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Dear e-KSF colleagues,

Welcome to the Spring edition of our e-KSF newsletter. Thank you, as always, for continuing to be part of a strong and growing e-KSF community!

As you're probably aware, NHS Employers, on behalf of all 4 UK countries, have retained Think Associates Ltd and ikonami Ltd to deliver the e-KSF project on a contract that will run to 2012 and which continues to ensure that the e-KSF is provided licence-free to all NHS organisations.

Think and ikonami are now working with Methods Consulting to deliver the e-KSF. I'm delighted that Methods have been selected to work with us on this key NHS toolkit. Methods bring additional skills, resources and networks, including their experience of running the NHS Jobs system. We'll be working together in partnership to really drive forwards the breadth and depth of e-KSF take-up, UK wide over the next 3 years".

You can also find news of this announcement on the NHS Employers Workforce Bulletin here: <http://www.nhsemployers.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/NHSWorkforceBulletin14April2009.HTML>

Our Regional Account Managers will continue to support Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland as well as SHA networks in England. So for queries about the implementation of the e-KSF please contact your Regional Account Manager, or email info@e-ksf.org.

Usage of the e-KSF continues to grow month on month. If you are using the e-KSF, you are part of a community of 164,000 active users on the tool. The e-KSF is currently being used to record over 400,000 individual learning activities for over 130,000 NHS staff.

If you are yet to take advantage of the benefits that the e-KSF can provide your organisation then please do get in contact with your Regional Account Manager or email info@e-ksf.org so that we can advise on the best way for you to help take your organisation forwards.

With best wishes,

Tim Newham
UK e-KSF Project Manager, Think Associates Ltd

Version 6.2.2 going live in June

On the 22nd June we will be issuing a mini release of the e-KSF which will have a small number of changes, minor fixes and improvements to usability, that should not require any re-training of users or new materials to be created. We have summarised below the key changes that you should be aware of, further information and screen shots can be found at www.e-ksfnow.org/hotlink36.html

Change Reference	Summary of Change	Description
6.2.2/05	Addition of reminder email to reviewers and reviewees to conduct an individuals' Personal Development Review, prior to an individuals increment date.	e-KSF Administrators can define how many weeks in advance of an individuals increment date they and their reviewers and / or managers are emailed to remind them to conduct a Personal Development Review. Who receives the email can be specified within the global email alerts area.
6.2.2/10	Addition of multiple levels within reports to allow managers to see up to 10 levels of staff hierarchy underneath them.	Within the reports available to managers on the e-KSF then individuals will now be able to see up to 10 levels of staff underneath them.
6.2.2/12	Addition of new report showing the detailed summary of reviews by employee within Monitoring Reports.	We have created a new report (report reference MR-09) that allows e-KSF administrators to see a detailed summary of reviews by employee along with their assignment references and departmental structures.
6.2.2/16	Addition of 'warning prompt' to e-KSF administrators when editing individual records received from ESR.	If an e-KSF administrator edits or deletes an individuals' 'ESR Employee Number' using the 'Edit Global User' function this removes the associated assignment mapping information. Within the new release, if an e-KSF administrator does opt to edit or delete an individuals' ESR Employee Number they will be shown a warning within a pop up window to confirm that the individual assignment mapping information will be lost if they continue with the amendment / deletion.
6.2.2/17	Amend to Managers Report - KSF Review Progress.	Within the report 'KSF Review Progress' accessible to managers, we have added the 'Actual Review Date' to the report template as opposed to the 'sign off date' of the review.

Change Reference	Summary of Change	Description
6.2.2/04	Amendments to the KSF Monitoring Report – Summary of Reviews, Objectives and PDP by Employee Name, (report reference (MR-07)) and Managers Report Summary of Reviews, Objectives and PDP by Employee Name.	<p>In the Summary of Reviews, Objectives and PDP report (MR-07) accessible to e-KSF Administrators and the report of the same name accessible to Managers. The following option has been added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 'Filter records by 'from' and 'to' date. <p>In addition to this the following change has been made to the figures shown within the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Only records which have both manager and staff sign-off boxes ticked will be shown – irrespective of what appears in the status drop-down. (This has the effect of picking up both agreed and completed records). » Total number of records, will be visible on the first page of the report.
	Amendments to the Post Outline Report – “Outline and Review Progress totals (Organisation-wise)”	<p>In the “Outline and Review Progress Totals (Organisation-wise)” report (accessible to SHA level administrators) the following option has been added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The ability to filter records by “from” and “to” date. <p>In addition to this the following changes have been made to the figures shown within the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Only records which have both manager and staff sign-off boxes ticked will be shown – irrespective of what appears in the status drop-down. (This has the effect of picking up both agreed and completed records). » The report will now show the 'number of signed off Personal Development Reviews, per employment' not “number of completed reviews”.

