Preparing for NMC Revalidation for Nurses and Midwives

Introduction
From 1st April 2016, all nurses and midwives will have to revalidate to maintain their registration with the Nursing & Midwifery Council. This is a new and more robust requirement which aims to demonstrate that nurses and midwives practise safely and effectively.

What is Revalidation?
• It is the process that allows nurses and midwives to maintain registration with the NMC;
• It builds on existing (PREP) renewal requirements;
• It demonstrates continued ability to practise safely and effectively;
• It is a continuous process throughout the career of every nurse and midwife;
• It is not a new way to raise fitness to practise concerns.

Background to revalidation
Sir Robert Francis QC conducted two inquiries into the failings of care at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust.
Following the 2013 publication of the Francis findings and recommendations, the NMC was urged to press ahead with an appropriate model of revalidation for nurses and midwives. The Francis report recommendations set out the model for revalidation. It suggested that NMC should require common standards for appraisal and support of nurses and midwives. The report also recommended that as part of mandatory appraisal, each nurse and midwife should be required to demonstrate in a learning portfolio an up-to-date knowledge of nursing practise and its implementation, to include wider relevant learning. The portfolio should also demonstrate commitment, compassion and caring for patients, ‘evidenced by feedback from patients and families’ if this is appropriate.

Francis further stated that portfolios should be counter-signed as being a true reflection by the nurse’s appraising manager and portfolios should be made available to the NMC, if requested, as part of a nurse or midwife’s revalidation process.

These recommendations were further strengthened within the Berwick report: ‘A Commitment to Act – Improving the Safety of Patients in England (2013)’ which stated as a central principle: ‘the NHS should foster whole-heartedly the growth and development of all staff including their
ability and support to improve the processes in which they work.’

The Hard Truths Report (2014) provided the Government’s response to the Francis Report and with regards to nursing revalidation reported: ‘The NMC is committed to acting on the Francis recommendations and will introduce a proportionate and effective model of revalidation’.

The NMC consulted on the new proposed model in 2014 and then tested the model in a series of national pilot sites in 2015 with a view to going live with the new model for revalidation for nurses and midwives from 1st April 2016.

What are the new requirements and how do they differ from the existing PREP requirements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing PREP requirements</th>
<th>New revalidation requirements from 1 April 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35 hrs CPD within the previous 3 years</td>
<td>35 hrs CPD in the previous 3 years - related to the NMC code</td>
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<tr>
<td>450 hours of practice within the previous 3 years</td>
<td>20 of these hours to include participatory learning with other nurses/midwives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of good character</td>
<td>450 hours practice in the previous 3 years</td>
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<td>Declaration of good character</td>
<td>Professional Indemnity cover</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of good character</td>
<td>5 pieces of feedback from colleagues or users of the services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of good character</td>
<td>5 pieces of written reflection each of which is based on the new NMC Nursing Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of good character</td>
<td>Signed and recorded ‘Reflective Discussion’ (conducted by another nurse/midwife, preferably line manager)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of good character</td>
<td>Confirmation individual’s portfolio is complete and ready to submit to NMC for application for revalidation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Few portfolios audited by NMC</td>
<td>Alignment with annual appraisal wherever this is possible</td>
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<td>Few portfolios audited by NMC</td>
<td>Completion of an on-line application via the NMC web portal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Few portfolios audited by NMC</td>
<td>NMC will regularly audit a set percentage of portfolios which will involve:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Few portfolios audited by NMC</td>
<td>• contact with confirmers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Few portfolios audited by NMC</td>
<td>• electronic submission of portfolio evidence</td>
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Key Questions:

- Have Board members received information regarding the new system of revalidation for nurses and midwives?
- Do we have an executive sponsor for revalidation?
- Are Board members aware of the links between NMC revalidation and the Francis Report, Berwick report & Hard Truth’s report?
- How have we ensured that every nurse and midwife is aware of the new requirements for revalidation?
- How are Board members gaining assurance on the effectiveness of systems and processes to support the new revalidation requirements?
Revalidation & the new NMC Nursing & Midwifery Code (2015)
The NMC states that revalidation builds on existing renewal requirements by introducing new elements which encourage nurses and midwives to reflect on the role of the new Code in their practise and demonstrate that they are ‘living’ the standards set out within it (NMC, 2015).

