



Hub and Spoke

Hub and spoke learning experiences for all professional and statutory regulatory body (PSRB) approved programmes

GM Practice Education Centre of Excellence
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1.0 Introduction

Background

The development of the hub and spoke learning experiences embraces the goals and aspirations embedded within the Greater Manchester (GM) Health and Care Learning Environment (HCLE) Strategy (2021-2024) and earlier policy/research including RePAIR (Health Education England (HEE), 2018) and Raising the Bar (Health Education England, 2015)

There are many benefits to adopting this approach to practice education. Spoke learning offers the opportunity to enhance the practice learning experience. Learning across services and sectors and witnessing first-hand, integrated interprofessional person-centred practice, will help remove a binary view of health and social care and widen the lens by which learners come to understand the complex and multifaceted nature of health care within the neighbourhoods they serve.

Greater Manchester is a vibrant metropolitan area rich in culture, diversity, and history. It also has acute differences in health and wealth across the region, with high levels of deprivation and poverty and systemic differences between the health outcomes for different groups. Understanding that healthcare happens in multiple places and domains will transform learner's 'know-how' and help scaffold their learning to develop their professional competence and confidence. The future practitioner must be prepared for the changing landscape of healthcare, one in which they will practice across sectors and services and forge strong partnerships in the delivery of care.

This spoke model does have some challenges. It requires an open-mindedness about where healthcare takes place and it relies on partnerships forged between provider organisations, approved education institutions (AEIs – universities) and the community.

The Hub and Spoke model involves:

- New and innovative ways of learning
- Overcoming barriers to primary and social care in practice learning
- Positive learning experiences impacting on the quality and delivery of person-centred care
- Emergent role experiences

Regulatory requirements

Many factors need to be considered and managed when utilising the hub and spoke model, not least the requirements of regulatory bodies.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2018) Standards for Student Supervision and Assessment state that students, though supernumerary, must be actively involved in midwifery / nursing care as part of the

team and should be supervised by suitably prepared practice supervisors, a nominated practice assessor and academic assessor. The responsibilities within this model of learning are detailed below.

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2017) Standards of Education and Training state that “Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users” and “There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.”

Quality Assurance (QA) for Hub and Spoke learning environments

All learning environments need to demonstrate the QA principles set out in the HEE Quality Framework and the Northwest quality assurance and enhancement framework (NWQAEF) (2021). Hub learning environments are quality assured and compliant against education standards (NMC 2018b), HEE Quality Framework (2019-2020) and the NWQAEF (2021).

Spoke learning environments are routinely identified as part of the quality assurance framework for the hub learning environment. Any spoke learning environment which is not identified as part of the hub environment must be agreed by the educator, Practice Education Facilitator, and the AEI (Practice Learning Lead / Academic). The learning environment will be required to complete a risk assessment to be included within the hub quality assurance / audit documentation.

Spoke learning environments are normally identified by the hub learning environment and appropriate support and practice supervision must always be available for learners. Hub supervisors and assessors retain oversight of student learning during spoke experiences – in spoke learning environments without registered health professionals, any agreed GM guidance for supervision and assessment should be followed.

2.0 Aims of the Hub and Spoke Model for Learning Environments

- Provide opportunities for learning across service, sector and organisational boundaries within healthcare settings that also transcend traditional professional boundaries to enrich the learner experience and enable future practitioners to be prepared for new challenges in healthcare provision e.g., telemedicine, digital health technologies and working in partnership to meet the needs of the community.
- Support the expansion of learning environments by fostering open-mindedness about care settings, embracing flexible learning opportunities. By adopting this model of learning across communities of practice, there is a predictable and sustainable approach to expanding the capacity of practice learning environments across Greater Manchester.

3.0 Learning Environments

3.1. Hub Learning Environments

This is the principal learning environment to which learners are allocated. This can be in a variety of settings, including, inpatient, outward facing primary and community settings, private, independent, voluntary, and other sectors. The hub learning environment will:

- Provide learning opportunities to ensure that the appropriate programme learning outcomes and proficiencies are achieved.
- Provide the opportunity for learners to experience full aspects of the patient / service user / carer journey
- Integrate theory and practice so that learners can learn, develop, and apply the fundamentals of practice required in all PSRB approved programmes.

Supervision and Assessment in the Hub Learning Environment

The hub learning environment will:

- Provide each learner with a nominated and appropriately qualified Practice Educator.
- Provide the opportunity for learners to engage in practice supported by a range of appropriate educators, and other members of the healthcare team.
- Provide continuity of assessment in practice, completed at the appropriate times. The hub educators are responsible for the assessment process.
- Provide direction and support for the learner in developing goal-orientated outcomes/learning log prior to their spoke experience. These should be linked to achievement of the learners' learning outcomes
- Ensure open communication between educators in the hub learning environment and the spoke learning environment to unify each experience.
- Monitor progression and where there is concern regarding a learners' ability to achieve their relevant programme learning outcomes, the use of spoke learning experiences should be discussed with the

educator team to ensure the summative assessment takes priority. In this situation the hub educator may decide spoke experiences are not a priority at this time.

3.2. Spoke Learning Environment

A spoke learning environment is one which offers learning opportunities through the healthcare system that are connected to the hub provision and reflects the service user's journey.

- Spoke experiences add to the learners learning and create learning opportunities that are not available within the hub learning environment. They provide a person-centred holistic view of health care.
- Some of these spoke experiences will occur within the provider organisation of the hub learning environment and others will be outside of this, in the wider health and care landscape.
- The combined length of spoke learning experiences can vary and should be negotiated with the hub educator. This should depend on the learning opportunities afforded and level of supervision and support available in order to achieve the learning outcomes.

Supervision & Assessment in the Spoke Learning Environments

- Spoke learning environments are identified by the hub learning environment and appropriate support and practice supervision must be available for learners.
- Learning will be guided using learning log/goals which have been developed by the learner supported by their educator in the hub learning environment. The goals identified will help the learner meet the learning outcomes they are working towards within their hub environment.
- The learner must reflect on and discuss their experience with their educator on return to the hub learning environment. Learners may demonstrate the following:
- How they have developed their appreciation of other roles and services and their contribution to the health and wellbeing of service users
- How they will apply this knowledge to their own practice
- How they will disseminate this knowledge to service users, carers, and peers
- Learning will be continually assessed throughout the learning experience, and valuable feedback from educators in the spoke learning environments will inform the overall assessment process.

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