Using the e-KSF to provide valuable training needs analysis information

The NHS spends over £4 billion every year on training and education. A significant proportion of this is spent on Agenda For Change staff. But how much of this money is spent effectively? Or are we guilty of sending people on “the usual training courses” without focusing activity where it’s actually required?

We have always been of the belief that the NHS needs to move away from “Training Wants Data” and believe the KSF provides an effective way of doing this.

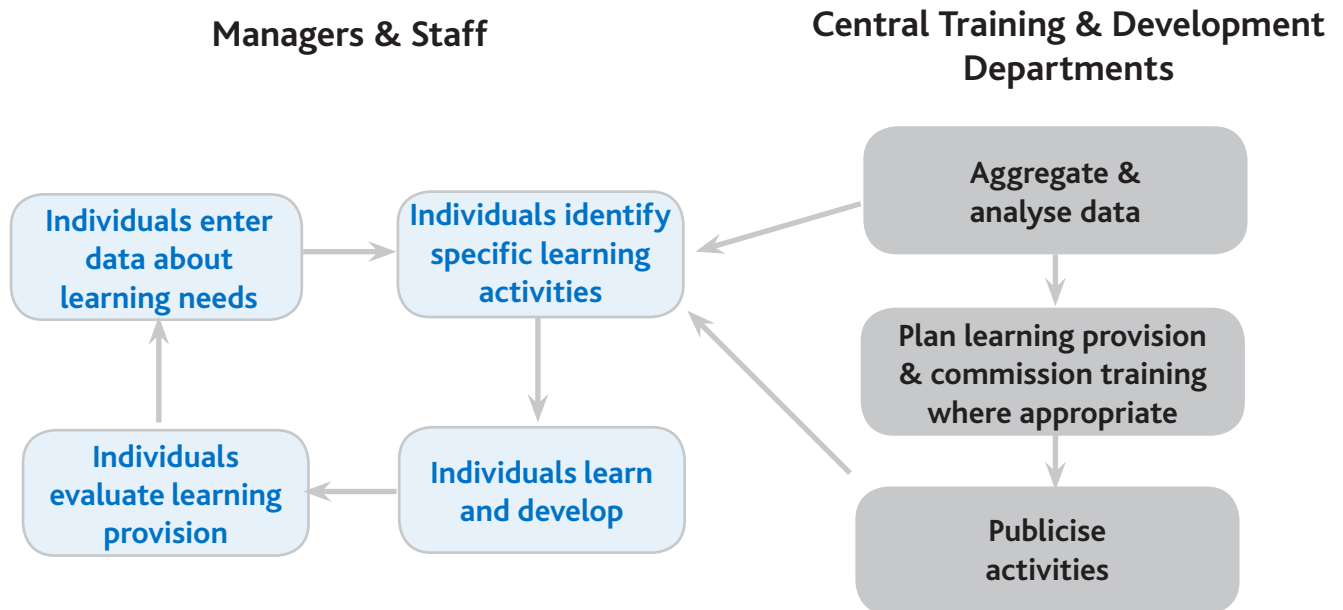
A focus on LNA	...not TWD!	Which means LNA is:
Learning	Training	Not about going on more courses
Needs	Wants	Focused on role and organisation first
Analysis	Data	In a format which can be understood and used

The KSF and thus e-KSF gives NHS organisations, and their managers:

- » **A language for describing gaps** in an individual’s knowledge, skills, competences and qualifications. National Occupational Standards and National Workforce Competences add more detail to this picture, where they are used.
- » **A way of storing data in one place**, for easy analysis and action.
- » **A common description of actual development activities** which people plan to undertake to close their knowledge and skill gaps, so that organisations have sight of not just the gaps, but also the planned development activities.
- » **A bottom-up approach for collecting data**, the KSF gives managers and staff a standard way of describing knowledge, skills and development, as part of their regular development discussions and appraisals. This allows organisations to collect development data at a very detailed, individual-staff-member level, focusing on their actual needs – much better than previous attempts at top-down training needs analysis based on estimated requirements across staff groups. This means that LNA becomes just “a part of the way we do things around here” rather than a separate annual activity.

Bringing it all together

Managers and staff, by completing their KSF development review, cycle through the 4 phases in the blue area of the picture below:



Step 1: An individual and his/her reviewer will review their progress against the KSF post outline, and record information about gaps in knowledge and skills.

