Multiprofessional working is central to good care and Health Education England has introduced a programme to make it central to all healthcare interventions.

Training to promote multidisciplinary working

In this article...

- Background to the Better Training Better Care programme
- Details of the pilots that are currently underway
- Case studies and feedback from nurses

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The Better Training Better Care programme incorporates recommendations from Sir John Temple’s report, Time for Training and John Collins’ review, Foundation for Excellence to improve multiprofessional training and working. This article describes some of the programme pilots under way in the UK and looks at how they can be disseminated through the rest of the health service to improve patient care throughout.

Teamworking leads to better outcomes for patients. It is widely accepted – not just in the NHS – that when different disciplines with the right mix of skills work together, the results are better. This is important in healthcare where results are all about providing the best and most effective treatment for the patients we serve. It is frustrating, however, that we do not seem to have broadly accepted that fact and embedded it within the service. Luckily, my role in Health Education England allows me to get involved with the Better Training Better Care (BTBC) programme.

The BTBC programme and pilots

The aim of BTBC is to deliver the recommendations from Time for Training (Temple, 2010) and Foundation for Excellence (Collins, 2010). The former looked at the impact of reduced working hours on the quality of medical training while the latter reviewed the medical foundation programme — the two years immediately following medical school for junior doctors.

Both of these have a clear medical focus, but the two main components of BTBC let us look at the wider benefits of multiprofessional working. The programme will identify, pilot, evaluate and disseminate examples of good education and training practice to ensure training provides safe, effective and improved patient care.

BTBC includes nine workstreams (Box 1), in the first – the 16 local pilots – there has already been positive feedback from nurses. In this workstream, BTBC provided £1m to 16 NHS trusts to pilot projects that meet recommendations outlined in the two reports. Nurses involved in the pilots say they enjoy their work more and feel they are members of a team that uses their combination of different skills and abilities to provide the best possible service for patients.

In one pilot – East London Foundation Trust – nursing and medical staff are working together on a simulation project where they can learn from things that have gone wrong and make sure they avoid making the same mistakes in future. The great strength of work like this is that it is providing real, evidence-based examples of how different professions can work together as a team (Box 2).

Another trust, North Bristol, is a great example as to how a medical-focused project could be adopted by other professions. This pilot investigates the use of video-recorded consultations as a training tool for specialty trainees in secondary care, starting with specialties in which chronic disease management is prominent. Currently, the pilot focuses solely on medical trainees but the programme shows potential for training nurses who see patients in clinics. With this finding, I, along with the BTBC team, am very keen to

5 key points

1. Teams made up of professionals from different disciplines provide better overall care
2. The Better Training Better Care programme delivers the recommendations outlined in two reports: Time for Training and Foundation for Excellence
3. BTBC has provided £1m to 16 NHS trusts for pilot projects that meet the recommendations of those two reports
4. When change has improved care, it is crucial that it is disseminated throughout the NHS
5. If a coordinated team approach is to become the norm, multiprofessional teamwork must be placed at the core of NHS training

BOX 1. THE NINE BTBC WORKSTREAMS

1. Local implementation and pilots
2. Role of the trainee
3. Role of trainers
4. Workforce planning
5. Improving careers guidance and availability
6. Integrated technology enhanced learning
7. Broadening the Foundation Programme
8. Regulatory approach to supporting Better Training Better Care
9. Funding and education quality metrics
inpatient care issues will be role played during each training session by six course delegates – three members of nursing staff and three doctors in postgraduate training.

Each scenario will embed various care and service delivery problems and produce learning points for discussion in the subsequent debrief sessions, which will be facilitated by senior nursing (modern matrons) and medical (consultant psychiatrists) staff. Twenty-four training sessions were scheduled from November 2012 to April 2013, offering a total of 72 delegate places to nurses working at the trust.

One of the key project objectives is to promote learning in multiprofessional teams and highlight the importance of teamworking and communication in the clinical arena. The project also aims to engage all levels of clinical staff in the promotion of learning from serious incidents via simulation training.

Alex Obamwonyi, team manager at Tower Hamlets Inpatient Ward, said: “Providing simulation-based training for serious incidents gives nurses the opportunity to learn from other peoples’ mistakes, meaning that the same sort of incidents will not occur again. Nurses also have the opportunity to practise newly learnt skills or skills that have not been practised for a while in a safe and controlled environment.”

**References**
