

LEARNING HANDBOOK

Guidance and tools to support systematic learning before, during and after project activity in health and care

Before action review

A 'before action review' (BAR) is a tool to help a team assess the current knowledge and experience they already have as a way to inform the planning stages of a new project. The BAR outlines the intended outcomes, lessons previously learned from similar projects, challenges therefore anticipated and actions needed to ensure success in light of what is already known.

Tool	Time	Resources	Physicality	Interactivity
Before action review	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★

When?

The BAR should be carried out as soon as a project team is decided upon. It is one of the first activities a team should do before making a start on the project itself. Timing the BAR in this way will give a team a fully informed and aligned approach to a project.

Who?

All members of a team should be involved and encouraged to share all relevant experience, not dependant upon hierarchy. It is essential that all experiences are heard, discussed and noted to ensure full understanding of previous learning.

How?

The overall time required for the session is around three to four hours.

It is advised that the BAR is conducted in person with the whole team present to make the session lively, interactive and enjoyable for those involved. There is no right and wrong way to carry this out:

- It might be useful to ask someone not taking part as a member of the team, to facilitate the session so that everyone else can focus on sharing their learning
- Another option would be to write down questions from the worksheet on page 2 onto flip chart paper and encourage the team to write their answers on sticky notes. This will allow everyone to input at their own pace and develop a hard copy of what has been shared at the same time

The worksheet below can be used to write-up the outcomes from the BAR to be stored and used again in the future. The questions used in the worksheet are from postcards developed by the Health and Social Care Information Centre Knowledge Management team, but you can tailor these as needed.

Further reading:

- NHS eLearning - [Before action review e-learning](#)
- Health and Social Care Information Centre - [Before action review postcard](#)

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Before action review worksheet

What are we setting out to achieve?

What challenges do we currently anticipate?

What can be learned from previous experience?

What will help deliver success?

How will we measure success?

What are the actions we need to take to avoid problems?

