

Improving the quality of trainee ACP supervision in mental health across the Northwest footprint

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Background

High-quality workplace supervision for practitioners developing in Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) is crucial for both professional development and patient safety. However, there are gaps identified nationally in relation to access to Trainee Advanced Clinical Practice supervision in mental health, the area of focus for this project. One potential solution is the development of an Action Learning Set (ALS) for Trainee ACP supervisors. Action Learning involves a small group of individuals alongside a facilitator. Set members take turns to present real challenges which are solved through the use of skilled questioning as they move through a number of rounds. It is hypothesised by applying this approach with a group of Trainee ACP supervisors the following aims will be achieved

Aims

To improve skills and confidence of TACP supervisors

To provide a supportive space for TACP supervisors

To reduce attrition rates of TACPs

Methods

Initial data collection

In order to understand the current Trainee ACP supervision, offer across the North West footprint, informal discussions with key stakeholders. Data was collected, interpreted and themes identified.

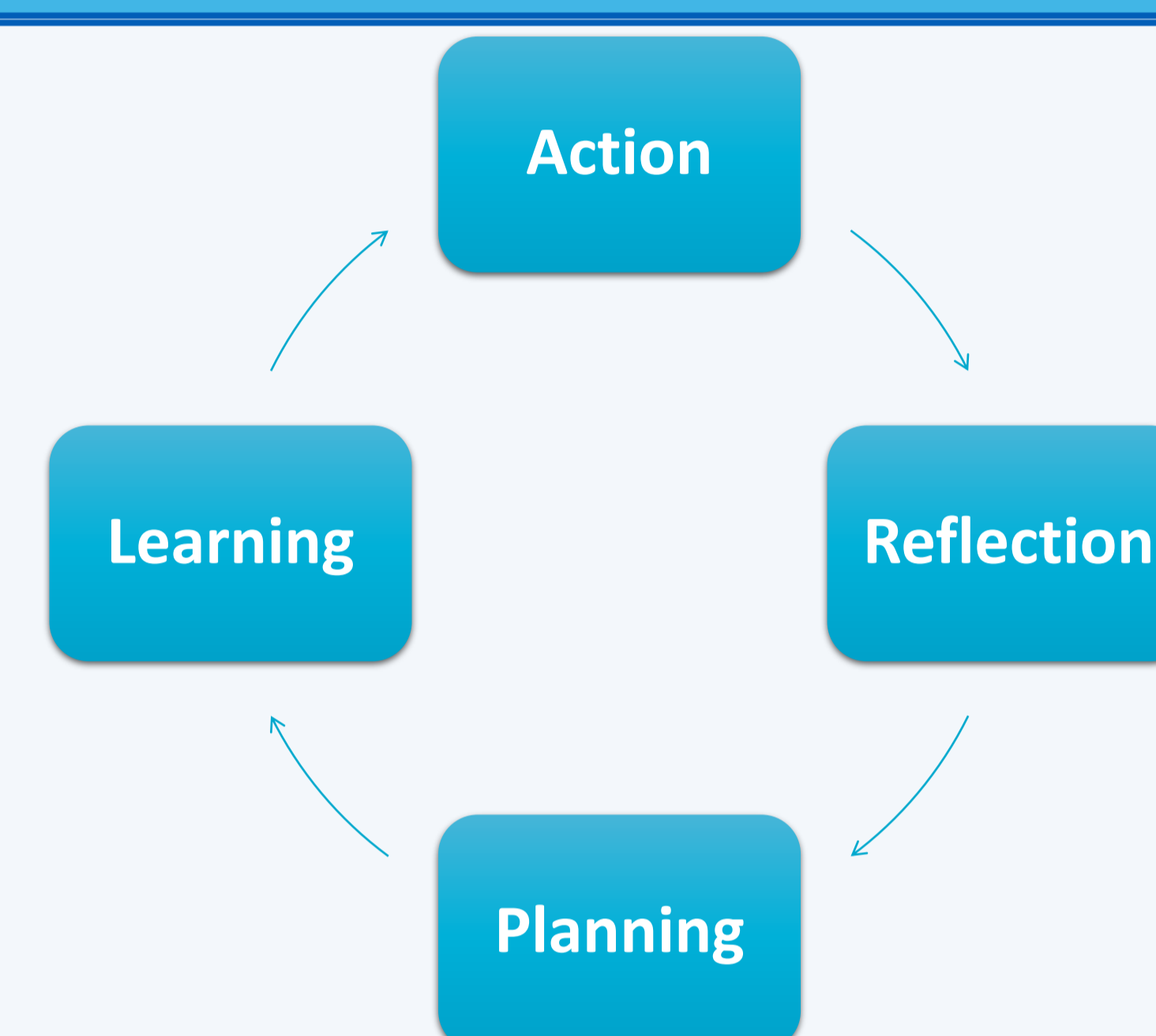
Action learning workshop

An action learning workshop was developed and facilitated to introduce the concept of action learning methodology to potential ALS members. The role of the ALS member was also explored and the potential benefits of engagement to members. To provide attendees with experience of action learning a set was facilitated.

Facilitation of action learning sets

A total of 4 Action learning Sets were facilitated over a period of 7 months. The sets took place virtually and were attended by 3-5 members. A record of the sets was documented to enable actions to be revisited and themes from discussions identified. Following the project semi structured interviews were undertaken alongside questionnaires to ascertain the perceived benefit of this approach

Action Learning Set process



Results

Themes from sets Evaluation

There were a number of emerging themes captured which included: lack of awareness of advanced practice as a level of practice within the clinical setting. Inconsistency in relation to supervision arrangements and the need to meet the four pillars of advanced practice. Requirement to raise the profile of advancing practice and scope of practice beyond the traditional role was also discussed and the steps members have taken to support this.

Evaluation

Members were asked to complete an evaluation form and participate in a semi structured interview, focused on their experience of Action Learning. All members reported benefits however there was no specific feedback in relation to perceived benefits to their role as supervisor. The focus of the feedback was predominantly around the support and validation that the set provided. To learn that challenges they faced were shared with other set members.

Conclusion

Action Learning provides a structured approach to problem solving in a supportive environment. Set members, have a shared interest in the topic therefore, learning is also shared. There is scope to utilise this approach with practitioners developing in advancing practice. However, one challenge which has been encountered during this project are time constraints. Unfortunately, several sessions were cancelled due to low attendance the rationale for non-attendance was reported as clinical demands despite the reported benefits to engagement. It is unclear whether all the aims of this project were met however, there are a number of perceived benefits from engagement in action learning that were not initially hypothesised including the application of this approach in practice and positive impact on the wider service.