

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Training Assurance Framework for Health Professionals

The purpose

This document provides a framework for the minimum training requirements for all healthcare professionals with regards to children and adults with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND).

It does not replace the contractual arrangements between commissioners and providers. It also acknowledges that some employers may need some staff cohorts to be trained at a higher level in line with their professional responsibilities.

This training assurance framework details five levels of competency that will support a healthcare professional in fulfilling their role and responsibilities depending on the level of engagement with children and young people with SEND up to the age of 25 and their families.

Introduction

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) is used to describe learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for a child to learn compared to other children of the same age. Sometimes this is for a short period of time, for example if their medical condition prevents them from attending school for extended periods or for the whole of their school life, for example, if they have profound and complex medical needs, a sensory impairment, a learning disability or autism.

Children and young people with SEND up to the age of 25 encounter and utilise the health services every day, whether that is a primary care setting, the accident and emergency department, a child development centre or mental health service. Therefore, it is essential for all health professionals to have the right knowledge and skills to support their practice and ensure that the holistic outcomes for these children and young people are understood and acted upon.

In 2011 the government launched "Pathfinder" to look at how better outcomes for children and young people (CYP) with SEND could be achieved, including how services could be more joined up. Following this, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act became law on 1 September 2014.

The Children and Families Act:

- Place the child and young person at the centre of any process and include them in decision making
- Promotes integration/inclusion of children and young people with SEND into the community
- Must have Joint Commissioning arrangements for health, care and education services
- There is a statutory duty for partner agencies to co-operate with the Local Authority
- Educational statements were replaced by Education, Health and Care Plans

The Health and Care Act (2022) states that Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) must ensure that statutory duties in relation to SEND receive sufficient focus. The SEND Code of Practice guidance will be updated and the statutory guidance from NHS England will detail the responsibility for these accountable functions to be delegated to an ICB Executive Lead.

The SEND Code of Practice describes how organisations should adhere to the Children and Families Act and has led to a significant change in how organisations provide information or training, however no coordinated document has set out the expectations of health professionals within a competency framework.

There has been a clearly identified need to have a recognised set of learning outcomes for those that work within the SEND landscape, as demonstrated by the results of local area SEND inspections nationally. Approximately 50% of Local Authority (LA) areas fail their inspection, and many of these areas have identified weaknesses in the training and competency of staff to fully implement the SEND reforms.

Competency Framework

To prepare our children and young people (CYP) with SEND for adulthood and help improve their wellbeing/ life chances and health outcomes, all healthcare staff must have the competencies to understand the Children and Families Act, the SEND Code of Practice, the SEND Local Offer, reasonable adjustments, the graduated approach, and the Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment process. This will give an opportunity to improve childhood wellbeing through enhanced knowledge and understanding by the health workforce. The competency framework will support partnership working, and strive for ambitious outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

This document provides a clear framework which identifies the competencies required for all healthcare staff. Levels 1-3 relate to different occupational groups, while level 4 and 5 are related to specific roles.

Level 1: All staff including non-clinical managers and staff working in healthcare services.

Level 2: Minimum level required for non-clinical and clinical staff who, within their role, have contact (however small) with CYP with SEND up to the age of 25 years.

Level 3: All clinical staff working with CYP with SEND would potentially contribute to assessing, planning, intervening and/ or evaluating the needs of a CYP with SEND.

Level 4: Professionals leading on the SEND agenda i.e., Children's care navigators, SEND Champions, service leads within CYP services, Children's commissioners.

Level 5: Designated professionals including the Designated Health Officer (DHO)

Each level builds upon competencies of the preceding levels and those possessing competencies at levels 1-5 should also have completed the competencies of each of the preceding levels.

In the table attached to this document, we have clearly defined the training requirements for all health professionals and staff working with CYP with SEND and streamlined the competencies within 5 levels.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the appropriate level(s) of training, the learning outcomes that staff should have achieved are referenced in the tables included in Appendix 1: Training Log.

