

15/2009: Sustaining Learning and Skills in the Workplace Governance Report: Quarter 3, September to December 2009

- The project team will produce a governance report on a quarterly basis which will cover activity including financial updates and project outcomes. This report relates to the third quarter of the project and is structured around the project workstreams.
- For background information, a report entitled *The RCN / Unionlearn project in England - Sustaining learning and skills in the workplace; supporting ULRs in developing learners* is available.
- For the purpose of this report the term 'learning representative' is abbreviated to 'LR'.

Workstream A – Governance

Project Team and Project Management

The project team continue to work using the project management structure of the 6 workstreams. Since the last report the project has been audited by the RCN internal auditor and has been commended for good practice. The project will be externally audited at some point during 2010/11.

Project Steering Committee

- The Project Steering Committee had their third meeting on 2 December 2009. The notes and key messages from the meeting are available on request.
- Julie Hardman has agreed to join the Steering Committee to represent LRs in the North West region. We are still attempting to appoint a LR to be a Committee member from the South West region.
- We are still awaiting a representative from the Membership and Representatives Committee (MRC). They discussed this at their recent meeting although we have yet to hear what has been agreed.

Project Finance

Quarter 3	Oct		Nov		Dec		Total		
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	
Dissemination	0.00	37.81	0.00	474.63	5,500.00	0.00	5,500.00	512.44	
Staffing Total	9,818.50	5,283.18	9,818.50	5,283.18	9,818.50	9,302.94	29,455.50	19,869.30	
Travel and Subsistence (team)	158.33	0.00	158.33	191.00	158.33	0.00	475	191.00	
Travel and Subsistence (other)	3,737.29	467.95	3,737.29	1,451.78	3,737.29	768.84	11,211.87	2,688.57	
Stationery	166.67	90.85	166.67	4.77	166.67		500.00	95.62	
Telephones	41.67		41.67		41.67		125.00		
Office Running Costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	375.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	375.00	
							Total for Q2	47,267.37	23,731.93

Project to date	Q1		Q2		Q3		Total	
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
Dissemination	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,500.00	512.44	5,500.00	512.44
Staffing Total	29,455.50	17,959.53	29,455.50	18,058.79	29,455.50	19,869.30	88,366.50	55,887.62
Travel and Subsistence (team)	475.00		475.00	137.70	475.00	191.00	1,425.00	328.70
Travel and Subsistence (other)	2,100.00	2,822.95	5,137.29	3,645.25	11,211.87	2,688.57	18,449.16	9,156.77
Stationery	500.00	620.44	500.00	928.06	500.00	95.62	1,500.00	1,644.12
Telephones	125.00	33.34	125.00	4.90	125.00	0.00	375.00	38.24
Office Running Costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	375.00	0.00	375.00
	32,655.50	21,436.26	35,692.79	22,774.70	47,267.37	23,731.93	115,615.66	67,492.89

Workstream B – Workshops for Learning Representatives

Activity during Quarter 3 (October to December 09):

- The Learning Needs workshops were delivered for the North West, London, South West and the East and West Midlands regions. There was a disappointing uptake which is reflected in the hard outcomes, but the courses that went ahead were very well evaluated and many attendees have signed up for future events.
- The new staff members responsible for the delivery of the workshops took up their posts and the project team were able to put more energy and resources into promoting the workshops.
- The Learning Skills workshop programme was developed.

Looking to Quarter 4 (January to March 10):

- Sign off and delivery of the Learning Skills workshops
- Developing the Learner Progression workshop
- Communications strategy to support and promote the workshops

Workstream C – Numeracy Initiative

Activity during quarter 3 (October to December 09):

- The 'Drug Calculation' workshop was reviewed by the steering committee and subsequently updated and signed off. The workshop is aimed at any staff member and intends to raise awareness and signpost to support.
- The team will deliver a congress fringe event focussing on how LRs can support members in numeracy and drug calculation.

Looking to Quarter 4 (January to March 10):

- 'Drug Calculation' workshop delivered at the Whittington NHS Trust
- Ealing Hospital confirm invitation to hold a similar workshop
- Trust in the East Midlands express an interest in holding a similar workshop
- Links made with Skills for Health
- Congress

Workstream D – Gathering Evidence of LR Activity

The project team has a series of measurable and soft outcomes which are set as per the contract with unionlearn.

Measurable Outcomes

	Target for Oct to Dec 2009				Actual
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	
LR initial training	5	5	5	15	7
LR follow on training	58	22	48	148	46
Skills for Life	0	6	6	12	0
ICT	6	5	6	17	15
Level 2	2	2	2	6	3
Level 3	2	2	2	6	1
CPD	30	30	30	90	114
FE	1	1	2	4	0
HE	15	15	15	45	75
<i>Total Number of Learning Opportunities Accessed (total of the above)</i>				323	261
IAG	450	400	400	1250	1237
Networking Events			1	1	3

Explanation of Outcomes

LR Initial Training

The RCN continues to recruit new ULRs through a marketing campaign. A marketing plan for 10/11 is in the final stages of development and focuses on:

- the purpose of the ULR and the impact they have on the workplace and therefore on the patient experience
- redressing myths around the ULR
- the benefits and expectations for members and the organisations they work in
- the benefits for the individual in taking on a ULR role

LR Follow on training

As suggested in the last quarterly report, we experienced a delay in the preparation and delivery of the workshops. We anticipate this figure to rise considerably in Q4 now all workshop dates have been set and publicised for 2010/11.

ICT

The RCN provides IT based learning opportunities for members who wish to become actively involved in using the web to network and communicate. Members are given training in using Content Management Systems (CMS) which enables them to become web editors.

