Kent and Medway Practice Nursing Conference 2015

Sue Timmins, senior associate and SECSU manager, Kent and Medway GP staff training team, reports on the third practice nursing conference held in November, attended by over 200 practice nurses from the area.

The Kent and Medway GP (KMGP) staff training team, hosted by South East Commissioning Support Unit (SECSU), received high praise from delegates following its third Practice Nursing Conference held in November.

The event, attended by 210 nurses from general practice across Kent and Medway, offered delegates insight and information around a number of topics and challenges currently facing practice nurses.

The conference was chaired by Marilyn Eveleigh, who has considerable experience in a variety of nursing and midwifery roles, and is now an independent trainer. Her expertise and knowledge of primary care was evident throughout the day, and was appreciated by the audience.

Marilyn opened the conference with an address entitled ‘Impending challenges for practice nursing’, which described the current shift in care from secondary to primary care, the prospect of opening surgeries 24/7, and the workforce challenges. She checked whether many audience members were representatives on CCG boards and in other positions of influence and leadership, encouraging the audience to become leaders on behalf of their nursing colleagues. There are over 700 practice nurses across the county, so the audience were encouraged to take this message back to their colleagues who could not attend, to endeavour to ensure that their voices are heard through all the impending changes and challenges.

Marilyn then moved on to co-present some information about the Care Certificate, and its implications for practice nurses in the assessor role against the new standards, signing off health-care assistant (HCA) core competencies as new HCAs work towards this award. Her co-presenter was Lorraine Hicking-Woodson, who is part of the KMGP team; she is also HCA and assistant practitioner representative on the SECSU practice nurse advisor team, as well as the member for the South-East of England on the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) health practitioner committee. The local accredited HCA development programme (KASPAC) has now been mapped against the Care Certificate, meaning that new HCAs now study for both awards at the same time, and this process was described to the audience.

Chris Loveridge from Education for Health was then welcomed—she was an appropriate speaker, given that 18 November was World COPD Day— to present on the current position with the long-awaited ARTP guidelines on spirometry, and giving an update on this. She referred to the Guide to Quality Assured Diagnostic Spirometry, and case studies.

Christine Smith and Pamela Ash from the SECSU’s ICT team then presented issues of information governance relevant to the nursing audience, emphasising when information can be shared and when it cannot, and the implications of inappropriate data sharing.

The final speaker of the morning was Dr. Jen Nash from Diabetes First, who presented on the psychology of weight loss in time-limited consultations—this was particularly relating to diabetes but could be translated into many settings—by appropriate questioning and guidance on dietary matters.
The conference then broke for lunch, during which time the delegates had ample opportunity to visit the 30 exhibition stands. The support of the exhibitors was appreciated by everyone involved in this event; they ranged from pharmaceutical and supply companies to academic education providers, publishers of books and journals, information stands from the Public Health England immunisations and screening team, and ICT training.

During the lunch break, the conference hall was divided into three syndicate rooms, giving space for three afternoon workshops.

The first of these was a non-medical prescribing update for independent and supplementary prescribers, delivered by Trudy Thomas and Fiona Peniston-Bird from the Medway School of Pharmacy, which provided delegates with information about the single competency framework for all prescribers, and hints and tips about the new British National Formulary (BNF).

The second workshop was on contraception, presented by Carol Robinson, senior lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University. She spoke about the most frequently asked questions on this topic, and provided an update on oral contraceptives.

The third workshop presenter was Owen Rogers, arrhythmia nurse specialist at Croydon University Hospital, who presented about the management of patients requiring stroke prevention in atrial fibrillation. He emphasised the importance of going back to basics—checking patients’ pulses—and the considerations for anticoagulation. Bayer Healthcare sponsored this speaker.

After tea, Karen Kessack, primary care education facilitator for West Kent CCG, gave a presentation on nursing revalidation, with a straightforward guide to the processes every nurse has to undertake. She also provided a reflective log form, which she suggested could be used by the delegates as part of their required portfolio, and discussed the processes for validating these logs.

Bryony Neame, associate partner in the quality and clinical governance team in SECSU, then updated the audience about the current service review of both the training team and the practice nurse advisor team, before handing over to Sue Timmins, the Kent and Medway GP staff training manager, to thank the audience for their attendance.

Marilyn Eveleigh closed the event with a rousing reminder to the nurses to digest and take on board everything that they had heard during a stimulating conference, and to make their voices heard in the decision-making processes.

Delegates’ feedback after the conference showed that the day had been extremely well received, with relevant and stimulating topics for them to take back to their workplaces and to share with their colleagues. PN

Correction
In the December 2015 issue of Practice Nursing (Volume 26, Issue 12) the article ‘Perceptions of health professionals involved in a NHS Health Check care pathway’ (page 608–612) was missing the author details. They were as follows: Colin Baker, research fellow, University of Gloucestershire; Elizabeth A Loughren, research fellow, University of Gloucestershire; Diane Crone, professor of exercise science, University of Gloucestershire; Nevila Kalfa, consultant in public health, Public Health England.