Level 1

- To have an awareness of SEND and what this means for CYP and their families
- To have an awareness of legislation (Children and Families Acts 2014) and the SEND Code of Practice
- To have awareness of what reasonable adjustments means for the CYP
- To have an awareness of the SEND local Offer
- To have an awareness of the vulnerability of children with disabilities and these children missing education
- To demonstrate an understanding of the experience and impact on the health and wellbeing of all family members
- To understand the importance of children's rights and know what action to take if you have concerns

Level 2

- To demonstrate an understanding of what constitutes special educational needs and/ or a disability in a CYP
- To demonstrate an understanding of the SEND Local Offer and how CYP and their families can access the information
- To understand the link between the Equality Act 2010 and SEND in the duty to make reasonable adjustments
- To understand key process which support CYP with SEND
 - To understand the EHCP statutory responsibilities
 - To understand key principles for working with CYP with SEND with a focus on
 - Inclusion
 - Co-production, participation, and engagement
 - Personalisation
 - Advocacy
- To be aware of the use of vocabulary in different context
- To demonstrate an understanding of own roles and responsibilities, and professional boundaries
- To understand multi-professional working and multiagency settings, and how they work together to support CYP

Level 3

- To know how to contribute to/formulate and communicate effective management plans for children and young people with SEND within a multidisciplinary approach and as related to role
- To be able to demonstrate an understanding of the issues surrounding diagnosis that impacts upon a CYP's special education needs and /or disability
- To know how to ensure the processes and legal requirements of the Children and Families Act, SEND regulations and the Code of Practice, are appropriately undertaken, where relevant to role
- To know how to appropriately contribute to inter-agency assessments by gathering and sharing information, documenting needs, outcomes, provision and legal purposes and seeking professional guidance in report writing where required
- To understand of the graduated approach and ordinarily available provision within education settings
- To fully understand the statutory education, health and care needs assessment process and the related statutory timescales
- To understand the tribunal process, contribute to the legal proceedings and represent in court as appropriate to role
- To be able to document CYP needs, outcomes and provision in a format that informs the relevant staff and agencies appropriately
- To know how to alert the local authority if a special educational need and/or disability is identified in children under school entry age
- To understand of the preparation for adulthood outcomes
- To understand the transition stages for a CYP with SEND and the impact this may have on

them.

- To understand and proactively engage with coproduction and how multiagency services participate/engage with CYP and their families
- To know how to assess training requirements and contribute to departmental updates where relevant to role. This can be undertaken in various ways, such as through audit, case discussion, peer review, and supervision, or as a component of refresher training
- To be able to identify safeguarding risks to the CYP with SEND as appropriate to role.
- To know how to apply the lessons learnt from audit, CeTR, CTR and LeDR
- To know, as per role, how to advise others on appropriate information sharing
- To know how to (where relevant to role) appropriately contribute to CeTR, CRT and LeDR reviews
- To recognise and knows how to obtain support and help in situations where the CYP with SEND and their family requires further expertise and experience
- To know how to participate in and chair multidisciplinary meetings as required
- To know how to advise other agencies about the health management of individual children

Level 4

- To be able to contribute to the development of robust internal SEND related policy, guidelines, and protocols
- To be able to discuss, share and apply the best practice and knowledge on the Children and Families Act, SEND Code of Practice and regulations including:
 - the latest research evidence and the implications for practice
 - learning lessons and cascading and sharing information with others
 - an advanced understanding of childcare legislation, information sharing, information governance, confidentiality and consent an advanced knowledge of relevant national and international issues, policies and their implications for practice
 - understanding the professional and experts' role in the court process
- To know how to implement and audit the effectiveness of services that include CYP with SEND on an organisational level against current national guidelines and quality standards
- To be able to effectively communicate local SEND knowledge, research and findings from audits, CeTR, CTR and LeDR
- To be able to work effectively with colleagues from other organisations, providing advice as appropriate e.g., concerning SEND policy and legal frameworks, the health management of children with disabilities and preparation for adulthood
- To be able to work effectively with colleagues in regional SEND or clinical networks where CYP with SEND are accessing services
- To fully understand and engage effectively with the local parent carer forums
- To know how to provide specialist advice to practitioners, both proactively and reactively, including clarification about organisational policies, legal issues and the CYP undergoing an education, health and care needs assessment
- To be able to support colleagues in challenging views offered by other professionals, as appropriate

