



Faculty of Public Health

Of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

Working to improve the public's health

Guidance for good practice in learning¹

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These guidelines have been developed to help you in quality assuring any educational event you organise. The guidelines can also be used as a checklist by individuals to ensure that any learning event attended is worthwhile.

Why have we produced the guidance?

The FPH is committed to encouraging active learner-centred education which includes elements of reflection and which contributes actively to personal and professional development.

Identifying the need

How was the need for this educational event identified? It is important that educational events respond to educational needs and are not driven by other agenda. Try using the following checklist:

- Does the learning event address an area of public health need?
 - As an individual you may be able to identify areas of need by looking at your personal development plan.
 - As an organisation you may be able to identified areas of need by looking at Personal Development Plans collectively (from management reviews), workforce plans, etc
- Does the learning event intend to impart knowledge only? Or does it intend to also develop skills? The Public Health Skills and Career Framework (web site) can help you to identify the different skills and knowledge needed across all groups, domains and levels of the public health workforce.
- Has a learning needs assessment been made prior to this event? This could be following on from a previous learning event or part of the public health national agenda.
- Is the learning event multi-professional? If so, is it designed to learn with people who are or may be professional colleagues? Multi-professional learning is a growing part of education for all teams.
- Does the learning event address an important national or local initiative? [Examples of these include child protection, diversity, CPR, NSF, NICE, domestic violence, consulting skills]

¹ This document is based on the guidance developed by the East Midlands Teaching Public Health Network

- Has the learning event been arranged in partnership with other organisations (e.g. local PCT(s), local Authorities, Colleges, Universities, etc)? If so, is it part of their educational strategies?

Learning aims, objectives and outcomes

Learning aims are what you aim to deliver to your participants. It is best not to be too ambitious but a learning event at least needs a statement of what the provider aims to do by the end of the event.

Learning objectives are what you intend the learner to take away with them. Keep to objective, measurable words like:

- “the learner will be able to **describe** ...”
- “the learner will have **taken part** ...”
- “the learner will have **practised** ...”

Learning outcomes describe what the learner will be able to do in the workplace, looking to the longer term. For instance, a **learning objective** may state: “The learner will have **practised** basic analytic techniques to analyse routine and non-routine data in health.

A **learning outcome** could be:

“The learner **will be able to utilise** these basic analytic techniques in the workplace”.

Teaching Methods

What teaching methods will be used for the learning event? Lectures and presentations have their place, but it is a limited place, especially for adult learners. It is likely to be of far more educational benefit if learning events are learner centred.

A suggestion for good practice is to consider participants’ learning needs and learning styles. Ideally, learners are encouraged to participate in the learning event.

What happens next?

How will you support the learners? The organiser of a valuable learning event should help supporting participants in incorporating what they have learned into their practice for the benefit of their clients. Consider:

- Have you encouraged reflection on learning, and if so, have you put a structure in place so that any reflections can be shared? One way of doing this is to include some time for reflection within the programme.
- If the learning event has involved sensitive issues and/or emotional commitment from the participants, have arrangements been put in place for their continuing support? An example of such continuing support would be membership of a learning set.

The learning portfolio

Learning events will form part of participants’ learning portfolios and be part of their learning plans, which will in turn form evidence for appraisal. What arrangements have you considered for this? A promotional handout or certificate of attendance alone is unacceptable. Far more desirable is evidence which demonstrates that the learner has engaged actively with the material, such as:

- Tasks completed during or after the course and written up.
- Reflections and action plan from the course. You could incorporate space for this on the Certificate of Attendance.
- Transcripts of, for instance, support groups (keeping confidentiality in mind at all times).

Feedback

It is your responsibility to arrange for feedback to be collected from your learning events, so that any appropriate improvements can be made.

Contacts

If you need further information or advice please contact the CPD Administrator on 020 7935 0243 or cpd@fph.org.uk