Step 2: The individual will then identify specific learning activities, and where the activity is a piece of formal learning, then they can select from a list provided to them by their training and development department.

Step 3: The learning then takes place – online or offline, and formally or informally and in or out of the workplace.

Step 4: The individual learner can then evaluate the effectiveness of the development and record completion.

This process of review and development provides valuable data for the training and development department. Experts in this department can aggregate and analyse the data that's been collected by reviewers and reviewees. This data can then be used to plan the upcoming period's training and development, and commission training from external and internal providers if necessary. Finally, the training and development department can use technology to publicise and manage the training activities, completing the loop back to managers and staff in the service.

If your organisation has already been rolling out the e-KSF to managers and staff to complete their development reviews and PDPs, data about the knowledge and skills requirements in your team (KSF post outlines on the e-KSF), the current level of knowledge and skills available (KSF development reviews on the e-KSF) and the current planned activities (Personal Development Plans on the e-KSF, supported by the e-KSF learning activities database or local training administration system) will be being collected.

Your e-KSF administrator can then run reports, today, to show things like this – the number of staff with development needs in a specific KSF dimension:

Dimension	Average Requirement	Average Achievement	Minimum Current Level	Maximum Current Level	Number of Staff with Development Need
G4 - Finance	2.4	1.9	1	2	6
G5 - Services and Project Management	2.0	2.2	1	3	3
G6 - People Management	3.2	3.0	2	4	4

Largest Gap

And greatest number of staff with need

...and this, showing what individuals have actually agreed with their reviewers, in order to close development gaps:

Dimension	Level	Number with Need	Proposed Action	Estimate Total Cost
C1	1	175	Conflict Resolution - Half Day Course	£7,000
C1	2	175	Conflict Resolution - Full Day Course	£11,375
C2	2	300	e-KSF Reviewer Training - Full Day Course	£10,500
etc				

The importance of good development needs analysis using the e-KSF

With accurate and timely information about the actual development needs of employees, we can help you to:

- » Make the absolute best use of training and development budgets, by developing staff in the things that are actually required to do their job.
- » Meet equality and diversity requirements, by focusing on objective knowledge and skills requirements, rather than individual wishes and requests.
- » Negotiate better with external suppliers, by requiring suppliers to focus their services on specific competence development – and then measuring how well the training course or development activity actually enhanced the competence of the attendees.
- » Link training and development to organisational strategy by showing how investment in staff develops defined competences, which in turn support organisational goals
- » ...and ultimately, IMPROVE PATIENT CARE by making sure that staff are receiving the development to do their jobs to the appropriate standard.

What next?

If you are interested in finding out more about how we can help you to maximise your investment in staff contact us via info@think-associates.co.uk



Linking evidence at the KSF Review on the e-KSF

We wanted to take this opportunity to highlight the functionality that we released in February 2009 that allows e-KSF reviewers and reviewees to relate a range of data on the e-KSF, into the KSF review evidence fields. The benefit of this is that reviewers and reviewees can quickly build up and identify sources of evidence (for example completed PDP activities) from information already entered in the system rather than re-type it.

We have come across a number of organisations who were not aware that this functionality exists on the system, since this function is switched off by default, as we recognise that organisational administrators will want to be in control of when this is released to their reviewers and reviewees. So we thought it was worth recapping here on what this functionality entails.

Linking PDP activities

Reviewees or reviewers can link completed PDP activities into the evidence window directly.

When this functionality is activated for an organisation, within the evidence pop up window, there is a button – “Link PDP Activity”. Upon selecting this link users will be shown a list of all the completed activities in the individuals’ PDP. Any relevant activities can be selected by ticking in the box on the right and selecting “Make Link” at the bottom of the pop up window.

Linking uploaded files

Reviewees or reviewers can also upload small evidence files to the e-KSF, and then link these as evidence against individual dimensions.

Within the evidence pop up window, there is a button ‘Link Uploaded File’ that is visible if any files have been uploaded previously using the ‘View/Upload Files’ link in the top right hand corner of the Review screen.

Viewing previously linked items

If PDP activities or uploaded files have been linked as evidence then at the bottom of the evidence pop up window either or both of the following links will be visible, “Show Linked PDP Activities” and “Show Linked Files”. By clicking on either of these links you will be able to see the links that have previously been made by the reviewee or reviewer.

Notes

This functionality is only available for organisations who are live with the e-KSF / ESR link.

» Single PDP activities and files can be linked to multiple KSF dimensions, meaning that one piece of information can be used as evidence across a number of KSF dimensions.

