Anne's confirmer story

Last Updated: 26/05/2021

Anne is a registered nurse and the Head of Clinical Services at Medacs Healthcare, a healthcare agency providing healthcare professionals to the NHS, public and private sectors.

Acting as the main confirmer for the nursing agency, Anne is part of a wider team that supports nurses with their revalidation.

Background

At an agency with over one thousand nurses on the books, Anne knew revalidation was something she needed to be ready for. She is responsible for ensuring that all nurses placed in NHS and community settings across the UK, are capable of providing safe and effective care to their patients.

> "We had experience of medical revalidation so we knew this was going to be a big change. It is important that we provide as much support as possible to our agency nurses," Anne says.

For Anne, part of that support meant acting as a confirmer for those who needed it.

> "It is important to remember that it's not about allocating confirmers for nurses. It is the nurse's decision who they choose," she explains.

Many of the agency's nurses also hold substantive posts within Trusts and are likely to seek confirmation from their line managers. However, for those working through the agency full-time, Anne is possibly the most appropriate person for them to choose.

Preparing for confirmation

To prevent unnecessary travel for the nurse, Anne calls them before a confirmation meeting is organised to explain the requirements and timings of revalidation. She ensures the nurse has set up an NMC Online account and knows how to access the NMC forms and templates.

For extra support, Anne offers to review their revalidation evidence via email before meeting the nurse face to face.

> "I talk to the nurses about responsibility," Anne says. "I'll give them information, direct them to resources and support in answering questions, but it is ultimately their responsibility to complete the revalidation application."

The confirmation meeting

Once the nurse is ready and has all of their revalidation evidence in place, Anne arranges a face-to-face meeting with them, which generally lasts about an hour. Being a registered nurse herself, Anne can have the reflective discussion with them at the same time should they request it.

> "I've not seen these nurses practise before and that is a challenge for us as an agency. For this reason I spend more time on the reflective discussions and it is also why the portfolio is so important to us," Anne explains. "I emphasise to them that I need to see evidence of what they've done – and not just evidence, but how they have linked it to the Code."

The most difficult requirement for those she's spoken to so far has been the practice-related feedback, she says.

> "People need to understand that, rather than just bringing evidence of feedback, they should be reflecting on that feedback and relating it to improving practice."

Anne goes on to explain some of the other things she may look for as a confirmer.

> "We ask our nurses to complete evaluations throughout the year. This is a reflective evaluation form that they fill in along with someone that they've worked with," she says. "It provides me with reassurance that someone else has seen them in practice."

Role of the confirmer

Anne admits there is a certain amount of preparation required before taking on the role.

> "I don't believe it's possible to just walk into a confirmer role," Anne says. "You've got to be extremely professional and prepare for the meeting. Before confirmation, I will review the nurse's file, looking at where they have worked, their CV and previous training."

Anne has also started to keep a log of who she has confirmed including their name, NMC Pin and the date the confirmation took place. This will be important if she is asked to provide any extra information as part of the NMC's verification process.

When asked if she had any concerns about signing to confirm somebody, Anne said:

> "It doesn't worry me because I know I'm not the one signing to say that they are fit to practise, that is the NMC's job. I'm there to make sure the nurse has met all of the requirements. I actually find it quite an honour to be able to support these nurses and help identify any areas that might need improvement."