



**SEXUAL HEALTH  
IN>PRACTICE**  
Learner Guide

## SEXUAL HEALTH IN>PRACTICE LEARNER GUIDE

**This document explains the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE concept and gives ideas for how learners can make the most of this education and training resource, including an overview of adult learning styles and some tips on using this resource for self-study.**

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## About the Welcome Pack, the Leader Guide and this Learner Guide

There are three support guides for the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE programme, these are:

**Welcome Pack** - to help users to find out more about practical education and how to use the resources contained within the website.

**IN>PRACTICE Leader Guide** - contains guidance material to enable leaders to make the most of this resource including an overview of adult learning styles and some tips on running practical training sessions.

**IN>PRACTICE Learner Guide** (this complementary guide for self-study) – contains guidance material to enable learners to make the most of this resource for self-study.

## IN>PRACTICE Learner Guide

This is the IN>PRACTICE Learner Guide.

The resources contained within Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE are designed to provide practical support within practice. The content has been written and critically reviewed by healthcare professionals, many of whom have a specialist interest in sexual health.

### **Making learning fun**

Research has shown that learning is more effective and longer lasting if you are presented with learning opportunities that you believe are relevant to your needs, timely, and that you can access through a variety of means, for example, by listening, thinking, talking or through activities. This material has been designed to be lively and fun, whilst maintaining quality and accuracy to ensure deep-seated learning and active transfer of skills and knowledge to the work place.

### **IN>PRACTICE programme**

The IN>PRACTICE programme is designed to act as an evidence-based resource for leader-led training interventions, for self-study, or as a work-based resource.

The IN>PRACTICE programme offers core materials, including comprehensive PowerPoint® presentations for each topic, complete with ready-to-run trainer notes. Downloadable resources include staff education materials, plus patient/client information that healthcare professionals may use in direct patient/client interactions.

If you are using this resource for self-study, then the overarching presentations that accompany each topic will provide a structured approach for working through the programme.

The Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE programme is a valuable resource for all nursing professionals working within the field of sexual health.

## What is Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE?

The Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE website is a practical education environment consisting of six key sexual health-related topic areas. Each topic is supported by a mix of activities, resources and tools for applying sexual health theory in practice.

Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE is designed to enhance core skills for practice nurses through the development of practical education solutions that improve clinical outcomes. The engaging and comprehensive resources accommodate a range of learning preferences and styles.

Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE is a flexible training and educational resource that can be used with the support of a leader, for self-study or as a work-based resource.

## What learners will gain from the programme

By using the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE programme, nurses, and other healthcare professionals, are likely to become better informed and more up-to-date in their knowledge and understanding of the field of sexual health. They are also likely to increase in confidence in their role and ability to deal with sensitive situations.

## Who is the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE website designed for?

The materials in the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE website are designed to provide information and education primarily for practice nurses, however it is a valuable resource for all nursing professionals working within the field of sexual health. It can be used for:

- induction training
- staff workshops
- continuing professional development/self-study
- staff and patient information.

## How to use Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE

Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE is available to anyone who has internet access and we welcome any user who would find this resource of benefit. You may tailor this information to suit your requirements but Healthcare A2Z and the RCN Practice Nurses Association retain the content copyright.

### **Module overview**

Within the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE programme there are six core modules, these are:

- Foundation
- Role of primary care
- Role of practice nurse
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Latest topics
- Communication

### **Information types and resources**

Each topic is supported by a series of sub-topic web pages and within each sub-topic there are a variety of downloadable resources, including:

- clinical backgrounders
- briefing documents
- patient information, such as frequently asked questions leaflets
- staff information leaflets
- fact files
- key point summaries
- quiz activities.

## **Key learning outcomes**

Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE provides an introduction to sexual health for practice nurses, and others working within the field of sexual health. The key learning outcomes for this programme are:

- to ensure that users gain an understanding of key sexual health topics
- to encourage visitors to select and download practical tools for putting sexual health knowledge into practice
- to raise awareness of national sources and resources for further reading
- to provide engaging on-line assessments for users to test their sexual health knowledge and identify areas for further improvement.

