

Unit Nine

Completing the cycle – evaluation from an education provider's perspective

Key messages

Reading this unit will:

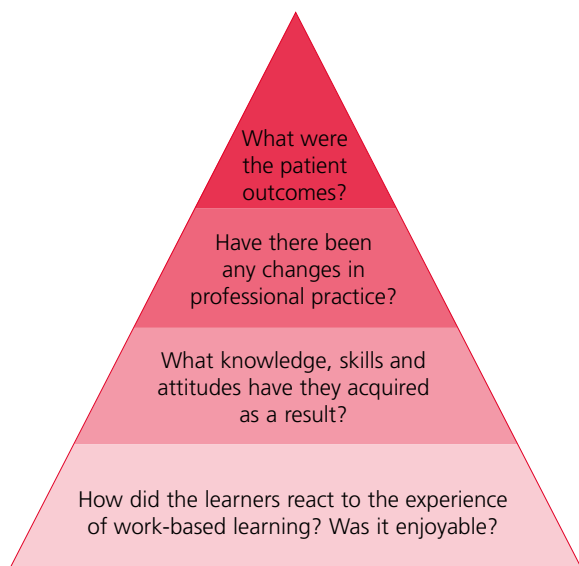
- explain how you can evaluate the education and training support provided to health care assistants (HCAs).

As a provider of education to HCAs working in general practice, you will want to know the extent to which:

- there are resources to fund HCA student places for current or future awards
- the format and delivery of HCA education suits the circumstances of the HCA working in general practice – the right balance between work-based learning, off-site learning and self-directed study
- local training is relevant and appropriate to HCAs working in general practice, as opposed to other healthcare settings
- HCAs take up education
- HCAs register for external awards with education providers (and the associated drop-out rates).

In order to define what particular aspects of work-based learning need to be evaluated, it is important to focus on the level of information required. Consideration should be made as to whether you are evaluating the outcome or product of the student's learning experiences, or the quality of the teaching activities – the process.^{1,2} Kirkpatrick's hierarchical model of four levels of evaluation (reaction, learning, behaviour and results) has been adapted for evaluating what can be gained from work-based learning (Figure: *Kirkpatrick's hierarchy application to work-based learning*).

Kirkpatrick's hierarchy application to work-based learning²



Some of the information in the hierarchy will feed into an evaluation to assess the current situation while planning what education and training is needed for HCAs working in general practice and/or what can be viably supplied.

The example in Table: *Examples of evaluation an education provider might undertake* focuses on training. It might, however, be appropriate to evaluate a different topic. With the example discussed, you might focus your evaluation on:

- **what actually happened** – such as the content of awards deemed suitable for HCAs working in general practice; the nature of the training needs assessment of HCAs undertaken by local PCTs that is shared with education providers
- **how it worked out** – how well the courses and awards ran; numbers who registered compared with those who dropped out or arranged to postpone; the content and satisfaction of feedback from HCA students and their employers
- **the outcome** – what was achieved as a result of educational provision; the skills and qualifications gained by what proportion of HCAs; their ability to apply their learning in practice.

You might evaluate the ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘outcome’ aspects regarding educational provision or some other aspect of work that is important. Alternatively, you may evaluate just one of these, such as the ‘how’ only. Evaluating the outcome and what was achieved or the changes made to the education and training provided will be more challenging to evaluate than the ‘what’ and ‘how’ aspects. A joint evaluation with an HCAs employer could be a useful exercise, as this could allow assessment of an individual’s resulting competency.

Undertaking the evaluation

1. Look at the table below and decide by reading the information in columns A, B and C if this is something you would like to evaluate.
2. Click on the tool for instructions on how to complete the evaluation. For example if you choose ‘Induction’, click on [Tool – Training provisions for health care assistants working in general practice – evaluation by education providers](#).
3. This Tool will give you a template to fill in electronically or by hand to complete the evaluation process.

Examples of evaluation that an HCA might undertake

Aspect of HCA post	Criteria for evaluation by HCA working in general practice		
	A	B	C
	What is it about?	How did it work?	What was the outcome?
	Extent by which:	Extent by which:	Extent by which:
Training <div style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px; font-size: small;"> Tool – Training provision for health care assistants working in general practice – evaluation by education providers </div>	There was an induction, what was the comprehensiveness, quality and nature of the induction programme.	HCA meets with other colleagues and understands their roles; HCA has the they have opportunity to learn about relevant practice protocols and policies; HCA’s learning and skill needs are identified.	HCA is familiar with the practice and its ways of working; training plan is agreed and undertaken relevant to skill mix of team, including HCA.
Your selected issue	You add	You add	You add

Summary

- *Education providers should consider the purpose of their evaluation and design the methods and process accordingly.*
- *This unit provides examples and tools to support your evaluation planning process.*

References

1. Kirkpatrick DL. *Evaluating Training Programmes – The Four Levels*. London: Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 1998.
2. Carter K, Edwards J, Mohammad I et al. Evaluate work-based learning. *Educ Prim Care* 2005; 16: 726–728.