This is seen to be one of the key benefits of revalidation as it reinforces the underlying principles and standards in the Code which is now a key reference point for meeting the new requirements and demonstrating how improvements have been made in line with the Code.

The NMC Code: Professional standards for practise and behaviour for nurses and midwives (2015) contains the professional standards that nurses and midwives must uphold. The caring values and principles set out in the Code are not negotiable or discretionary. The Code contains a series of statements that signify what good nursing & midwifery practise looks like and aims to promote public trust through increased professionalism. It is presented in four sections and requires nurses and midwives to:
• Prioritise people;
• Practise effectively;
• Preserve safety;
• Promote professionalism and trust.

Every nurse and midwife must reflect on the ways they can improve their practise in line with the above principles and values as a central component of revalidation.

Key Questions:
• Who is championing the uptake of the new Code and how is it integrated into our education and training provision?
• How are Board members assuring themselves that the caring and compassionate values and principles in the new Code are being upheld?

How does revalidation improve public confidence?
NMC (2015) state that ‘revalidation will help to encourage a culture of sharing, reflection and improvement and will be a continuous process that nurses and midwives will have to engage with throughout their career’ thereby strengthening public confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions.

Preparing for NMC Revalidation - Organisational systems & processes
Every Trust is expected to have arrangements in place to support the introduction of NMC revalidation for nurses and midwives.

Although revalidation is the responsibility of nurses and midwives themselves, health care organisations should provide a framework to support the revalidation process and demonstrate that their staff have the continued ability to practise safely and effectively throughout the span of their career. Effective processes will include:-
• Timely and regular communications to all nurses and midwives;
• Regular awareness raising sessions;
• Support from locality/ divisional managers;
• Identification of those nurses and midwives particularly at risk;
• Analysis of workforce data to ensure seasonal flows are understood;
• Identification of those nurses and midwives who will revalidate early in 2016;
• Local, informed staff to champion revalidation & provide timely advice & support;
• Assistance with portfolio completion;
• Linkage of revalidation with appraisal wherever possible;
• Preparation and availability of confirmers;
• Additional arrangements for situations where confirmers are not available;
• Incorporation of revalidation requirements into the education & training programme.
Key Questions:
- **Where is our operational plan for revalidation & are we on track as an organisation to prepare ourselves for NMC revalidation?**
- **Do we know the first cohorts of nurses and midwives due to revalidate and have we reached them to ensure that they know of the new requirements?**
- **How will we continue to be informed of progress after 1st April?**
- **Do we have an effective policy or approved procedure ready for the introduction of NMC revalidation?**
- **What happens if a nurse or midwife fails to revalidate on time, are our policies and processes clear, up to date and known to staff?**
- **Have we enabled revalidation to be linked with appraisal processes?**
- **Have we prepared sufficient numbers of sign off confirmers?**
- **What will happen if there is a dispute between a nurse or midwife needing to revalidate and their confirmer that might prevent revalidation?**
- **How are we supporting revalidation through education & training provision?**
- **Have our recruitment processes been adapted to recognise revalidation requirements?**
- **How can we be assured of the quality of the processes that should lead to continued improvement?**

**Revalidation Risks**
There are several potential risks that might arise associated with the introduction of revalidation. The majority arise from a lack of organisational preparedness.

Potential risks include:
- Insufficient preparation of those registrants needing to revalidate in 2016, resulting in a risk of delays in revalidating and possible loss of registration;
- Failure to reach all nurses and midwives across the whole of the organisation resulting in poor registrant readiness;
- Failure to maintain accurate workforce data by the organisation which would not enable prompts and reminders to be issued ahead of revalidation deadlines;
- Inability to confirm due to poor quality portfolios/ poor preparation of confirmers leading to delays in applying for revalidation and possible lapses in registration.

**Key Questions**
- **Are Board members aware of the main risks associated with the introduction of NMC revalidation?**
- **Are revalidation risks on the Trust risk register?**
- **Who is accountable for ensuring that risks are managed & are we confident about risk management and risk mitigation?**

**Contact Us**
Please contact us if you would like to discuss how we may be able to support you and your organisation with any aspects covered within this briefing note.

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