

Hywel Dda University Health Board

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The organisation

Hywel Dda University Health Board is a local health board in Wales. It provides healthcare services to around 384,000 people throughout Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. The Board employs professionals who work in hospitals and in the community in rural areas.

Setting up a revalidation process

A lot of work went into setting up a system that would support colleagues working there to revalidate. This has produced real benefits to professionals, their confirmers and Hywel Dda University Health Board.

Dr Caroline Williams, a professional and practice development nurse, put these processes in place back in 2015 and she still facilitates a course for confirmers across Hywel Dda. This not only goes through the role of the facilitator, but also covers practical things like how to lead a reflective discussion, and developing professional portfolios. It is now also linked with the personal appraisal and development review process.

The health board keeps a list of all registered nurses and their revalidation dates and has a dedicated administrator for revalidation. She contacts registrants around six months before their revalidation date to remind them of the timescale and see if they need any assistance. If so, they are put in touch with one of the professional and practice development nurses. Initially the administrator kept checking and reminding registrants of their approaching deadline, but now that everyone has been through revalidation once, that responsibility has been devolved to the senior nurses.

Full support for all employees

Professional and practice development nurses are available to assist other nurses to prepare their portfolio, discuss events the nurse has in mind for reflections, and guide them to consider events. Once prepared, managers will undertake the reflective discussions and confirm all other details.

In Hywel Dda confirmation is almost always done by the manager. No matter how rural someone's practice is, they will always have a manager or professional lead they can contact and go through the process with.

Flexibility is key for maternity or sick leave

At the outset of revalidation Hywel Dda worked with occupational health to ensure the question 'when are you due to revalidate' is asked routinely when registrants use the service. This ensures they don't get forgotten simply because they are not around.

If people are on maternity or sick leave, someone from the health board is always available to meet up with them, either at a location near them or at a health board site. For one registrant who was on maternity leave, a colleague went to her house to go through all the paperwork she had collected. The colleague assisted her to organise her paperwork, then went through her reflections and later confirmed her. The health board can also do the same for people who are suspended from work for whatever reason.

What if you work overseas?

This is where technology really comes into its own. One nurse who moved from Wales to work in the Middle East as a hospital manager used a video conferencing app to help with her revalidation. She used to work for Hywel Dda but in her new job abroad the senior manager of the hospital wasn't a nurse and so couldn't be her reflective discussion partner. So she went through her reflections with an ex-colleague (a senior nurse) using a video conferencing app, and was then confirmed by the senior manager at her new hospital in the Middle East.

The hard work that Hywel Dda has put into supporting their NMC registrants to revalidate has meant that as yet they haven't had anyone unintentionally lapse from the register due to a failure to revalidate.