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Professionalising management in healthcare: an organisational journey

Background

A current priority for UK healthcare administrations is the improvement of patient safety and the delivery of compassionate care.

Following an inquiry into failures at one hospital in England¹, NHS organisations have been required to strengthen leadership and management to achieve better outcomes.

What follows is a brief outline of the practical steps our organisation is taking to effect culture change through targeted management development.

Design

A management development programme was launched in October 2013 to distil the evidence base² linking staff engagement and cultures of high quality care and to disseminate this learning to all staff with line management responsibility.

Setting

Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT) provides a broad range of mental health, learning disability and community care services.

Following a merger in 2011 the organisation doubled in size and needed to:

- ✓ harmonise services
- ✓ integrate professional groups
- ✓ enhance corporate alignment with regional funding requirements

engagement: a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption³

The course takes an action learning approach with managers collectively discussing the real challenges that they face in their professional roles, before taking agreed action and finally reflecting together upon the outcomes. In turn this helps enhance the problem-solving process, as well as the consistency and professionalism of solutions developed and implemented.

Structure

Delivered off-site
18 managers per group
3 x 2-day modules

Focus

Strong emphasis on managing effective appraisals and giving constructive performance based feedback

Reach

86%
of managers have taken part
570 individuals by May 2016

Impact

A range of evaluation methods are being used to measure the effects of the course in terms of organisational performance and staff engagement and commitment, including participant feedback, project outcomes, results of the annual staff survey and external auditor's reports.

Care Quality Commission Report 2015

Overall rating good

Only 20% of healthcare providers in England are rated as good, with no other combined healthcare or Mental Health provider rated 'good' in the whole of South East England.

Care Quality Commission⁴ comments:

"Staff treated patients with kindness, dignity & respect"

"The Trust was innovative and looked for new ways to improve patient care"

"Most staff understood and were committed to the Trust's values... Commenting that they were easy to understand and were embedded in staff thinking from an early stage"

"Staff enjoyed working for BHFT. They told us the Board was visible & approachable. They spoke positively about the opportunities for professional development..."

Staff feedback⁵

Learning

The benefits resulting from this investment substantially outweigh the costs and challenges of sustaining the programme in a climate of increasing financial pressure.

Care of patients/service users is my organisation's top priority

My organisation acts on concerns raised by patients/service users

I would recommend my organisation as a place to work

If a friend or relative needed treatment, I would be happy with the standard of care provided by this organisation

Average Median combined for: Community/Mental Health/Learning Disability

BHFT 2014 BHFT 2015

0 20 40 60 80 100%

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