

# SMART KSF IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation and future embedding of the KSF within NHS organisations is not just a project implementation but for many a cultural change that requires a mix of knowledge and skills to be delivered effectively. We have found that a number of organisations are still struggling to implement the KSF despite the Social Partnership Forum target, that gateways should have been operational over two and a half years ago, in October 2006.

A number of organisations have now used Think Associates Ltd to outsource all, or parts of their KSF implementation project, to ensure they reach their defined goalposts in agreed timescales. We find there are a variety of reasons behind this decision including:

"We don't have a culture of appraisal within the organisation, so implementing the KSF is a real uphill battle".

"We've struggled to get the implementation of the KSF off the ground."

"We already have a good appraisal system and rate within the Trust so we're not clear about what benefits the KSF will bring."

"We've tried to implement the KSF and our approach wasn't successful".

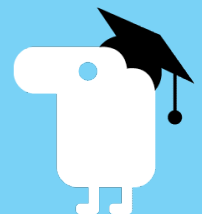
"We've not really tried to implement the KSF in full as it feels too complicated and we're not really sure the best way to achieve it."

"We have a lack of resources required to implement the KSF".

"We've managed to get the KSF embedded within a few key areas of the organisation but are struggling to engage other groups".

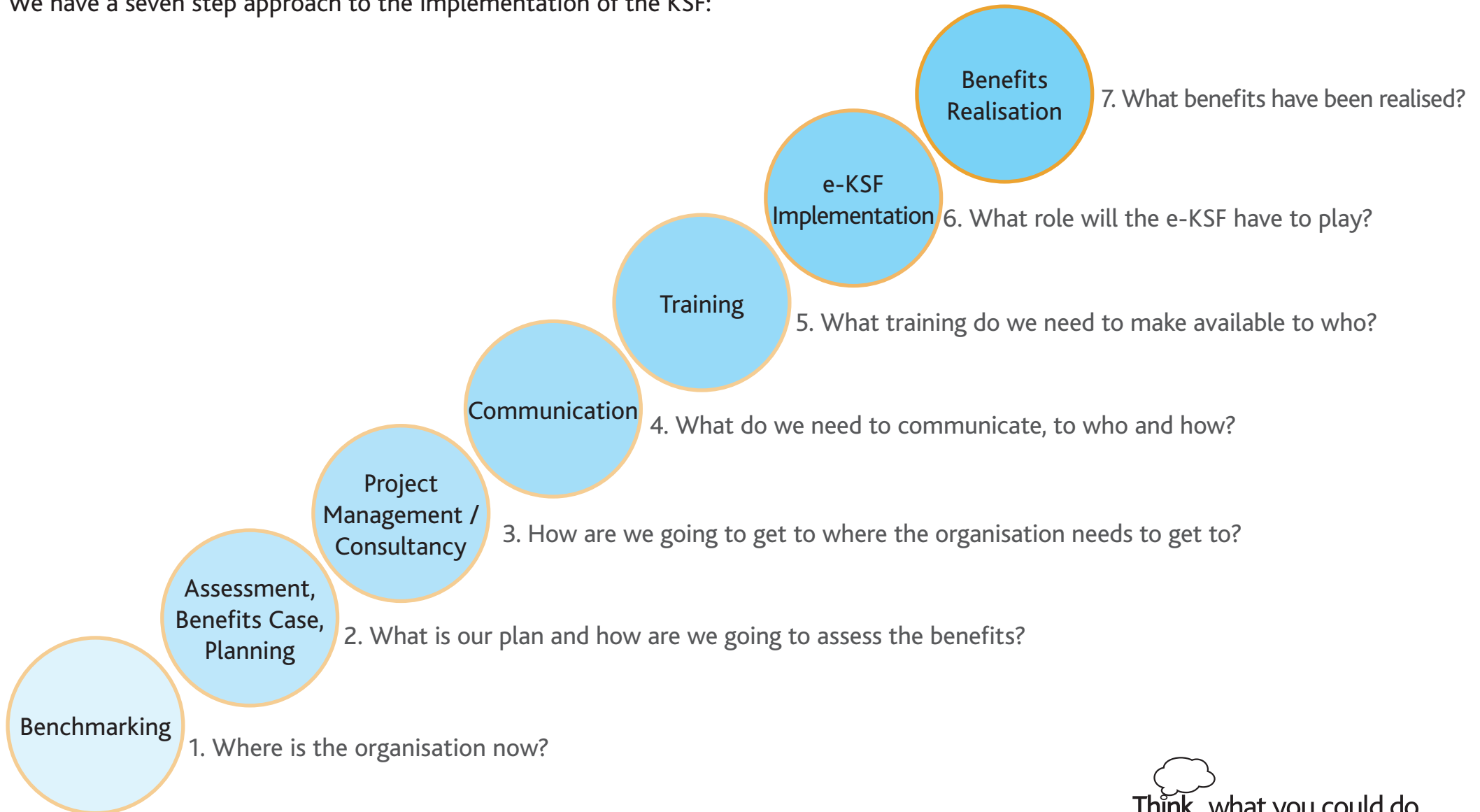
"We thought the KSF would go away - as it felt too complicated to us".