Skills for Life

While we have not yet had any referrals to skills for life courses, the project team have moved forward considerably in their work around numeracy.

Since the start of the project, the RCN has begun working with a London based NHS trust and will be delivering 2 numeracy workshops on the 1st of March 2010 for staff. The workshops focus on drug calculation (level 2), and where to access support to improve numeracy skills. Two other trusts have expressed an interest in the workshop and have approached the project team to deliver later in the year.

At RCN Congress in April 2010, the project team will be delivering the workshop as a 'train the trainer' event for ULRs with a view to the workshops being widely run throughout England.

We hope that evaluations of these workshops will provide evidence of referrals to formal skills for life numeracy courses.

Level 2 & 3 vocational qualifications

This quarter we have identified 4 members who have been referred or are being supported in study for vocational qualifications. The project team has commissioned the ULR's who are part of the ULF Steering Committee to undertake a small piece of research in their workplace to enable us to understand the current climate with regards to vocational qualifications. The results will be reviewed at the next ULF steering committee in March 2010.

CPD

The RCN continues to offer opportunities and support to members in continuing professional development. This quarter the RCN supported over 60 learners to create an on-line CPD plan using the RCNs Learning Zone technology.

Further Education

The project team have been unable to identify any learners undertaking further education courses.

Higher Education

Learners continue to utilise the RCN / OU strategic alliance. This quarter saw one learner enrol on Using Mathematics which is a broad, enjoyable introduction to university-level mathematics.

Information Advice and Guidance

In this quarter ULRs have provided information advice and guidance to learners and employers using wide ranging methods.

Dissemination / Networking Events

This quarter the:

- South West Learning Representatives Network met in Exeter. The ULF Project team presented to the group and worked with them to develop their action plan for 2010/11.
- ULF project team held a workshop at the RCN Stewards Conference in December 2009 to promote the role of the learning rep and to encourage joint working amongst union representatives.
- ULF project team delivered a working lunch session to staff at the RCN. The purpose of the event was to promote the role of the ULR and to enable people to see the potential of working with ULRs. A wide range of staff attended including Jill Galvani, Director of Nursing & Patient Services for North Wales NHS Trust who was shadowing Janet Davies, The RCN's Director of Nursing and Service Delivery.

Other Outcomes

Union Learning Representatives

We are starting to see evidence of learning being put into practice from the training and follow-on training provided for ULRs as part of the ULF projects.

Five ULRs who undertook The Professional Development Programme exploring facilitation skills earlier in the year, submitted portfolio's for accreditation against the RCN Facilitation Standards. One ULR wrote that he:

'utilised the skills I learnt from our facilitation training in our departmental meeting....engaging all the members of staff, taking on board their concerns and worries. The 'Claims, Concerns and issues approach is now used regularly on our meetings'

As part of the project, the team are delivering a programme of workshops and masterclasses to ULRs and during November and December, the team delivered the first one which is entitled Learning Needs. The workshop focused on the needs of the learner and the organisation, and covered learning styles and training needs analysis. In one evaluation, the ULR noted:

'I am currently involved in ongoing dialogue with our learning and training department and information from this course will help me during these discussions'

When asked what actions they would take away, another ULR suggested they would:

'reflect on learning styles when discussing feedback with HCA on completing the HCA trust induction course as they are sometimes feeling blocked on how to get from classroom into practice'

We have also seen some ULRs who have accessed training opportunities, go on to take up influential roles within the RCN in groups such as the UK Committee for Learning Representatives, RCN Regional Boards, and Project Steering Committees.

Supporting Learners

RCN union learning representatives continue to employ wide ranging methods to reach and support learners in the workplace. This quarter activity included:

- supporting members who have English as a second language with writing statements
- arranging workplace meetings to promote the role of the LR
- supporting a member to adapt their continuing professional development to accommodate a long term medical condition
- supporting Health Care Assistants who wish to explore access to nursing
- organising a conference for learners exploring accountability
- delivering workshops to support new policy and procedure
- supporting members to negotiate their way around the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework
- supporting members with personal development plans

Employer Engagement

ULRs continue to take an active role in staff side negotiation and to influence the learning agenda. This quarter ULRs have been involved in:

- staff side committees such as the Staff Involvement Forum and Joint Consultative Committees
- representing members to influencing the way job evaluation panels are conducted
- attending KSF committees
- representing members concerns over local workforce development.

Time off for ULR training

The project team are becoming aware that, in the current climate, it is becoming increasingly difficult for ULRs to be released to access follow on training and that they are experiencing challenges with finding the time to provide the project team with reports.

The project team are therefore:

- exploring web technology to deliver shorter web based follow on training or 'webinars' that can be accessed from the workplace
- conducting research to establish the current challenges faced, and support needed, to enable ULRs to engage
- reviewing methods of communication and requests made of ULRs, to maximise their engagement in the project.

Workstream E – Networking events

Activity during quarter 3 (October to December 09):

- The Steering Committee drew up a proposed invitation list for a regional networking event and agreed to work to populate the list with contacts.

- The project team presented at 3 events to promote the role of the LR and union learning. (See above for details)

Looking to Quarter 4 (January to March 10):

- The project team are presenting at the South East HCA conference
- The project team are moving forward with plans for regional networking events.

Workstream F – Communications Plan

The project risk assessment identified the project communications plan as a major control of risk for the project. A detailed communications plan is available on request.

Activity during quarter 3 (October to December 09):

- Mailout to experienced LRs in England introducing the workshops
- Paper sent to all regional boards
- Key messages from Steering Committee

Looking to Quarter 4 (January to March 10):

- Article in Activate
- Developing the Continuing Professional Development Prospectus for England which includes all ULF Workshops