Gofal Cymdeithasol Cymru
Social Care Wales

Supporting professional development

This page offers guidance and practical resources for managers and supervisors to support their staff’s continuing professional development (CPD) and reflective practice.

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People learn in many ways, through training, supervision, professional discussions and everyday practice. Managers and supervisors play an important role in supporting learning and professional development. They can support workers by creating opportunities to learn, reflect and put new knowledge into practice.

This page offers guidance and practical resources for managers and supervisors to support their staff’s continuing professional development (CPD) and reflective practice.

Your role in supporting professional development

Supporting professional development helps workers provide safe, effective and person-centred care and support. Regular conversations about learning help workers to keep developing their skills and knowledge throughout their careers.

As a manager, you can support workers to:

- identify learning needs
- access learning opportunities
- reflect on learning
- apply learning in practice
- develop knowledge and skills
- prepare for future roles and responsibilities.

Creating a positive learning culture

A positive learning culture encourages people to learn, share ideas and reflect on their practice. Learning should be part of everyday practice, not just formal training.

You can create a positive learning culture by:

- giving time to discuss learning
- encouraging workers to share learning with colleagues
- recognising learning from everyday practice
- creating opportunities for reflection
- recognising strengths and good practice
- supporting open and honest conversations.

Identifying learning and development needs

Learning needs will change throughout someone’s career. Use supervision and regular conversations to talk about:

- current roles and responsibilities
- strengths and areas for development
- feedback from practice
- changes in legislation, guidance or best practice
- future learning priorities
- career aspirations.

These conversations help workers identify learning opportunities relevant to their role and professional development.

The Codes of Professional Practice for Social Care, and National Occupational Standards (NOS) can help identify the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed

for different roles, and support conversations about learning and development.

Supporting learning through supervision

Supervision gives workers time to reflect on their practice, discuss what they've learnt and set development goals.

Use supervision to explore:

- what they've learnt
- how they've used that learning in practice
- what's worked well
- any challenges or barriers they faced
- what support they need
- what actions are needed for future learning.

Reflective conversations help workers understand how learning affects their practice and improves the care and support they provide.

Use our reflective questions for supervision to support these conversations.

Recognising everyday learning

Learning doesn't just happen through formal training. Workers learn through many experiences, these include:

- supervision
- professional discussions
- team meetings

- mentoring and coaching
- shadowing colleagues
- reading guidance and research
- webinars and podcasts
- getting feedback from colleagues and people who receive care and support
- everyday practice.

Recognising informal learning helps workers understand that professional development happens every day.

Reviewing the impact of learning

Learning has the greatest impact when it’s applied in practice.

Use supervision to discuss:

- what workers have learnt
- how practice has changed
- what difference the learning has made
- what further learning or support may be needed.

These conversations help workers use what they’ve learnt and identify future development needs.

Supporting career development

Managers play an important role in helping workers develop their careers.

Regular development conversations help workers to:

- identify their career goals
- explore learning and development opportunities
- prepare for new responsibilities
- understand qualifications and progression opportunities
- plan their future development.

When managers support career development, workers build confidence and develop the knowledge and skills they need for future roles.

The pay and progression framework and qualification framework can support career development conversations by helping workers understand the knowledge, skills and qualifications that support progression.

Useful resources

You may also find these resources helpful:

- Reflecting on your learning
- Different ways to reflect
- Reflective questions for supervision
- Learning log

Related pages

- Understanding CPD
- Learning
- Reflective practice
- Continuing professional development (CPD)
- Effective supervision
- Pay and progression framework
- Codes of Professional Practice
- National Occupational Standards (NOS)

- Qualification framework