- To be able to lead/oversee quality assurance and improvement processes in relation to CYP with SEND
 - Supporting any relevant inspections including SEND CQC & Ofsted inspection including any work required to provide assurance to NHSE
- To be able to undertake risk assessments of organisational ability to safeguard/protect children and young people.
- To know how to lead service reviews of individual cases and processes

Level 5

- To be able to know how to take a lead role in SEND by:
 - leading/overseeing quality assurance and improvement across a range of healthcare services
 - implementing of national guidelines and auditing the effectiveness and quality of services across healthcare services
 - strategic and professional leadership across healthcare services on all aspects of SEND
 - leading regional and national clinical networks.
 - supporting and leading any relevant inspections including SEND CQC & Ofsted inspection including any work required to provide assurance to NHSE
- To know how to give appropriate advice to specialist professionals working within organisations delivering health services and to other agencies
- Act as a lead for healthcare in ongoing review of the SEND Local Offer
- To know how to provide expert advice on increasing quality, productivity, and improving health outcomes for vulnerable children and those where there are safeguarding concerns
- To be able to oversee quality assurance processes across the whole of healthcare services.
- To establish and maintain relationships with organisations representing parents and carers of disabled children and young people and to facilitate their involvement in the development and review of policies, procedures and criteria
- To know how to provide expert advice to service planners and commissioners, to ensure all services commissioned meet the statutory requirement
- To provide strategic contribution to the development of a joint commissioning strategy that works towards the integration of services to improve outcomes for CYP with SEND
- To know how to influence improvements in SEND across healthcare services
- To be able to monitor services across healthcare services to ensure adherence to legislation, policy and key statutory and no statutory guidance
- To be able to apply in practice:
 - advanced and in-depth knowledge of relevant national and international policies and implications
 - advanced understanding of tribunal court and the role of professional witnesses
 - advanced awareness of different specialties and professional roles
 - advanced understanding of curriculum and training.
- To be able to evaluate and update local procedures and policies in light of relevant national

and international issues and developments

- To be able to reconcile differences of opinion among colleagues from different organisations and agencies
- To be able to proactively deal with strategic communications across healthcare services
- To know how to work with public health officers to undertake robust SEND population-based needs assessments that establish current and future health needs and service requirements across healthcare services
- To be able to provide an evidence base for decisions around investment and disinvestment in services to improve the health of the local population and vulnerable children and young people and articulate these decisions to executive officers
- To be able to deliver high-level strategic presentations to influence organisational development
- To be able to work in partnership on strategic projects with executive officers at local, regional and national bodies, as appropriate
- To be able to work in partnership with adult colleagues locally, regionally and nationally

SEND Training Requirements for All Staff and Healthcare Professionals

Level	Cohort of Staff	Requirements for Training	Competencies	Suggested methods of training
Level 1	All healthcare staff	<p>A mandatory session of at least 60 minutes duration should be included in the general staff induction programme or within six weeks of taking up post within a new organisation.</p> <p>Over a three-year period should receive level 1 refresher training equivalent to a minimum of 1 hour.</p>	<p>Awareness of and to increase understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What SEND means • The national and international legislation around SEND • The challenges faced by CYP and their families, and how they can be supported • Where do find more information about SEND in your local area • The Local Offer 	<p>Induction training – Basic Awareness Level 1 E-learning</p> <p>Council for Disabled Children Level 1 basic awareness: https://learning.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/?ga=2.228459167.346246937.1659106669-697660405.1655390462</p>

