



The drug sector PARTNERSHIP

Developing the workforce: Family support in the drug and alcohol sector

Background

As part of the [Drug Sector Partnership](#) Adfam is working on ways to develop the workforce supporting families affected by drugs and alcohol. After research and consultation in 2010 Adfam produced these role profiles for practitioners supporting families affected by substance use for use by the sector.

As part of the research carried out to inform the content of the role profiles Adfam ran a survey on the nature of the workforce. Read a [summary of the results](#) (pdf) of our workforce survey.

What are role profiles and NOS?

A role profile is a description of a professional role based on competencies. It is not a job description which describes every activity that take place within a job. It specifies the competencies that an individual must possess in order to carry out his or her role. Role profiles also specify the skills and knowledge an individual must have. Role profiles are extremely useful as they can be used for recruiting, on-going professional appraisal and be mapped to National Occupational Standards.

National Occupational Standards (NOS) are individual competencies that can be put together to form role profiles, contribute towards qualifications and used for professional assessment. NOS are developed by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) in partnership with employers – there are SSCs covering lots of different sectors and producing NOS covering everything from hair and nail treatment to caring for police sniffer dogs. The SSCs that have written NOS relevant to this work are [Skills for Care](#), [Skills for Health](#), [Skills for Justice](#) and [Lifelong Learning UK](#). NOS can be browsed on the [NOS directory](#).

DANOS are the Drug and Alcohol National Occupational Standards. They were chosen by Skills for Health from a number of suites to form a comprehensive selection of competencies describing the work of drug and alcohol practitioners. Other NOS in the health, social care and criminal justice suites may also be relevant to the drug and alcohol workforce, e.g. mental health and children and families.

How should the role profiles be used?

Role profiles can be used in the recruitment process, appraisal and supervision of staff, the creation of staff development plans, any changes in service targets or outcomes to respond to new needs and other processes.

In **recruitment** role profiles should be used in combination with job descriptions when advertising and short listing for a job, to describe to applicants the competencies they need to get the job. For the employer, using an effective role profile has the benefit of promoting transparency and equality throughout the process. Everything a candidate needs to demonstrate is clearly specified in a set of measures which apply to all people equally regardless of any individual characteristics. Questions and



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tests used in recruitment can then be designed specifically to allow candidates to demonstrate competencies.

For the candidate a role profile allows them to clearly see which areas of competence they should possess and demonstrate in order to make a successful application.

In the **appraisal and supervision** processes role profiles can be used by managers to monitor and assess the quality and effectiveness of the practice of staff. The structure of a role profile allows managers to identify exactly the areas where staff may need additional training or support, which can lead to the creation of staff development plans at an individual, team, or service level. Role profiles can also include developmental competencies which individuals can work towards. Areas of excellence as well as deficiency can be identified using role profiles, by examining the evidence of how practitioners fulfil each area of competence.

Further guidance on NOS, role profiles and their application can be found at:

- [Defining and creating roles](#) – Skills for Health
- [Guide to developing a role profile](#) (pdf) – Lifelong Learning UK
- [NOS benefits for employers](#) – UK Standards
- [NOS benefits for employees](#) – UK Standards
- [NOS FAQ](#) – UK Standards
- [Developing standards of practice in the drug and alcohol workforce](#) (pdf) – Federation of Drug and Alcohol Professionals
- [The Skills Consortium](#)

Feeding back

Adfam encourages you to use these role profiles throughout your organisation with all relevant practitioners. Please pass them on to your HR department and any other colleagues who may be interested.

If you have any feedback on them or would like to discuss them further please contact Oliver Standing on 020 7553 7656 or o.standing@adfam.org.uk.

Accreditation

Adfam and the [Federation of Drug and Alcohol Practitioners](#) (FDAP) are currently developing an accreditation scheme for practitioners based on workplace assessment of their ability to meet the competencies detailed in the standards of the role profiles. If you are interested in learning more about the accreditation scheme please contact Oliver Standing on 020 7553 7656 or o.standing@adfam.org.uk.