## The Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE Interactive Zone

In addition to the core educational programme and downloads within Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE, there is also an on-line area – the *Interactive Zone* – that is home to the programme’s puzzles and assessment quizzes. These flexible knowledge resources can be used for:

- pre- or post-learning needs analysis
- self-assessment
- team training sessions
- clinical practice top-ups
- or, for creating Continuing Professional Development (CPD) evidence.

### Practice Puzzles

The practice puzzles contained within the *Interactive Zone* include:

- mix and match
- drag and drop
- fill-in-the-blank
- multiple choice
- true or false.

There is also a final assessment in the form of a coaching quiz. Within the quiz, the feedback fields give further information which will help expand learner knowledge and understanding of the topic. The final quiz offers users an optional email facility. Results can be sent direct to their tutor, line manager, or themselves, as part of their Continuing Professional Development evidence portfolio.

The final assessment quiz also offers:

- a 20-question self-assessment coaching tool with a target pass mark of 90%
- multiple-choice questions with coaching notes for each possible answer
- random display of questions to create a different learning experience at each sitting
- email results facility for sending personal scores to tutors/managers or learners
- on-screen summary of topics to revisit at the end of the quiz session
- a repeat facility to improve learning.

## Using Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE for professional development

The Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE programme can contribute towards your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements to maintain your professional competence.

### Guidance

Although there are a variety of definitions of CPD across professions, CPD usually means learning activities that update existing skills. CPD requirements should be aligned to the needs of individuals, organisation and patients.

In the NHS, CPD is determined through appraisal with a personal development plan agreed between the individual professional and their manager with the commitment of the necessary time and resources. A key development in ensuring that health professionals maintain their competence is that regulatory bodies are developing CPD strategies for the revalidation/re-certification of their members.

The resources contained within the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE programme can contribute towards personal CPD requirements. The table (timings grid) on the next page provides CPD guidance for activities.

### Timings grid

The timings grid gives an indication of how long each element within the Sexual Health IN>PRACTICE programme takes to review. You can see from the grid that you will be able to mix and match the materials that best fit your needs and that provide a variety of learning experiences.

For example, if you wished to review a topic's *overarching presentation*, play a *quiz* and study a *fact file*, you should allow at least 2.5 hours.

# Sexual Health IN> PRACTICE

Document/activity	15 minutes	30 minutes	45 minutes	1 1/4 hours
Overarching presentations				✓
Presentations – e.g. topic introductions or overviews			✓	
Fact files	✓			
Key Point Summaries	✓			
Clinical backgrounders		✓		
Frequently asked questions (FAQ)	✓			
Quizzes (mini quizzes)		✓		
Briefings		✓		

## All about learning

This section of the Learner Guide gives an insight to learning styles. We have included this here as theorists agree that by understanding your learning style you can improve your learning outcome.

### Understanding learning styles

Since the 1970s there has been much debate on learning styles. It is generally accepted that individuals favour one or more methods for interacting with, taking in, and processing stimuli or information. Understanding your learning style can help you learn faster, more thoroughly and retain information.

There are numerous types of models for learning styles, with anything from three to eight styles being suggested.

It should be stressed though that while most people have one or two favoured styles, you can also develop styles. Therefore, favoured preferences can be further enhanced and weaker preferences developed. You can then develop the ability to use the style most appropriate to your learning need. Both learners and trainers should recognise that there is no right or wrong style.

Some of the more popular theories of learning styles are outlined in this guide.

## Learning styles

### **VAK learning styles**

The VAK learning styles model suggests that most people can be divided into one of three preferred styles of learning. These three styles are as follows, (and there is no right or wrong learning style):

Someone with a **Visual** learning style has a preference for seen or observed things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, flip-chart, etc. These people will use phrases such as 'show me', 'let's have a look at that' and will be best able to perform a new task after reading the instructions or watching someone else do it first. These are the people who will work from lists and written directions and instructions.

