

GP reflective learning log (Example 3)

Motivation to continue clinical work

What's the issue you reflected on?

The self-motivation needed to continue in clinical practice as a locum GP.

What was the incident/situation/feeling that gave you cause for reflection?

Since leaving my partnership, I have not been as diligent in getting locums as I intended. There always seems to be something high priority in my educational roles that makes me put off getting my CV out to practices and locum sessions booked in. I am worried that if I don't get back into clinical practice soon, I will start to lose confidence.

What made you stop and think?

I suddenly realised that three months had gone by without me doing a locum in clinical work (part of that was Christmas).

This was an internal area of disquiet, brought up to conscious awareness by a mentoring course where I chose to raise this issue to discuss in a "mini-mentoring" session with another delegate.

What did you do?

We looked at practical strategies to get over the barrier caused by moving into a new way of working - like working out what to charge and where to send my CV.

It was a really important and thought-provoking discussion. I had not realised how much I was inhibited by having to set a price on my time and ask for money.

Tell us what you took away or learned from this experience?

I have realised how helpful it is to talk through things that seem difficult to get on with. I liked being introduced to some ideas about how to deal with procrastination - such as breaking the task down into bite-sized chunks, and giving myself mini-rewards for achieving each stage.

How did it change your thinking or practice?

I have stopped allowing my fears about being a locum from stopping me any longer and I have started to take on locums in a variety of GP practices.

I have professionalised my locum work with a clear standard "service level agreement" with each practice. I have joined the National Association of Sessional GPs.

What have been the effects of your changes?

Has it improved your practice and outcomes?

By getting back into clinical work, my confidence has been restored. I am getting more experiential learning to target my CPD, although I do have some learning needs that are entirely about this career change - such as learning new computer IT systems that we did not use in my practice.

Has it affected others?

I have shared my learning about how to deal with procrastination with some of my friends and colleagues and shared my findings on setting myself up as a locum GP with other new locums in my position (former partners with well-established links into one particular practice and team).