If any of these statements resonate with the situation in your organisation then we can help you to move forwards towards full implementation of the KSF and help you to use the framework to deliver real organisational value.



# WHAT ARE THE KEY PROCESSES INVOLVED IN KSF IMPLEMENTATION?

We have a seven step approach to the implementation of the KSF:



## Step 1 Benchmarking

Before any project is initiated it's important to understand where your organisation is currently at. We would use a range of diagnostic approaches, including online, telephone, face to face, group workshops and desk research, to assess the current position including a review of:

- » The organisations people management strategy and operating environment, to identify where KSF can support the organisational objectives.
- » The existing state of KSF implementation – how many post outlines have been created, how many staff are aware of the KSF, how many managers have been trained, whether gateways are truly operational.
- » IT infrastructure and skills, with a view to implementation of the e-KSF, and ESR self service.
- » Current organisational data, including the results of recent staff surveys, e-KSF usage (if utilised) and key ESR data to determine the scope of KSF implementation (e.g. number of posts for how many, what post outlines are required, what management structures exist etc).
- » Existing policies and procedures, to identify any changes required to ensure that the KSF is embedded in induction, recruitment, appraisal, clinical governance and more.

The purpose of this stage is:

- » to engage stakeholders – as they talk about their experiences, we can help them to identify the need to change
- » to baseline the current situation, which allows us to help you measure benefits at the end of the project
- » to collect information to inform the benefits case and project planning stage.

## Step 2 Assessment, benefits case & planning

In this step, we compile and present the results of step 1 (benchmarking), to get organisational buy-in to the need for change. We help you to articulate the resources required for implementing KSF, the costs of doing nothing, and the benefits that the KSF can bring to your organisation and staff.

We can also help you to create a KSF project group, and facilitate that group to design a project plan with clear, measurable milestones.

The key outputs we deliver are a detailed assessment document, project initiation document (PID), and project plan. The project plan includes:

- » A benefits case which clearly links the KSF to organisational objectives
- » Communication and change management plan
- » Milestones, critical path and resourcing plan
- » Training plan
- » Management metrics and reporting plan

## Step 3 Communication

Key to the success of any project is communication with stakeholders. Whilst we are passionate about the benefits of the KSF, and it's clear that the KSF is mandatory across the UK for all Trusts, we understand that the programme often needs to be 'sold' to the audience through a "what's in it for you" demonstration. We recommend the production of a communication plan (in conjunction with your internal communication team if appropriate) to ensure that the right messages are cascaded to individuals within the organisation in an appropriate, timely and compelling way.

The outputs identified within the communication plan can either be produced internally or outsourced to us or others as part of the KSF implementation project. Outputs may include things like

- » newsletters
- » benefits documents
- » board and senior management presentations
- » "what's in it for me" slogans
- » posters and leaflets
- » training advertisements
- » online discussion forums
- » updates to policies with KSF specific information
- » email marketing campaigns
- » roadshows and awareness sessions

The purpose of this stage is to ensure appropriate buy-in (from awareness through to evangelism) for all staff and stakeholders in the organisation.

## Step 4 Training

Depending on the current stage of implementation, there may still be training and / or awareness raising requirements within the organisation. We can help with a range of different activities including the following:

**Train the Trainer training**, options include:

- » 2 days KSF training course
- » 3 days KSF & appraisal training course
- » 2 days e-KSF train the trainer course

**KSF Outline Development Training**, options include:

- » ½ day outline development training
- » 1 day outline development training

**Appraisal Training**, options include:

- » ½ day appraisal training
- » 1 day appraisal training

**e-KSF Training**, options include:

- » 1-2 days e-KSF Administrator training
- » ½ day e-KSF manager training
- » ½ day e-KSF reviewer training
- » 2 days e-KSF Champions training

**KSF Awareness for staff**

- » 2 hour and ½ day awareness sessions

## Step 5 Project Management / Consultancy

We bring a clear project focus to KSF implementation and would plan to work rapidly and effectively with you to achieve success.

We can help with:

- » Executive management team / board presentations & updates.
- » Team meeting briefings.
- » Progress tracking and regular project update reports (broken down by directorate / department to highlight successes and sticking-points).
- » Pulse surveys – to check that the right messages are being disseminated throughout the organisation within communication exercises and training.
- » Coaching for KSF leads in project management and influencing skills.
- » Email and telephone support.
- » General project co-ordination.