Someone with an **Auditory** learning style has a preference for the transfer of information through listening: to the spoken word, of self or others, of sounds and noises. These people will use phrases such as 'tell me', 'let's talk it over' and will be best able to perform a new task after listening to instructions from an expert. These are the people who are happy being given spoken instructions over the telephone, and can remember all the words to songs that they hear!

Someone with a **Kinaesthetic** learning style has a preference for physical experience - touching, feeling, holding, doing, practical hands-on experiences. These people will use phrases such as 'let me try', 'how do you feel?' and will be best able to perform a new task by going ahead and trying it out, learning as they go. These are the people who like to experiment, hands-on, and never look at the instructions first!

People commonly have a main preferred learning style, but this will be part of a blend of all three. Some people have a very strong preference; other people have a more even mixture of two or less commonly, three styles.

When learners know their preferred learning style(s) they understand the type of learning that best suits them. This enables them to choose the types of learning that work best for them.

There is no right or wrong learning style. The point is that there are types of learning that are right for learner's own preferred learning style.

Please note that this is not a scientifically validated testing instrument – it is a free assessment tool designed to give a broad indication of preferred learning style(s).

With acknowledgements to Victoria Chislett for developing this assessment.

Victoria Chislett specialises in performance psychology and its application within organisations, and can be contacted via email: performance\_psychologist at yahoo.com.

## (VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire)

*Appears courtesy of © V Chislett MSc & A Chapman 2005. Further copies available from [www.businessballs.com](http://www.businessballs.com)*

*Circle or tick the answer that most represents how you generally behave.*

*(It's best to complete the questionnaire before reading the accompanying explanation above.)*

1. When I operate new equipment I generally:

- a. read the instructions first
- b. listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
- c. go ahead and have a go, I can figure it out as I use it

2. When I need directions for travelling I usually:

- a. look at a map
- b. ask for spoken directions
- c. follow my nose and maybe use a compass

3. When I cook a new dish, I like to:

- a. follow a written recipe
- b. call a friend for an explanation
- c. follow my instincts, testing as I cook

4. If I am teaching someone something new, I tend to:

- a. write instructions down for them
- b. give them a verbal explanation
- c. demonstrate first and then let them have a go

5. I tend to say:

- a. watch how I do it
- b. listen to me explain
- c. you have a go

6. During my free time I most enjoy:

- a. going to museums and galleries
- b. listening to music and talking to my friends
- c. playing sport or doing DIY

7. When I go shopping for clothes, I tend to:

- a. imagine what they would look like on
- b. discuss them with the shop staff
- c. try them on and test them out

8. When I am choosing a holiday I usually:

- a. read lots of brochures
- b. listen to recommendations from friends
- c. imagine what it would be like to be there

9. If I was buying a new car, I would:

- a. read reviews in newspapers and magazines
- b. discuss what I need with my friends
- c. test-drive lots of different types

10. When I am learning a new skill, I am most comfortable:

- a. watching what the teacher is doing
- b. talking through with the teacher exactly what I'm supposed to do
- c. giving it a try myself and work it out as I go

11. If I am choosing food off a menu, I tend to:

- a. imagine what the food will look like
- b. talk through the options in my head or with my partner
- c. imagine what the food will taste like

12. When I listen to a band, I can't help:
- watching the band members and other people in the audience
  - listening to the lyrics and the beats
  - moving in time with the music
13. When I concentrate, I most often:
- focus on the words or the pictures in front of me
  - discuss the problem and the possible solutions in my head
  - move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils and touch things
14. I choose household furnishings because I like:
- their colours and how they look
  - the descriptions the sales-people give me
  - their textures and what it feels like to touch them
15. My first memory is of:
- looking at something
  - being spoken to
  - doing something
16. When I am anxious, I:
- visualise the worst-case scenarios
  - talk over in my head what worries me most
  - can't sit still, fiddle and move around constantly
17. I feel especially connected to other people because of:
- how they look
  - what they say to me
  - how they make me feel
18. When I have to revise for an exam, I generally:
- write lots of revision notes and diagrams
  - talk over my notes, alone or with other people
  - imagine making the movement or creating the formula

