

CiP Framework – Learning and Development Plans

Learning and development plans are tools that can assist an individual or a team to develop knowledge, skills and competence to achieve goals – personal, professional or organisationally and to enable continual development. They outline actions and resources to achieve learning outcomes.

Learning and development plans are important for social care practitioners to enable them to have the appropriate knowledge, skills and competence to provide good quality care.

Learning and development plans are a tangible outcome of learning cultures within organisations.

Learning and development plans enable professional growth and assist in meeting regulatory requirements.

Learning and development plans may also be known as:

- Development Plans
- Training Plans or
- Action Plans.

Social Care Workforce Strategy 2025–2035 (DoH)

The Social Care Workforce Strategy ‘Social care practitioners need the right knowledge and skills to have energy, confidence and resilience in being able to adapt to changing social care needs. Learning and improvement opportunities are key to supporting staff in this process.’

Priority 3:

‘Social care practitioners will have access to qualifications and opportunities to develop and progress through on-going learning relevant to their role and function.’

To achieve the vision- ‘Support employers to put measures in place to support, train and develop their workforce.’

The Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy 2026: Delivering for Our People:

“The workforce is...the most valuable asset in social care, and can, at its best, be at the forefront of empowering people’s independence and choice and improving their social inclusion, participation and social wellbeing. Delivering this vision requires a confident, capable and well-trained workforce.”

Social Care Matters, NISCC, 2017:

“Having the right people, in the right place, at the right time requires a workforce which is safe, effective, and agile in its responsiveness to changing service user needs. The skill and capacity of the social care workforce is integral to the delivery of high-quality social care and successful transformation of service provision.”

NI Social Care Council:

*‘Social Care Practitioner’s and Social Worker’s Post **Registration Training and Learning (PRTL)** is a priority for the Social Care Council to ensure the provision of quality social care and social work services for the public and to ensure workers are safe and competent to practice.*

PRTL also provides benefits for registrants and employers, strengthens skills within the profession and enhances public confidence in social care and social work.

It is recommended that every social care practitioner should have an up to date learning and development plan and that this plan should be discussed and agreed with their line manager and reviewed at least annually.

Components of a learning and development plan can include:

- Assessing current baseline regarding knowledge, skills and competence.
- Assessing needs.
- Setting clear objectives.
- Identifying methods of learning/development.
- Identifying resources required.
- Setting deadlines for completion.
- Mandatory/required training.
- Ongoing professional development.
- Performance reviews.

The benefits of learning and development plans include:

- Employee engagement.
- Career pathway and progression.
- Employee retention.
- Improved performance.
- Continuous improvement.
- The development of confident, knowledgeable and skilled practitioners.

Learning and development plans should be an integral part of supervision and appraisals, should involve reflecting on practice and achievements and are useful when employees are being coached or mentored.

Learning and development plans should be active documents, reviewed and updated at regular intervals.

[Click here to see an example of a learning and development.](#)

Useful resources:

Learning and Development Plans support PRTL (Post Registration Training and Learning):

[Post Registration Training and Learning \(PRTL\) – NISCC Learning Zone](#)

[Reflective Practice for Social Care Practitioners – NISCC Learning Zone](#)

The following may be helpful from Scottish Social Services Council:

[supervision learning resource.](#)

Here is a link to the [IRISS resources](#) that SSSC use.

Additionally, here is SfC's [effective supervision](#) guide.

VBR Toolkit:

[Values-Based Retention Toolkit – What works in valuing and keeping social care practitioners | Induction, Supervision, Learning and Development Plans](#)