

**A guide for
Chief Officers**

SKILLS FOR NEW CHC MEMBERS

What it is

Skills for New CHC Members is a distance learning pack for new CHC members. It's designed to complement the CHC's normal induction programme, not to replace it. The pack gives new members a chance to think through some of the issues in their own time, to recognise the skills they bring to the CHC, and develop or extend them.

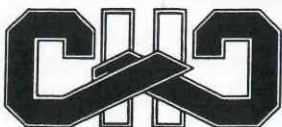
How it works

The pack is divided into five units:

- 1. The role of the CHC member**
- 2. Meeting skills**
- 3. Monitoring services**
- 4. Writing reports**
- 5. Responding to consultation**

There are also appendices of reference materials.

Each unit takes about an hour to work through. Although readers work on their own, they are encouraged to ask for clarification or support from the Chief Officer as they need it.



Giving it out

You can offer people the pack as a whole, or in parts. If you have new members who are not confident about their role, or about learning in this way, it may be better to give them a unit at a time, and make sure they can talk through the issues after each one.

Please make sure that anyone coming to the pack for the first time reads the general introduction (the sheet beginning **THIS PACK**).

Supporting people using the pack

All the experience with distance learning materials shows that learners do best when supported throughout the process. For Chief Officers, this means:

- i: judging the right time to give the units to each new member
- ii: deciding whether to offer the whole pack at once, or to stagger the five units over time
- iii: encouraging people to talk through anything they're unsure about.

If you have several new members at one time, you might also suggest they meet to discuss what they've learned and to ask questions. There are a lot of issues raised in the units, and members who are confused at this stage risk being affected by this confusion all through their time on the CHC.

The units are intended to help new members absorb the culture of the CHC and understand their role. You can help them explore issues in more depth, and look at their own assumptions. This is much more valuable than simply providing the 'right' answer to the questions and case studies. You may well find that you disagree with some of the ideas in the pack: if so, you can use the differences of opinion to point out some of the complex real-life issues members will need to deal with.

Please let ACHCEW know if you have any comments or questions about the pack. We hope you and your members find it helpful.

**Skills
for New
Members**

Evaluation

Please let us know what you think of this pack, so that we can judge how successful it is, and plan for any future changes.

1. How long have you been a CHC member?

2. Which units of the pack have you studied?

• all of them _____

• some [*please circle*]: 1 2 3 4 5

3. How familiar was the **content** of the units to you?

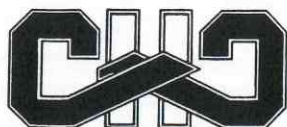
very familiar 1 2 3 4 5 not at all familiar

4. Was there anything that you thought could be left out?

5. Anything you thought should be added?

6. What did you think about the **quantity** of information and ideas?

too much 1 2 3 4 5 too little



7. And the **length** of the units?

too long 1 2 3 4 5 too short

8. What did you think about the **style** of the units?

too complex 1 2 3 4 5 too simple

9. What was the most useful thing you learned?

10. And the least useful thing about the pack?

11. Anything else you think we should consider?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form. Please give it to your Chief Officer, who will forward it to ACHCEW.

This pack

INTRODUCTION

is part of the induction programme for new members of CHCs.
It is designed:

- as an opportunity for you to consider your new role
- to help you develop and extend the skills involved.

How it works

This is a distance learning pack (like the printed part of an Open University course). You work through it in your own time, and at your own pace.

There are five units in the pack:

- 1.** The role of the CHC Member
- 2.** Meeting skills
- 3.** Monitoring services
- 4.** Writing reports
- 5.** Responding to consultation

There are also appendices of reference materials.

You can work through the units in any order, since they're all self-contained. You can also choose to concentrate on one or more units which seem particularly relevant to you at the time.

Each unit takes between half an hour and an hour to work through: the estimated time for each one is given at the start. You will need uninterrupted time, so that you can concentrate, and think through some of the complex questions you're asked. The pack is about attitudes as much as facts, and the learning comes when you start applying them to your own situation. There are also opportunities to practise skills such as report writing.



Getting support

There are bound to be times when you need to clarify something that has come up in one of the units, or to find out how it applies in your CHC. This is an essential part of the process of distance learning. You should talk through these questions with the Chief Officer, or the person appointed as your Tutor, if you have one.

If there are several new members at one time, you might consider getting together to work through the units, or to discuss them after you've studied them.

Skills for New CHC Members was written for ACHCEW by Ruth Valentine, with the assistance of a Reference Group of CHC Chief Officers. They were:

Cath Arnold	Manchester North CHC
Hugh Barnet	Swindon & District CHC
Beryl Furr	Southend District CHC
Jackie Gladden	Barnsley CHC
Sarah Head	East Birmingham CHC
Wendy Lockwood	South West Surrey CHC
Rosie Newbigging	North Bedfordshire CHC
Geoffrey Poxon	Cornwall CHC
Lesley Sterling Baxter	Bradford CHC
Barrie Taylor	South West Herts CHC
Penny Thewlis	Oxfordshire CHC

Thanks are due to them, and to the new members of some of their CHCs, who piloted the units and fed back their comments. Thanks also to Liz Rickarby, the Information Department, Toby Harris and all at ACHCEW, for all their assistance.

This pack was revised in 1998, taking on board recent developments in the NHS.

There are two more distance learning packs in this series. They are:

Developing Skills as a CHC Member

Skills for CHC Chairs

ACHCEW 1998