19. If I am explaining to someone I tend to:

- a. show them what I mean
- b. explain to them in different ways until they understand
- c. encourage them to try and talk them through my idea as they do it

20. I really love:

- a. watching films, photography, looking at art or people watching
- b. listening to music, the radio or talking to friends
- c. taking part in sporting activities, eating fine foods and wines or dancing

21. Most of my free time is spent:

- a. watching television
- b. talking to friends
- c. doing physical activity or making things

22. When I first contact a new person, I usually:

- a. arrange a face to face meeting
- b. talk to them on the telephone
- c. try to get together whilst doing something else, such as an activity or a meal

23. I first notice how people:

- a. look and dress
- b. sound and speak
- c. stand and move

24. If I am angry, I tend to:

- a. keep replaying in my mind what it is that has upset me
- b. raise my voice and tell people how I feel
- c. stamp about, slam doors and physically demonstrate my anger

25. I find it easiest to remember:

- a. faces
- b. names
- c. things I have done

26. I think that you can tell if someone is lying if:

- a. they avoid looking at you
- b. their voices changes
- c. they give me funny vibes

27. When I meet an old friend:

- a. I say "it's great to see you!"
- b. I say "it's great to hear from you!"
- c. I give them a hug or a handshake

28. I remember things best by:

- a. writing notes or keeping printed details
- b. saying them aloud or repeating words and key points in my head
- c. doing and practising the activity or imagining it being done

29. If I have to complain about faulty goods, I am most comfortable:

- a. writing a letter
- b. complaining over the phone
- c. taking the item back to the store or posting it to head office

30. I tend to say:

- a. I see what you mean
- b. I hear what you are saying
- c. I know how you feel

Now add up how many A's, B's and C's you selected.

A's =

B's =

C's =

If you chose mostly A's you have a **VISUAL** learning style.

If you chose mostly B's you have an **AUDITORY** learning style.

If you chose mostly C's you have a **KINAESTHETIC** learning style.

Some people find that their learning style may be a blend of two or three styles, in this case read about the styles that apply to you in the explanation on page 16.

When you have identified your learning style(s), read the learning styles explanations and consider how this might help you to identify learning and development that best meets your preference(s).

## **Honey and Mumford learning styles**

Peter Honey and Alan Mumford grouped learning styles into four main areas:

1. **Activists** – generally want to be up and doing, they like to get stuck in and worry about the theory later. They tend to concentrate less well in formal lectures.
2. **Theorists** – generally like to have their learning delivered in a structured and orderly way. They like step-by-step instructions with clear briefs. Likely to be unhappy if thrown in at the deep end.
3. **Pragmatists** – like to see a clear link between the learning and the application. They are happy to experiment, although they will appreciate feedback and guidelines. Are generally less likely to be receptive if they cannot see a clear reason for the learning or if it is too theory driven.
4. **Reflectors** – are often the quiet ones in the group. They like to absorb all the information, consider it carefully and then come out with an opinion. They prefer to observe rather than take part, and like time to prepare. They will learn less well if they have to act as leader or role play, or feel rushed into something.

## **Multiple intelligences**

The multiple intelligence theory comes out of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP). It suggests that there are a number of intelligences:

- **Visual (spatial)** – this preference uses pictures, images and spatial understanding. They will have strong visual imagery in their minds and may talk in visual terms (I see what you mean....). They will find using pictures, mind maps, diagrams and colours helpful to them in learning.
- **Aural (auditory-musical)** – this type takes in information through sound. They will be able to listen well in lectures, but will gain even more benefit if they can have sounds, music and other aural stimuli when learning. They will often talk in aural terms (I hear what you say...).
- **Verbal (linguistic)** – linguistic types use language, both in speech and written down. They will learn well by reading and writing notes, and by open discussion. They tend to talk in terms of language (Tell me about it...).
- **Physical (kinesthetic)** – people with this learning preference are often very active. They may well take part in sport, and will often think on the move. They will not learn well where they have to sit still for long periods, but will enjoy activities that get them up and moving around, their sense of touch is important and they will often feel things to test for texture. Using role plays, or activities using props, such as building blocks or cards will help people with this style, although their ultimate learning experience may be outdoors on an assault course! They will often talk in terms of physical sensation (That feels right to me...).
- **Logical (mathematical)** – this preference tends to be highly structured and likes having good signposting throughout learning. They may find it hard to translate games into learning, although

they would be more comfortable with logic games, such as crosswords or sudoku. They will be happier with flow diagrams, or making logical connections between elements. They will enjoy the theory behind the practical. People who are good at logic and maths are often very musical as well, so this can be used to aid their learning. Common phrases emphasise logical intelligence (Let's put some numbers to that...).

