

CASE STUDY

Humber & North Yorkshire (HNY) Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) Process

At a Glance

Overview

Transitioned from a reactive "shopping list" approach to a proactive Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) strategy, aiming for strategic future planning and efficient budget commissioning in addressing organisational learning needs.

Approach

Engaged key stakeholders, introduced structured planning and workshops, and utilised Health Education England (HEE) to manage the LNA process, ensuring cohesiveness and strategic alignment among various health and care organisations.

Impact

Achieved strategic budget commissioning, empowered system partners with an in-house template for training and funding management, and informed education providers about current and upcoming educational needs for strategic provision planning.

OVERVIEW

The original approach used a 'shopping list' of current, yearly needs based on previous activities. This didn't allow for strategic future planning due to its lack of a forward view. There was also a lack of engagement across programmes and networks in prioritising learning needs. The LNA process was introduced to encourage organisations to define their learning needs for both the present and upcoming years, aiding in better forward planning and strategic commissioning of the budgets. It also establishes a business case readiness for any in-year funding opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

- Gather data from health and care organisations across HNY about their present and future learning needs.
- Inform education providers about learning needs across the system footprint.
- Plan for upcoming educational provision needs.
- Identify suitable and appropriate funding channels for learning needs.
- Collaborate with system and Regional programme/network/staff leads to understand current and future training and education priorities.
- Improve the commissioning process of the Workforce Transformation Budget, and other key funding streams.
- Monitor and evaluate the use of funding and accessed educational provision.

CHALLENGES

- Organisations initially hesitant to engage with a detailed, evolving learning process.
- Low engagement from particular sectors to give a fair and full system picture of learning needs, i.e., Primary Care & Social Care.
- Inconsistent details and engagement levels across the system, affecting a balanced view.
- The volume of learning needs requests significantly surpasses available funding.



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APPROACH & IMPLEMENTATION

The approach prioritized engaging key stakeholders and designing a process that would inspire ownership and involvement. This involved initiating working groups, employing the Workforce Transformation Group to vocalise ideas and shape the development process, and launching workshops to present new templates and processes. Additionally, it was crucial to identify key leads for Primary Care Networks (PCNs) to ensure streamlined communication and coordination. Throughout the process, drop-in clinics were established to provide continuous support and resources for ongoing initiatives, while support from Health Education England (HEE) was utilised to merge all returned LNAs. This also facilitated necessary discussions among programme, network, staff leads, and education providers, ensuring a coherent and collaborative approach to addressing learning needs across organisations.

RESULTS

A functioning LNA process for 2023/24+ was established, successfully identifying the learning needs of HNY organisations. However, engagement in Primary Care, Social Care, and Mental Health Trust could be enhanced. Furthermore, a documented system view of learning needs was developed, effectively informing both NHSE and education providers about requirements across the system.

LESSONS LEARNED

From our self-evaluation of the process, it became apparent that template adaptations are necessary to cater to various organisations, as some created their own simplified in-house versions. A need for heightened engagement was identified, particularly from Primary and Social Care, as well as our Mental Health Trusts. Although we rolled out the process as a Yorkshire & Humber procedure in 2023/24 for organisations operating across system boundaries, further refinements could be applied, such as a consistent approach utilising identical templates.

IMPACT

The project facilitated more strategic commissioning of budgets where applicable and enabled system partners to use the template in-house for managing and identifying opportunities for internal training and/or alternative funding uses, such as Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Additionally, education providers became aware of the present and future yearly education needs, enabling them to strategically plan their provision, thereby optimising educational offerings in alignment with identified needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Early engagement with partners is crucial, especially during the design phases of the process, to ensure alignment and commitment from all involved parties.
- A 'test group' could be employed to engage with the process — utilising the template and gathering relevant data — ensuring that the data collected, and the use of the template are both practical and efficient prior to wider implementation.

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