family friendly policies.	T2.3 Check arrangements for the following: • identify team health and safety record eg, minor injuries • review use of Occupational Health Services including the number and reason for referrals • review hours worked • review existing work arrangements. Could work be organised in different ways?
T2.4 We have well thought out personal development plans and access to development opportunities.	T2.4 Confirm existence of personal development plans and review the quality of these plans.

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T2.1	T2.1
T2.2	T2.2
T2.3	T2.3
T2.4	T2.4

Recruitment

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T2.5 Work roles and competencies are clearly defined and understood.	T2.5 Check for the existence of assessments.
T2.6 Trust recruitment and selection practices are objective, fair and adhere to our equal opportunities policy.	T2.6 Check adherence to Equal Opportunities policy. • Review policy availability and implementation.
T2.7 We have guidelines and standards for recruiting employees.	T2.7 Check existence and quality of recruitment guidelines and standards. • Review the effectiveness of selection procedures.
T2.8 We provide effective staff induction training.	T2.8 Check how this is achieved, including: • understanding corporate and departmental objectives • understanding personal and/or team work objectives • providing relevant training and development.

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T2.5	T2.5
T2.6	T2.6
T2.7	T2.7
T2.8	T2.8

III: Managing the performance of our people

We get the best from our people as individuals and teams

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T3.1 There are clear links between: • what we want to achieve • what the department wants to achieve • what the trust wants to achieve.	T3.1 Check there is a process to match: • corporate and departmental / functional goals • objectives with people available • objectives with skills available.
T3.2 We develop our own plans for individual and team development.	T3.2 Check there is a training plan and that resources to meet training needs have been negotiated.
T3.3 We have fair access to training and development, education, and continuing professional development.	T3.3 Check resources, including trends in training budget, and distribution of training between team members. • What? • When? • To whom? • Why? • Benefits expected and achieved? • How much?
T3.4 We are aware of the development opportunities available to us.	T3.4 Check for arrangements which make this happen. How effective are they? Do they include information on: • secondments • work shadowing • voluntary work?
T3.5 We evaluate the effectiveness of team and individual development activities.	T3.5 Check there are processes to review and evaluate the effectiveness of training and development activities.

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T3.1	T3.1
T3.2	T3.2
T3.3	T3.3
T3.4	T3.4
T3.5	T3.5

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T3.6 Roles and competencies are clearly defined and understood. We know: • what to do • when to do it • how to do it • how well to do it • how well we are doing.	T3.6 Check for arrangements which make this happen, including: • procedure manuals • quality assurance systems • guidance • personal action plans • feedback from service users.

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T3.6	T3.6

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T3.7 We know: • why our performance is appraised • how our performance and development is assessed • when our performance and development is assessed • who assesses our performance and development • how our performance and development can be improved.	T3.7 Check for arrangements which make this happen, including: • regular individual and team appraisal meetings • evidence of personal development plans • assessment of training and development needs.
T3.8 Information flow, communication and decision making processes are well developed and understood.	T3.8 Check for a systematic approach to communications and identify evidence that communications are effective. **Checklists 6 & 7**
T3.9 We can express our comments and views freely both as individuals and team members.	T3.9 Check that the communication arrangements are two-way and that the organisation/department understands employees views on: • what the organisation/department wants to achieve • what its priorities are • how well it is doing • what the department/function wants to do better.
T3.10 We, including staff side representatives, are communicated with and involved in NHS and local issues.	T3.10 Check for a systematic approach to communications and identify evidence that it is effective. • Check for examples of partnership working. • Identify employee involvement initiatives.
T3.11 Our leaders promote early and meaningful involvement in NHS and trust issues.	T3.11 Check for a systematic approach to communications and identify evidence that it is effective.

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T3.7	T3.7
T3.8	T3.8
T3.9	T3.9
T3.10	T3.10
T3.11	T3.11

IV: Improving the performance of our people

We have a positive approach to improving the performance and contribution of our people

1. Prompts	2. Tasks
T4.1 We understand the importance of improving performance and our own role in performance improvement.	T4.1 Check for evidence of: • performance improvement plans • links between team, departmental / functional and corporate objectives.
T4.2 We believe our performance can be improved through teamworking.	T4.2 Identify the range of the team eg, functional or matrix. • Review team objectives and performance monitoring systems. • Identify investment and impact of team initiatives.
T4.3 Our performance is regularly reviewed by our key stakeholders and proposals for performance improvement set.	T4.3 Check the extent to which this is done.
T4.4 We are involved in the development, agreement and use of performance indicators to benchmark our performance against good practice.	T4.4 Review processes for agreeing performance indicators. Assess the availability and ownership of performance indicators. **Checklist 9**
T4.5 Continuous performance improvement is encouraged and supported.	T4.5 Check how this is done through: • the involvement of employees in the performance improvement process • the use of non financial incentives, including recognition • training and development of employees. **Checklist 8**
T4.6 Our skills, competence and contribution are recognised and appreciated.	T4.6 Identify recognition and appreciation systems. Review adequacy - do they have the desired impact?

