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Protected learning time – an innovative approach to a learner-led clinical environment

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Protected Learning Time – an innovative approach to a learner-led clinical environment

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- Background – what is a learner-led clinical environment? (LLCE)
- Protected Learning Time (PLT)
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Introduction

- NHS Long Term Workforce Plan (2023) – challenges for learner placements
- Demands within trusts – placement quality improvement
- Challenges for Practice Placement Teams – improve learner capacity
- Requirements on clinical areas – ensuring ongoing best practice
- Expectation from learners – better preparation for qualification (Tweedie et al., 2019)





Background – what is a LLCE?

- UHB creative solution – LLCE's unique in midwifery
- Bespoke wards/ward areas – set up for learner leadership
- Clinical Educators facilitate – clinical & pastoral support (Markowski et al., 2022)
- Coaching model application – from all staff (Hill et al., 2020)
- Protected Learning Time – underpins daily practice (Channa et al., 2024)





Protected Learning Time (PLT)

- PLT is crucial to the function of the LLCE
- Teaching/skills sessions – clinically relevant, MDT
- Examples include: obstetric emergencies, safeguarding, fetal monitoring, neonatal resuscitation, feeding support, PMA's, OASI care bundle, MEOWS, NIPE, safety/concerns escalation
- Opportunities to scaffold learning (Bruner, 1977)
- Holistic approach – linking theory with practice





Evaluation Methodology

- Protected Learning Time experience surveyed during LLCE placements on a post-natal ward
- Degree & Masters midwifery learners from two UK universities
- January – December 2024
- 44 learners participated
- 54 PLT sessions evaluated
- 173 responses





Results

- PLT sessions met most learners' expectations (87.7%)
- Enabled application of learning to the workplace (88%)
- Confidence scores post-PLT (M=8.92) > pre-PLT (M=6.72)
- Statistically significant difference 2.2, $t=2.79$, $p < 0.05$





Conclusions



Qualitative data indicated learner development



Areas on improvement: knowledge, skills, confidence & competence



Demonstrated significant benefits for midwifery learners



LLCE's offer an innovative opportunity for improved clinical learning





Learner Quotes

“The opportunity to have Protected Learning Time each shift for an hour gave insight into further topics such as safeguarding and screening”

“I was on the learner led ward which I found to be a brilliant way of learning personally, gave me opportunities to learn and gain more confidence in my knowledge and skills taking ownership of care and working part of the student team”

“Working on the Learner Led clinical environment has really improved my confidence as a student, it has broadened my knowledge and skill set too. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on placement - the staff have been amazing too - I couldn't fault anything”





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Q&A



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