

Gateway reference number: 9957

Dear Chief Executives

ACTION REQUIRED FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVES TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FRAMEWORK IN AGENDA FOR CHANGE

We have now completed the ten SHA led regional events, commissioned by the Social Partnership Forum (SPF), to re-energise the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF), which you know is an integral and mandatory part of the Agenda for Change pay system. The event raised a number of valuable learning points. I am therefore writing to let you know what these are, particularly the action that trust boards can take to help KSF fulfil its potential.

LEARNING POINTS FROM RE-LAUNCH

We all know that leadership is key and the events showed that where board members provide positive leadership on use of the KSF, linking it strongly to your organisational objectives, it is delivered more effectively within their organisation.

Learning points from the various events were that the NHS KSF:

- Should be applied in a simple but effective way which adheres to the underlying principles
- Should be linked to locally determined organisational objectives enhancing corporate, financial and clinical governance
- Is helping organisations meet their obligations in relation to diversity, Corporate Manslaughter, and objectives such as reducing MRSA cross-infection and achieving 18 week waits
- Supports effective planning of training and development at an individual, team and organisational level
- Is therefore central to the current and future of service delivery in the NHS
- Contributes toward enhanced outcomes for patients and staff wellbeing

ACTION REQUIRED FROM TRUST BOARDS

The SPF is clear the application of the KSF produces a range of positive outcomes. They therefore have recommended that organisations should take the following actions, which I fully endorse -:

- **Each board should have a named board member with key organisational responsibility to ensure that KSF is applied effectively**
- **Every Board should receive regular reports about the extent to which KSF is being used in their organisation and its effectiveness.**
- **Each organisation should be able to demonstrate a clearer link between use of KSF and improved quality and quantity of appraisals i.e. 100% of staff receiving appraisals.**
- **Linked to this - there should be an ongoing commitment to support union learning representatives and to delivering the KSF through partnership working with local staff sides**

As it is clear that there are so many positive outcomes from the implementation of the KS, I am asking you to ensure this action is taken forward in your organisation. These actions will be followed up by the SHA KSF leads, who will provide an updated position for their constituent organisations to the SPF meeting on the 16th October.

Thanks you in anticipation of your support for this important area of work.

Yours faithfully,

**Ann Keen
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health**