

Roberta L. Ainsworth - Publications

Using an action learning set (ALS) to support the nurse and AHP consultant role.

Richardson, J., Ainsworth, R., Allison, R., Billyard, J., Corley, R., Viner, J. (2008).
Action Learning: Research and Practice 5 (1) 65-77

Abstract:

Advanced clinical practice roles are now an integral feature of many healthcare services and have been adopted in a diversity of areas. However, mentoring of these roles is not well documented in the literature and formal mechanisms of support are limited.

An action learning set (ALS) was developed to provide support for consultants currently in post. The purpose was to facilitate clinicians in developing and meeting the demands of these posts by providing peer supervision, identifying strategies for leading service developments, providing a focus for problem solving and reflection. The ALS meets bi-monthly and is externally facilitated with the option to attend individual sessions with the facilitator. Participants also completed questionnaires measuring coping skills and stress, which were fed back in the individual sessions, providing opportunity for further opportunities for reflection.

Initial evaluation was conducted formally using a structured questionnaire and reflective accounts, and provided evidence of the value of the ALS and an indication of how the criteria for success were being met, with greatest achievement reported in the area of work-life balance.

The evaluation demonstrates the ongoing value of this ALS and the effectiveness of this method of supporting senior clinical staff.