The new dementia core skills framework comprehensively details the training and knowledge needed by all staff involved in the dementia care pathway.

### Dementia education and training framework

**In this article...**

- Outline of the Dementia Core Skills Education and Training Framework
- Using the framework to improve care

**Dementia**

Dementia can affect anyone, regardless of age. While it is true that most people with dementia are over the age of 65, more than 40,000 people in the UK under 65 are living with dementia (Alzheimer’s Research UK, 2015). Nurses and other health professionals need support to care for those with dementia, and Health Education England (HEE) has been working with Skills for Health and Skills for Care to develop the Dementia Core Skills Education and Training Framework.

**Framework development**

The framework, commissioned and funded by the Department of Health, is designed to underpin the implementation of the national dementia strategy (DH, 2009), the prime minister’s challenge on dementia (DH, 2015a) and the HEE mandate to develop the right people with the right skills and the right quality, effective, compassionate care: developing a stakeholder engagement event to support implementation. (NT)

Colin Wright is skills framework manager at Skills for Health

**What is the framework?**

The framework is a comprehensive resource that details the essential skills and knowledge necessary for all staff involved in the dementia care pathway. It will enable organisations to:

- Standardise dementia education and training;
- Guide the focus and aims of dementia education and training delivery through key learning outcomes;
- Ensure the educational relevance of dementia training;
- Improve the quality and consistency of education and training provision.

By setting out the skills, knowledge and behaviours expected for the delivery of dementia services, the framework will be of value to a range of stakeholders, including staff at both a personal and team level, trainers, assessors of occupational standards, service managers, education commissioners and education providers.

**How it works**

The framework is structured into three tiers to reflect the scope of HEE’s principal mandate requirements, as well as to ensure that the education and training needs of staff across the broad spectrum of health and social care settings can be met, regardless of whether they provide clinical care, offer information or provide support and assistance in other ways (Box 1).

The training/teaching and assessment methodology is not prescribed in the framework – the aim being that education and training should be developed to suit the local context. The framework is presented in 14 subjects and is structured to guide the user through a range of relevant information, including learning outcomes, links to relevant guidance, legislation, national occupational standards and other relevant frameworks. Further guidance, including suggested standards for training delivery, are also provided. Interactive hyperlinks to sources of information ensure reference material can be readily accessed.

**Implementation phase**

The framework was launched jointly through Skills for Health, Skills for Care and HEE media channels. HEE is also planning a stakeholder engagement event to support implementation.

**References**

- Colin Wright is skills framework manager at Skills for Health

**Keywords:** Dementia/Education/Framework

**Box 1. Framework tiers**

- **Tier 1:** Raising dementia awareness, in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes for all those working in health and social care settings;
- **Tier 2:** Developing knowledge, skills and attitudes for roles that have regular contact with people living with dementia;
- **Tier 3:** Enhancing knowledge, skills and attitudes of experts working with people living with dementia.