- Social (interpersonal) – people with this style are the team players and often people who others will turn to for advice. They like to be in a group and dislike being on their own. They will enjoy learning in a team, through group activities or discussion. They like to bounce ideas off others, to learn through their and others' experiences. They tend to talk inclusively (Let's share ideas...).
- Solitary (intrapersonal) – these types will be happy learning on their own, through self-study, distance learning or e-learning. They will be quieter in groups, and may find group learning stretches their comfort zone. They are often very self-aware, and understand themselves and their reactions well. They can concentrate on a task. In group work, they will enjoy a quiet period where each person is working on their own. They will state their thoughts (Let me think about that...).

### **Myers-Briggs personality types**

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI) personality inventory was developed by Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Briggs to enable people to understand the theory of psychological types described by C G Jung. These types are inborn, but when understood by an individual can be modified both sub-consciously and consciously depending on circumstances. The types the MBTI sorts for, known as dichotomies, are extraversion/introversion, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling and judging/perceiving. Participants are given one of 16 four-letter abbreviations, such as ESTJ or INFP, indicating what their preferences are. The term *best-fit* types refers to the ethical code that facilitators are required to follow. It states that the person taking the indicator is always the best judge of what their preferences are and that the indicator alone should never be used to make this decision.

- Extraversion (E) or Intraversion (I) – often classified as extroverts or introverts, this indicates where the focus on an individual lies, looking inwards, being self aware, or outwards and considering others.
- Sensing (S) or Intuition (N) – people with strong sensing types use the evidence of their own senses. They take the facts at hand to make a decision. They like to take a hands on approach. Intuitive types tend to see if there is a pattern to those facts, they try to think beyond what they see, hear or feel. They will prefer to think through a problem first.
- Thinking (T) or Feeling (F) – thinking types tend to be logical, and try to make decisions on an objective basis. Feeling types will consider the needs of others who may be involved or impacted by the decision making process.

- Judging (J) or Perceiving (P) – this pair relates to how we like our outer world to be organised – these are traits we show to others, and are not necessarily how our inner world is structured. Judging types tend to prefer a more structured, organised way of life. They like to have made a decision and a plan. Perceiving types prefer a more spontaneous, flexible approach to life.

## **Blended and accelerated learning**

There has been much debate among learning and development professionals about the use of blended and accelerated learning in the workplace. A multitude of definitions are bandied about leading to potential confusion about these topics.

### ***Blended learning***

Blended learning has come to mean the combination of two or more types of learning event, with one of the components being e-learning of one form or another. However, blended learning first came into being when learning moved from a purely oral tradition, or show and tell, to a mix of written and oral components.

### **Keep the learner at the front of your mind**

Blended learning is important to consider as it helps trainers to create learning interventions that appeal to all learning styles, enabling learners to maximise their learning outcomes. When thinking about blended learning solutions, as with any learning programme, it is important to put the learner at the centre in considering the following:

- Ease of use for learner.
- Accessibility to the learning for the learner.
- Learning styles to be engaged.
- Desired learning outcomes.
- Continuous or ongoing learning provisions.
- Ability to assess the learner, or for the learner to self-assess.
- Transference of learning to the workplace.
- The practice of skills.
- Affordability for the learner.
- Affordability (cost/benefit) for the training provider.