» Only completed PDP activities can be used as evidence. However, once completed, both effective and non-effective activities can be used.

» If your organisation is using the e-KSF Credit Bank then reviewees and reviewees can also link Credit as evidence towards KSF reviews. If you’re interested in finding out more about the e-KSF credit bank (QCF in England and CQFW in Wales), then please contact your e-KSF Account Manager.

» There is no charge for using this functionality.

To activate the ability to link PDP activities or uploaded files as evidence, for reviewers and reviewees in your organisation, please contact your e-KSF Account Manager or email info@e-ksf.org.



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e-KSF "Credit Bank" trialled in Wales

The European Qualifications Framework was adopted by the EU in April 2008, as a tool for allowing the translation of qualifications across all EU countries. NHS Wales has been at the forefront of implementing the new qualifications framework – actually a Credit and Qualifications Framework, which in Wales is called the CQFW. (The English version is the Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF)). In Wales, NHS learners can accrue valuable educational Credit for undertaking "bite-sized" pieces of accredited learning, as small as 10 notational learning hours, provided that they pass an assessment. Increasingly, this learning and credit accumulation is happening at the workplace rather than at Higher/ Further education establishments.

For more about the CQFW, please see www.cqfw.net.

In partnership with the National Leadership and Innovations Agency for Healthcare in Wales (NLIAH) we've enhanced the e-KSF to be a tool for the NHS to manage Credit. This functionality is currently being trialled, with a view to full roll-out. In summary, this new e-KSF "Credit Bank" functionality will allow:

- » Organisations to identify which of their learning activities carry Credit.
- » Learners to view these activities and add them to their PDP.
- » Learners to record the accrual of credit.
- » Reviewers to approve the credit accrual and confirm that the credit should be added to the individuals' credit bank.
- » Administrators to view the total credit accrued, by educational level, across the organisation.

We think that Credit will become an increasingly powerful tool to allow the robust collection of evidence and high quality assessment of competence, for the KSF as well as Continuing Professional Development. It also provides significant benefits for the efficient transfer of learning as individuals move between organisations, and is proving to be a great way of encouraging learners to undertake high quality education and development.

For more information about this pilot project in Wales, or to find out more about how Credit will change your organisation's learning provision, please contact tim@e-ksf.org.

Implications for the Provider / Commissioner split for the KSF / e-KSF

We are aware that many organisations are currently in the midst of planning the reconfiguration of their provider and commissioning services and we are already in discussions with a number of individuals who are looking at the implications of these changes on both the KSF and e-KSF.

If part of your organisation is splitting to form a new organisation or joining with an existing organisation there will be implications for your systems and processes, we are ready to help you with the implications so please do get in touch with your Regional e-KSF Account Manager to ensure you have an appropriate plan in place or email info@e-ksf.org



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e-KSF / ESR link activation dates

Over 200 NHS organisations in England and Wales now have the e-KSF/ESR link in place. The link allows these two central systems to share data, benefitting organisations by reducing duplicate data entry, minimising errors and making the most of local KSF and ESR workforce reports.

The e-KSF and ESR teams joint strategy is for all organisations in England and Wales to take advantage of the e-KSF/ESR link. If your organisation is yet to go live with the e-KSF / ESR link then there are the following batches now available for organisations wanting to go live in 2009:

Batch Ref	Confirmation Fax Returned to us by	Link Activation Date
P	13/07/2009	w/c 21/09/2009
Q	02/11/2009	w/c 14/12/2009

To go live with the e-KSF / ESR link in either of these batches please go to <http://www.e-ksfnow.org/hotlink1.htm> to download the confirmation fax we require from you to be added to either of these batches.

For further information on going live with the e-KSF / ESR link then please refer to <http://www.e-ksfnow.org/hotlink1.htm> or contact your Regional Account Manager.

e-KSF Regional Account Managers

As a reminder your regional e-KSF Account Manager is as follows:

- » East Midlands SHA mark@e-ksf.org
- » East of England SHA mark@e-ksf.org
- » London SHA shaun@e-ksf.org
- » North East SHA richard@e-ksf.org
- » North West SHA shaun@e-ksf.org
- » South Central SHA rob@e-ksf.org
- » South East Coast SHA mark@e-ksf.org
- » South West SHA rob@e-ksf.org
- » West Midlands SHA richard@e-ksf.org
- » Yorkshire & The Humber SHA richard@e-ksf.org
- » NHS Northern Ireland mark@e-ksf.org
- » NHS Scotland shaun@e-ksf.org
- » NHS Wales richard@e-ksf.org



If you would like more information on any of the topics featured in this newsletter please email info@e-ksf.org