

SKILLS FOR HEALTH MAKES ITS 'MARK' TO DRIVE UP STANDARDS IN TRAINING FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR

Skills for Health is pleased to announce the launch of the UK's first Quality Mark specific to the delivery of education and training in the healthcare sector following the completion of a successful pilot phase.

The model for the new Skills for Health Quality Mark has been developed following an in-depth consultation process¹, working closely with employers and providers to gain valuable insight, evaluation and feedback at every step.

Following robust assessment during the pilot, ten leading training and education providers² have been awarded the Skills for Health Quality Mark for specific programmes of learning and will be the pioneers of the scheme.

The programme, which will be available UK wide from October 2013, is expected to generate a high level of interest following support of the initiative in the recently published Cavendish Review. With the current investment in education and training in the health sector standing at £2.9bn per annum³, the Skills for Health Quality Mark aims to provide the 'gold standard' for training across the healthcare industry. Given the renewed national focus on the importance of training in the health sector, this will assure that providers can demonstrate a deep understanding of the sector that is translated into the design, delivery and impact of the learning and training courses offered.

The main purpose of the Skills for Health Quality Mark is three-fold;

- Ensure that providers of training and specific learning/training courses have met the high standards expected by healthcare employers
- Assure that the staff delivering training have the right knowledge and skills and maintain these through continued professional development
- To give health employers greater confidence when investing in workforce development and make it easier to identify and select appropriate course and providers of training.

It will also act as a benchmark to enable training provider organisations to measure the quality of their own delivery with specific reference to the health sector.

The Standards cover four domains which Skills for Health expects providers to meet in order for training programmes to be endorsed by the Quality Mark including;

- **Effectiveness of Quality Assurance Arrangement:** including assessment of efficacy of quality systems and processes and demonstrable commitment to continuous improvement
- **Health Sector Engagement/awareness:** ensuring effective stakeholder partnership to meet health sector learning needs and add value to patient/service user experience
- **Learning Excellence:** meeting the needs of the health sector via contextualisation, relevance and impact
- **Ethics and value:** includes attitudes, behaviours and values appropriate to the health sector to inform and drive delivery of all programme activity.

John Rogers, Chief Executive, Skills for Health comments; “With our legacy in the healthcare sector and knowledge of its skills development and training requirements, the Skills for Health Quality Mark is a natural extension of the organisation’s service offering. The successful launch of this initiative is testament to the collaborative approach taken during the consultation process and the valuable contribution of our stakeholders. We believe this new benchmark will help to set high standards for training in the health sector to benefit the delivered of patient care, now and in the future.”

Holders of the Skills for Health Quality Mark will be able to use the Quality Mark logo on materials and advertising to demonstrate their accreditation to this unique health sector quality framework for learning and training.

The Skills for Health Quality Mark focuses on the key factors that underpin high quality teaching, learning and assessment but does not endorse the subject matter or content of programmes.

For expressions of interest regarding the Skills for Health Quality Mark application process email qualitymark@skillsforhealth.org.uk or for specific questions on the scheme please contact; Anne.Close@skillsforhealth.org.uk. For further information, visit <http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/workforce-transformation/sustainable-skills-for-sustainable-services/quality-mark/>

Once launched, the Quality Mark will be administered by the new National Skills Academy for Health which will itself launch on 12th September, email: Information@nsahealth.org.uk

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For more information please contact Caroline Beswick or Francesca Levi on telephone: 020 7112 4905 or email caroline.beswick@trinitypr.co.uk.

Notes to editors:

- Skills for Health is the Sector Skills Council for all health sector employers: NHS, independent and third sector. Since 2002 we've been working with employers to get the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time. We are the authoritative voice on skills issues for the health sector and offer proven workforce solutions and tools – with the expertise and experience to use them effectively. To find out more about our unique competence-based approach to workforce transformation and how we can help you drive up productivity and quality visit www.skillsforhealth.org.uk.

References:

1. The consultation process included stakeholder sessions and focus groups with employers and providers to obtain views pertaining to the development and value of a Quality Mark covering the delivery of education and training in the health sector. An online questionnaire was also conducted.
2. The Skills for Health Quality Mark has been awarded to the following provider organisations and specific programmes of learning:

Organisation	Programmes of learning endorsed
Beacon Education Partnerships	Apprenticeships in Health and Social Care
Prevention and Support Services Team (NHS Ayrshire and Arran)	Alcohol and Substance Abuse Awareness and Prevention programmes of learning.
Open University	Level 4 Health Care Sciences and Health Sciences programmes of learning.
Stroke Association	Stroke 15 module training course and 'Active Communication' and 'Stroke is a medical emergency'
North West Regional College (Northern Ireland)	Apprenticeships in Health and Social Care and Diploma in Health and Social care
Somerset College	The Foundation Degree in Healthcare Practice and Diploma in Health Studies programmes of learning.
Calderstones Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Apprenticeships in Health and Social Care
Preston College	Apprenticeships in Dental Nursing and Diploma in Dental Nursing
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust	Working Better Together programme of learning

CME -Medical	Device Training and Advanced Device Training programmes of learning
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