

## **The Development of Clinical Supervision for Nurses.**

This information provides a brief overview of the activities that have taken place involving staff from the Gosport and Fareham nursing services. More detailed information regarding the content and structure of both the Introductory and Skills Based workshops can be available if required.

Portsmouth HealthCare NHS Trust has been working to introduce systems for Clinical Supervision to all nurses across the Trust, for the past 5-6 years. In the early stages a team from the Royal College of Nursing Institute were engaged in assisting with this.

The main focus has been on establishing Clinical Supervision based on a clearly described reflective process, and consistent with the model first described by Bridget Proctor which specifies the 3 key functions as being to support 'Normative' 'Formative' and 'Restorative' practices. The overall aim being to ensure that staff had access to good systems of clinical support that would facilitate exploration of their own practice and ensure this linked in to service and organizational expectations as well as providing a structure for continuing professional development and life long learning. These aims are consistent with those expressed by the key professional bodies, in this instance the United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing.

The approach adopted has been:

1. Initial Introductory workshops,-- generally 2 - 3 hours long. The aim being to give participants an opportunity to explore their understanding and anxieties relating to this issue in more detail.
2. 1-2 day Skills Based workshops,-- aimed at individuals who were developing their role as 'Supervisors' and emphasizing the importance of facilitation, support/challenge, work based learning and reflection.
3. As part of the Trusts Clinical Nursing Development Programme which ran between January 1999 and December 2000, individuals within each geographical area were identified to 'lead' in terms of helping staff and identify the best ways of introducing clinical supervision into their services and day to day practice.

Several nurses from the Gosport and Fareham area have participated in activities 1 and 2 described above, a number of these were staff based within the Gosport War Memorial service. Whilst there has been a great deal of interest and enthusiasm for this the practical problems,-- availability of appropriately skilled supervisors, the time to carry it out when so many other direct patient care activities are identified as priorities, day to day staffing problems, embedding the practice into 'busy' cultures, inevitably mean that this is a slow process and often slips off agendas, even if only temporarily, as other problems need to be addressed.

On-going work in this area is looking at ways to secure a good base of appropriately skilled supervisors and find ways of supporting staff in overcoming some of the obstacles that can be seen to prevent this from developing fully.

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