## ***On- and off-line learning methods***

Learning interventions can be either off-line or on-line and are categorised as follows:

### Off-line

- Workplace learning – e.g. on-the-job coaching, projects, shadowing.
- Face-to-face tutoring, coaching or mentoring.
- Classroom.
- Distributable print media – e.g. books, journals, learning logs, newspapers.
- Distributable electronic media – e.g. video, DVD, CD, audio.
- Broadcast media – e.g. TV, radio.

### On-line

On-line learning content – e.g. simple learning resources, interactive content.

E-tutoring, e-coaching or e-mentoring.

On-line collaborative learning – e.g. web conferencing, bulletin boards, email forums, chat rooms.

On-line knowledge management – e.g. data mining, document or file retrieval.

The web – e.g. search engines, user sites/groups, websites.

Mobile learning – e.g. via mobile phones, laptops and handheld devices.

## ***Accelerated learning***

As with many other learning theories, 'accelerated learning' has its supporters and critics. It developed in the 1970s as more information about the brain and brain function became available. The definition below captures most of its elements:

***Accelerated learning combines aspects of adult learning theory with “brain-based” approaches, in order to achieve a faster learning rate.***

Accelerated learning theory suggests that we all learn easier if we tap into the ways that the human brain naturally learns. It does this by actively involving the whole person, using physical activity, creativity, music, images, colour, and other methods designed to get people deeply involved in their own learning. The emotional state of the learner is also important.

### University of Bradford, Accelerated (or effective) Learning)

The University of Bradford, School of Management describes the three main elements that enable effective learning:

- **Motivation** - effective learners are clear and honest with themselves about their reasons for learning; reasons that sustain them when the going gets tough.
- **Reflection** - effective learners think critically about what and how they learned, the ways they could use the knowledge, and what they might do to learn more effectively in the future.
- **Effective learning techniques** - effective learners have developed a range of study techniques that save time, effort and connect with their skills and personalities.\*

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More information is available from

<http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/management/external/els/information sheets.php> [accessed 23 June 2008]

### Other principles for a good accelerated learning intervention

- **Emotional state** – learners need to be in a positive, receptive frame of mind to learn at their peak. Tired, anxious or lethargic people will not learn as well, so try to create a positive physical, emotional, and social environment, which is relaxed but challenging.
- **Engaged** – people learn best when they are totally and actively involved and take full responsibility for their own learning. Learning is not a spectator sport but a participatory one. Learners should understand the 'what's in it for me' of the training intervention, what the intended outcomes are, and how it will help them in the future.

- **Working with others** – people generally learn best in an environment of collaboration. The learning design should encourage teamwork, discussion and the ability to learn from and through each other.
- **Using the whole body** – this draws on peoples' learning styles, and enables them to use a variety of senses and options to gather and process the information. Use different activities, images, colours, music, even tastes and smells to develop the learning experience.
- **Learning in context** – facts and skills divorced from reality tend to be lost. The relevance of the learning needs to be clear. Learning is easiest when there is information – practice – reflection – adjust and practice again.

## Adult learning

It has been shown that adult learners are different to children and therefore learning interventions need to reflect their needs. The following guidelines are important when designing adult training sessions:

- Adults are adults – they are autonomous and self-directed. They should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and participate as equals in the event. As adults, they need to be treated with respect for who and what they are.
- Prior knowledge – adults bring a whole range of past experiences and knowledge with them. They need to be able to bolt on the new knowledge and skills to their existing skill set.
- Relevant objectives – adults should understand why they are undergoing the training and what the outcomes are; the learning should also be relevant to them, whether it's for their job, their personal life or a mixture of both.
- Practical – adults may prefer to get hands-on with the core knowledge, rather than be burdened with perceived unnecessary theory.

## Effective self study

Here are our top three tips for effective self study...

### 1. Set clear learning goals.

- i. Make them job-related.
- ii. Write them down.
- iii. Tell someone else.

### 2. Decide your programme of work.

- i. Tailor this to fit your goal.
- ii. Be practical about what is achievable.
- iii. Stick to the plan.

### 3. Keep yourself motivated.

- i. Reflect on past successes.
- ii. Build in small rewards for completing tasks.
- iii. See yourself succeeding from the beginning.

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