3. Assessment	4. Potential improvements
T4.1	T4.1
T4.2	T4.2
T4.3	T4.3
T4.4	T4.4
T4.5	T5.5
T4.6	T4.6

Checklists

1 Monitoring turnover

2 Reducing employee numbers

3 Format for a job description

4 Setting objectives

5 Training and development

6 Counting the cost of communication

7 Designing a communications strategy

8 Performance management systems

9 Absenteeism

10 Examples of the kind of organisational values which may be adopted

Checklist 1: Monitoring turnover	
1. Do we regularly measure and report turnover trends? How do we measure turnover? Do the measurements include: • crude rate	<u>Number of employees who left x 100</u> Average number employed
• skill index in a particular department or category	<u>Number of staff with one year or more service x 100</u> Number of staff employed
• stability index	<u>Number currently employed with one year or more service x 100</u> Number employed last year with one year or more service
2. Do we know how much this turnover costs the organisation? Do we know how this cost is changing over time? Does this cost include: • recruitment of replacements • training of replacements • costs of short-term replacements (ie, through overtime for other staff, use of agency staff).	
3. What actions have we taken in the past to reduce these turnover costs? How effective have these been?	
4. Do we hold exit interviews with employees who are leaving to find out why they are leaving? How do we make sure information from these interviews is translated into action?	
5. Do more employees tend to leave from particular: • departments • job categories • age groups • wage/salary groups • gender categories • length of service groups?	
6. Do we feel that too many good employees are leaving?	

7. Do we feel there are specific causes of the problem:

a) Wage/salary structure

- How do our wages/salaries compare with other local organisations or to those organisations we are losing employees to?
- Is the wage/salary structure based on job evaluation? If not, how do we know it is equitable?
- Is there a performance incentive or bonus scheme in operation? Can it be improved to help reduce turnover in key areas?
- When did we last review job terms and conditions to assess potential improvements for employees?

b) Career progression

- Is there a clear career, or development structure for employees?
- Is an employee's performance periodically reviewed?
- Are employees aware that career progression depends upon job performance?
- Could we restructure jobs to provide increased job satisfaction and development?

c) Morale and motivation

- Do we have an effective induction programme for new employees so their expectations are in line with what we can deliver?
- Do we ensure all our employees have the skills and training necessary to do their job?
- Have we communicated what we are trying to achieve as an organisation to our employees?
- Do we ensure that our employees understand the key issues we are trying to address and the changes we have to make?

Checklist 2: Reducing employee numbers
1. Are we confident that employees are not being removed from high-risk areas?
2. Are the arrangements and criteria for employee reductions clearly set out, understood and communicated and followed?
3. Have we reviewed roles, responsibilities and activities in those areas affected by reducing employee levels?
4. Have we assessed the implications for training and development for those employees being retained?
5. How will we guard against the loss of corporate memory in key areas affected?

Checklist 3: Format for a job description
Job title
Grade
Department
Reports to:
Receives reports from:
Working structure: (to show stylised organisational chart and location of this job)
Main role/purpose
Main tasks/duties (typically three-five, with estimated percentage of time spent on each)
Conditions of employment (pay, hours, holiday etc)

Checklist 4: Setting objectives
What do you do? (What is your job? What are your main responsibilities?)
Why do you do it? (What are your objectives? How do they relate to your team or department/function's objectives and your trust's objectives?)
How well should you do it? (What standards of performance are expected from you?)
How well are you doing it? (What aspects of your job are you doing well? How do you know?)
How can you improve your performance in your job? (Do you need to develop any additional skills, change any ways of working, delegate any areas of work, undertake any additional training and development?)
Now ask 6 employees chosen at random in your department/function the same questions. Could employees answer the above questions easily? Were their answers the same as yours? Do employees know how their work contributes to the achievement of the team, department/function's and trust's goals?
What impression has this exercise given you of individual and shared understandings about work objectives in your department/function?

Checklist 5: Training and development
1. What new training has your team undertaken since 1999?
2. Why did you choose this particular training?
3. How did this help your team achieve its objectives?
4. What training has your team stopped providing since 1999?
5. Why? What impact did this have on the achievement of your team's objectives?
6. Which development activities have produced the most results for your team?

