

My personal experience of PBSGL

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I am Allison Tait and I have been a general practice nurse (GPN) for over 20 years and a NES GPN Supervisor for over five years. One of the NES GPN education advisors started a practice-based small group learning (PBSGL) group in Lothian four years ago, with other GPNs. There was a lot of interest from local practice nurses and I became a member of one of the first groups. As this original group expanded in members I decided to become a facilitator for a new group.

Our new group has seven GPN members from different health centres in Edinburgh. We all work in the same cluster. Having the spread of nurses across the cluster helps build relationships as many of the GPNs work in small teams with only one or two nurses. Our group has a range of knowledge from new-in-post nurses to others who have many years of experience. Some members have specialised in long-term conditions such as diabetes and we all benefit in sharing our clinical expertise.

We meet every 6-8 weeks avoiding the months of July and December. Meetings are in the evening, directly after clinics as we all work different hours, and getting together is easier for us this way. We take turns in hosting the group. Attendance costs a modest £60 per year which for a full year of education compares very favourably with the cost of advertised study days. The modules are structured, are very relevant to primary care, and there is a wide choice of topic. The learning is participatory, everyone in the group takes part and it's a very supportive learning environment. I find now if I go to a lecture it's not nearly as satisfying as the learning style that PBSGL offers with the process of working through case studies and information sections. The modules stimulate discussion, and develop knowledge in clinical skills regardless if it's a subject we already have a good knowledge of. The modules are the same whether it's for medical, nursing or pharmacist colleagues. We choose our next topic as a group and everyone gets a chance to choose.

With the Nursing and Midwifery Council revalidation this is a good way to undertake the three-year continual professional development. It meets all my needs in one year never mind three years and has been very positive in my own development.