Level	Cohort of Staff	Requirements for Training	Competencies	Suggested methods of training
Level 2	<p>All staff who have contact CYP up to age 25 with SEND and who handle confidential information:</p> <p>Staff who manage SEND correspondence Allied Health Professionals Children Care Navigators in PCN</p>	<p>Over a three year period should receive level 2 refresher training equivalent to a minimum of 90 mins</p>	<p>To increase understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What SEND means • Key principles for working with CYP with SEND, with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion • Co-production/ personalisation • Advocacy • Key processes which support CYP with SEND, with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education, Health and Care Plans • Roles and responsibilities in a multidisciplinary team • The local offer and how CYP and their Families can access it 	<p>Basic Awareness Level 2 E-learning or face to face training.</p> <p>Council for Disabled Children Level 2 basic awareness: https://learning.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/59167.346246937.1659106669-697660405.1655390462</p>

Level	Cohort of Staff	Requirements for Training	Competencies	Suggested methods of training
Level 3	<p>All health professionals who potentially contribute to assessing, planning, intervening and/ or evaluating the needs of a CYP with SEND :</p> <p>GP's, Therapists (physio, occupational, speech and language etc.), Health Visitors , school nurses , continuing care assessors Commissioners (this list is not exhaustive)</p>	<p>Over a three-year period, professionals should be able to demonstrate education, training and learning equivalent to a minimum of 4 hours for those requiring Level 3 core knowledge, skills and competencies</p>	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHC needs assessment and the process including statutory timelines. • Children and Families Act 2014 graduated approach • Annual reviews • Ordinarily available provision • SEND tribunals • Preparing for adulthood outcomes and the transition stages into adult services <p>Meaningful awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-production and the complexity of the health economy. 	<p>Attendance at SEND protected learning time delivered by the Designated Health Officer</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Use a combination of learning formats. Online resources (below), learning reflections including appraisals, safeguarding or clinical supervision, peer-to-peer learning, personal development plans.</p> <p>Training sources: Council for Disabled Children (CDC),: Consider Basic Awareness Level 2 as part of your hours if newly qualified or new role: https://learning.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/?ga=2.228459167.346246937.1659106669-697660405.1655390462</p> <p>NDTi: https://www.ndti.org.uk/</p> <p>IPSEA: https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/training-for-sen-professionals-and-private-orgs</p>

Level	Cohort of Staff	Requirements for Training	Competencies	Suggested methods of training
Level 4	<p>Senior Roles:</p> <p>ICB Executive Lead for SEND, Senior Responsible Officer for SEND, Senior Children's Commissioning team, GPs with clinical leadership in SEND, Senior Managers in health providers, e.g. Lead for SEND, senior CYP's Specialist Service Managers.</p>	Over a three year period, a minimum of 12 hours of education, training and learning	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint commissioning • Personal health budgets • Strategic framework for SEND • SEND inspections • Learning from SEND tribunals: single route of redress 	<p>Specialist level 4 training organised by DHO or Council for Disabled Children.</p> <p>SEND conferences.</p> <p>Training sources: as above</p>
Level 5	Designated Health Officer , Deputy DHOs	Over a three year period, a minimum of 12 hours of education, training and learning	<p>Understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the DMO / DCO • Regional and national changes in SEND guidance and legislation 	<p>Specialist level 5 training organised by NHS England or national groups.</p> <p>For example: Regional forums, regional Meetings, SEND conferences DHO induction Checklist & handbook available on CDC website</p> <p>Training sources: as above</p>

Appendix 2: Education, training and learning reflection record¹

Date:
Topic and learning activity
What did you learn/key points of the learning activity
How does this relate to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and competencies outlines in the SEND training requirements for all staff and healthcare professionals?
How will the learning affect your future practice?

¹ Intercollegiate Document: Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competencies for Healthcare Staff Fourth edition: January 2019