Checklist 6: Counting the cost of communication
How to avoid the dangers of spending too little or too much from "*The Communicating Organisation*"
How to 'Count the Cost' **1. Why are you planning a communication exercise?** Try to set down a simple statement of no more than 50 words about the purpose of the exercise.
2. What is the message? • Who are you really trying to talk to? • What are you trying to say? • What outcome do you expect from the exercise? • What are the pressures and/or deadlines against which the communication must be achieved? • What financial value do you place upon the success of the exercise? • Bearing in mind the financial value, what budget is reasonable to allocate?
3. Who should be the messengers? • What is the current communications culture? • Who will have credibility with the audience? • Who can deliver the message – training? • What are the shift patterns, normal operating routines of the audience? • What are the time pressures on the audience?
4. What type of programme will be most effective? • Is this a one-off communication or part of a longer-term process? • What links will this programme have into other processes within the organisation? • How will action be streamlined? • What type of feedback do you need and how will it be collected? • Who will act as the focus and co-ordinator of the exercise? • Where will the message be delivered? • Who will provide resources for completing the programme?
5. How will you ensure that your audience relates to and owns the message? • Which key elements of the message will strike a personal chord with the audience? • How can the audience be involved in constructing the communication? • How will you reinforce the message? • What channels for two-way communication will be possible?
6. How will you measure whether you have achieved your aims?

Checklist 7: Designing a communications strategy	
"Organisations relying on the grapevine to test messages can never have integrity or values." A comprehensive communications strategy would embrace the following objectives:	
Objectives	**Potential Actions**
1. Future planning and developments	• promoting increased use of plain English in all communications • demonstrating a cohesive approach • timing messages for best impact • gaining commitment.
2. Involvement and influence	• actively encouraging staff to give feedback • continuing to promote employee involvement • continuing to involve trade union representatives • treating views and ideas with respect.
3. Personal issues	• making sure people understand that their views are important • encouraging people to air their views • demonstrating how views, feelings and ideas can help the trust achieve its mission.
4. Feedback	• improving understanding of what matters to people • gaining commitment by giving people the opportunity to influence business messages and decisions • demonstrating that two-way communication is vital to help meet ever-increasing challenges and changes.
5. Service aims	• encouraging and enabling people to give the best of themselves towards the success of the organisation • making sure that all trust staff have a clear understanding of the service • promoting understanding of objectives and progress and the individual and team contribution towards fulfilling them.
6. Information and action	• effective teamworking to provide better quality of patient/carer service • enhancing an easily understandable leadership language and style which everyone can buy into • reaching mutually acceptable decisions.

Checklist 8: Performance management systems
Characteristics of good systems:
• line management and staff association/union consultation/participation in development • training given to all appraisers and to appraises, the former including skills practice • element of self-appraisal and self-preparation included • emphasis on joint goal setting and on key tasks • strong staff development element • feedback mechanism on distributions, in place where ratings are used • paperwork kept to minimum and presented attractively • all, or nearly all, appraisals are carried out • appraisals done at least annually • some variation to allow for differences within organisation and across grades • monitoring and evaluation procedures in place • links with other PM systems clear.
Characteristics of poor systems:
• appraisal imposed without consultation • superficial or no training given • minimal appraisee input • excessive emphasis on assessment • rigid and or unwieldy in terms of administration • appraisals done intermittently if at all • no formal evaluation • links with other PM systems unclear.

Checklist 9: Absenteeism

1. Is absenteeism recognised as a cause of inefficiency?

2. To what extent is absenteeism a problem?

- how is absenteeism distinguished from 'lateness' or non-attendance?

Does it occur amongst:

- particular age groups
- particular grades
- particular departments or functions
- particular occupations
- different length-of-service groups?

3. What does absenteeism cost us?

- How has this been calculated and what costs does it include?
- How up to date is the calculation?

4. How is absenteeism measured? Do the measures include:

a) lost time $\frac{\text{number of hours worked}}{\text{total number of hours available to work}}$

b) number of absences $\frac{\text{number of employees absent at least once in a given period}}{\text{average number employed over the period}}$

c) average length of absence $\frac{\text{total days lost in period of absence}}{\text{number of spells of absence}}$

Do we routinely monitor trends in absenteeism?

5. How do our trends compare with other departments or organisations? • sickness • accidents • absence with permission • absence without permission.
6. Does our information system allow for analysing absence by cause?
7. Do we ensure all employees understand the organisation's policy and expectations on attendance and timekeeping? • How is this achieved and how effective is it?
8. Do we ensure consistent expectations and standards across the whole organisation?
9. Does our information system allow for each employee's attendance to be monitored?
10. Is the attendance performance of individual employees discussed with them?
11. Are all managers aware of their role in minimising absenteeism?
12. What plans are in place to reduce absenteeism?

Checklist 10: Examples of the kind of organisational values which may be adopted

- Patient centred approach
- Innovation around service redesign
- Mutual trust, honesty and respect
- Openness and transparency in communications
- Recognising and valuing the contribution of all partners
- Access and sharing of information
- Consensus, collaboration and inclusion as the 'best way'
- Maximising employment security
- Being fully committed to partnership and good employment practice
- The right of partners to be involved, informed and consulted
- Early involvement of all staff and their Staff Side organisations in all discussions regarding change
- Firmly rooting partnership in the process of formulating and delivering Local Health Plans
- Using a team approach to underpin partnership working

AUDITOR GENERAL

110 GEORGE STREET EDINBURGH EH2 4LH

T. 0131 477 1234 F. 0131 477 4567

www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

ISBN 0 903433 23 1