## Step 6 e-KSF Implementation

We believe that the e-KSF is the most effective way of supporting KSF implementation. As the national implementers of this system, we can help with the range of e-KSF activities including:

- » Understanding how e-KSF fits and interacts with other HR systems in your organisation.
- » Management of the e-KSF / ESR link (or of organisational staff data).
- » Managing the distribution of e-KSF usernames and passwords and managing password reminders, unlocking accounts etc.
- » Collation and management of organisational hierarchy data.
- » Assignment of post outlines (where required).
- » Supporting staff with KSF post outline creation (data input).
- » Coaching of managers to use e-KSF in reviews and PDPs.
- » General email and telephone support.

## Step 7

## Benefits Realisation

We recognise that the message “it’s a term and condition of employment so you must do it” is only part of the driver for KSF implementation. For a sustainable and valuable implementation, the organisation must appreciate and value the benefits that the KSF can bring, beyond the requirements of contractual compliance. We therefore recommend a specific project phase to compare KSF implementation with a range of output and outcome measures.

- » Output measures – a comparison of the KSF implementation metrics against the baseline identified in step 1, and the milestones in step 2, to show how far the KSF project has come in a short time period.
- » Outcome measures – the more compelling information about how KSF implementation has contributed to a range of organisational objectives. Please see the “beyond implementation” section at the end of this document for the sorts of outcome measures we’d work on.

Our typical engagement ends with a “lessons learned” and “knowledge transfer” period, where we aim to take your feedback about the project to help us improve in the future, and also provide you with feedback, coaching and business processes to allow you to build on the successes of your KSF project, to ensure the KSF is embedded within the organisation and sustainable for many years to follow.

## Additional Components

We can provide the following additional components to support the implementation of the KSF within an organisation:

### Project coaching

- » We can help to develop your internal staff to manage the implementation of the KSF – we are committed to “helping organisations to help themselves” rather than relying on our ongoing support

### Bridging the gap between KSF and ESR teams

- » We often identify that organisations would benefit from additional team development to bridge gaps between KSF and ESR teams. We offer a range of team development programmes to help to remove this obstacle from the project and organisation.

### ESR data management

- » Many HR teams require additional support in data cleansing their HR data – we can help to support this.

### Engaging staff development in manager / employee self service

- » Organisations which are looking to utilise the e-KSF are often embarking on a roll out of manager / staff self service HR. Our systems and cultural change experience can help organisations to smooth this transition.

# WHY USE THINK ASSOCIATES TO HELP YOU TO IMPLEMENT THE KSF?

<b>Expertise</b>	Our team form the national e-KSF Account management team and have direct links in with the national KSF Development group.
<b>Value for money</b>	Many organisations have been trying to implement the KSF since the start of Agenda for Change (AfC) and have invested significant resources trying to implement the framework without always having the right mix of knowledge and skills to make the project a success. Using experienced people who have the right mix of knowledge, skills, and experience can represent good value for money as we will ensure the objectives agreed at the start of any project will be met.
<b>Management skills</b>	All of our consultants have a strong background in project implementation which combined with our experience in the NHS help to ensure that all projects are managed within agreed timescales and budgets.
<b>Availability</b>	We recognise that to implement and embed the KSF a cross range of skills is required that are seldom found within an individual post. Within our team we have a range of skills that we can draw on to ensure the project is a success.
<b>Long term partnership</b>	Although a large proportion of the operational implementation of the KSF can be outsourced it is key that there is a strong partnership to ensure knowledge and skills are transferred within the organisation so that there is no dependency on external consultants.
<b>Knowledge transfer / skill development internally</b>	Our consultants have coaching and mentoring relationships with a number of individuals with responsibility for delivering projects such as the KSF. This can be an effective way of up-skilling the workforce and ensuring that projects are run efficiently and effectively.
<b>Communication skills</b>	Key to the success of any project is communication. We find that many organisations don't have dedicated communication teams with the capacity to embrace the communication requirements of the KSF. With our experience in internal communication strategy and operations, we can help you to create an appropriate communication strategy and also the materials identified within this. All organisations are different so the strategy and materials need to reflect the needs of the organisation.
<b>Flexibility of team</b>	Our team are flexible enough to work within the requirements of any project giving your initiative the maximum opportunity for success. Our team consists of individuals who can provide the following services: consultancy, project management, training, project co-ordination / administration and we have also have the knowledge and skills of the e-KSF support desk as required.
<b>Focus</b>	Organisations have found that outsourcing elements of a project useful in providing a more dedicated focus and in turn commitment to ensuring the project is a success. The dedicated focus of our consultants on the objectives identified at the start of the project ensures that other organisational priorities don't affect the implementation project. This focus often means that timescales for implementation are reduced.
<b>National e-KSF Team</b>	Our consultants are all part of the national e-KSF team so organisations looking to use the e-KSF as part of their KSF implementation will benefit from being trained by the experts.

## What Next?

If you are facing challenges with implementing the KSF and would be interested to find out more about our approach, then please contact your Regional Account Manager or email [info@think-associates.co.uk](mailto:info@think-associates.co.uk) for further information.