

e-KSF - Top tips for effective implementation

e-KSF; Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF)

Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Trust uses the e-KSF tool to support, deliver, monitor and coordinate the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) process across the organisation. The trust has learnt many lessons in implementing e-KSF and has shared their top tips for the benefit of others who are about to or are in the process of implementing e-KSF across their organisation.

The organisation

Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Trust is one of the largest acute teaching trusts in the UK. It provides a full range of acute services to almost 550,000 people in the Hull and East Yorkshire region, and tertiary services for over 1.2 million. The trust employs over 8000 people with an annual income of over £400 million.

What we did and why

The trust used the e-KSF tool to support, deliver, monitor and coordinate the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) process across the organisation. The ultimate aim was to provide trust employees with a single, equitable electronic performance development review (PDR) tool, that has the ability to record and maintain an individual's performance and development needs against a clearly structured KSF based framework. The decision to adopt this system was based on the premise that it provides:

- an electronic PDR recording tool that directly supports the KSF process
- a clear, sound and logical process for the creation of KSF post outlines
- a central point for the monitoring, approving and quality assurance of KSF post outlines throughout the organisation and across the NHS as a whole
- a local and national database, which encourages a consistency based approach in the creation and customising of KSF post outlines
- a central transparent local and national KSF post outline database to enable employees to view and plan their career pathway
- reviewers with a logical flow through each stage of the PDR cycle
- a reduction in paperwork and administration management and increased confidentiality of staff records
- a reduction in resource requirements for KSF implementation
- a stream of reports to monitor all aspects of PDR activity across the organisation
- a direct link to the trust's Electronic Staff Recording System (ESR)
- the ability to link with managed learning environments (MLE).

How we did it

The education and development team worked in partnership with workforce planning to lead the implementation of e-KSF. They did this in collaboration with the e-KSF implementation team

This included:

- integration of employee information into the e-KSF system (ESR was not available at this time)
- system training and support from the e-KSF team
- development of internal protocols and guidelines to create, customise and approve KSF post outlines across the organisation
- engaging 'champions' across the Trust to roll out e-KSF effectively
- introducing a series of in-house PDR online tool training sessions for employees.

As there were limited resources and a lack of IT skills in some areas of the trust, employees were given the option to complete PDRs using either the paper-based system or e-KSF. This view was taken as it was hoped a natural transition towards the online tool would evolve once resources improved and skills were developed. The trust is in the process of evaluating all education and development activity, this will include impact evaluation of the e-KSF system.

The results and top tips for implementing KSF

The majority of the trust's employees are fully engaged with e-KSF and have had minimal issues. The trust has learnt many lessons in implementing e-KSF and have shared their top tips for the benefit of others who are about to or are in the process of implementing e-KSF across their organisation:

- **Ensure you have sufficient administration support** and do not underestimate how much you will need— particularly for large trusts. There is a large amount of administrative time required to support e-KSF, for example, for advice and guidance, reports, log ins, creation of practice sites, data cleansing, data analysis, remote support and post outline management. Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Trust decided to copy all approved post outlines onto the intranet so that everyone can view or access them irrespective of whether they choose to use e-KSF or the paper-based system).
- **Pilot e-KSF in one or two areas before full implementation.** It is only when the system is used that issues arise, whether technical (such as, PC system issues) or user issues (such as, are there enough computers to carry out the reviews? do the staff have the IT knowledge and skills to carry out the reviews?). The pilot will give an idea of the resource implications to ensure effective implementation.
- **Stage e-KSF roll out.** Plan the e-KSF roll out in stages, make sure one area is implemented well before moving onto the next and use this to promote it to the rest of the organisation.
- **Make sure all the necessary resources are in place before training staff.** Make sure everything is in place so that once staff have completed their online training they can start carrying out PDRs straight away. Things to consider are; have outlines been written? Have outlines been assigned? Have managers assigned reviewers to their staff?

- **Have E-KSF champions.** Make sure that you have enough skilled staff throughout the organisation to support the implementation of e-KSF.
- **Think about other resources you may need to support staff.** The education and development team needed to introduce a number of resources to help staff to implement e-KSF these include:
 - KSF intranet site
 - e-KSF online tool training
 - e-tool which specifically shows an individual how to record PDRs on both the paper-based system and e-KSF (includes working examples of completed self assessment documents, reviews, objectives and PDPs)
 - three completed online examples of e-KSF PDRs (practice sites where individuals can log in and see how the PDR is completed online from start to finish).
- **Consider how paper-based documentation fits with e-KSF.** Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Trust redesigned their paper-based documentation to fit in line with the online tool, thus making the transition from using the paper-based PDR system to e-KSF much easier.

KSF is an integral part of Agenda for Change (AFC) and as such the trust applied the same focus, commitment and priority for its implementation. For effective and successful roll out of KSF and e-KSF, the education and development of the trust believe that the following key criteria are essential:

- senior manager buy in
- a collaborative approach with all partners including managers, staff and Trade Union representatives
- a willingness to commit the time and resources
- sufficient advice, support and training
- a strong administrative support team.

Contact details and further information

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