



Building confidence, capability and capacity in General Practice

Leading transformation in General Practice via an educational programme in Tower Hamlets.

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The concept



- In 2008 we designed a new programme to recruit and train new Practice Nurses.
- I was working as an independent education consultant with experience in clinical practice nursing and had been supporting GP Vocational Training Schemes in SE London for 7 years.
- My dream was to create a VTS programme for Practice Nurses!

What led to the programme development?



- Shortage of well trained PNs in Tower Hamlets
- Increasing number of people moving into the Borough (Public Health Report 2006-16.)
- Extremely high rates of chronic disease especially heart disease, COPD and diabetes
- Severe problems with patient access to GPs (Mori Poll 2007) Patient access has continued to be a challenge, given current difficulty with recruiting into GP posts in Tower Hamlets.

What did the PCT commmission?



- In 2007 Tower Hamlets PCT commissioned me to research effective recruitment and training programmes which would attract new Practice Nurses (PNs) into the Borough.
- Training for PNs had previously been haphazard and the idea of a formal 2 year degree programme was welcomed.

Overcoming barriers to training



- Local research showed that there was no time for training as senior Practice Nurses were overloaded due to staff shortages.
- To deal with this barrier and make transition from hospital to General Practice Nursing safe and attractive a new team was established
- The role of Clinical Mentor was created to deliver clinical training on site via weekly 'teaching clinics' and facilitate an Action Learning Group.

Setting up a new team



- In 2008 five very experienced Practice Nurses were recruited to the programme providing weekly 3 hour visits in year 1 and fortnightly in year 2.
- These nurses became our 'Open Doors Clinical Mentors and provide clinical teaching, advice and support to the trainee PNs.
- One Mentor (our first to pass their PGCE qualification) has led the weekly Action Learning Groups since 2009.
- All Mentors are part time but have developed extended roles working with HCAs, Undergraduate nurse students, Care Home Staff and newly trained independent Nurse prescribers

Key aspects of the Practice Nurse programme



- Central advertising using NHS Jobs for AfC aligned posts in General Practice
- Use of Occupational Psychology company to assess and interview applicants
- ‘Speed dating’ event to link practices with vacancies to applicants
- Standardised contract and Service Level Agreement for all trainee PNs
- HR support for practices.

The academic programme

- The programme syllabus reflects the needs of the local population as it was designed to reflect the Public Health priorities in Tower Hamlets in their 2010-2016 planning document.
- University modules commissioned included Diabetes, Asthma / COPD and Coronary Heart Disease management in Primary Care, as well as Cervical cytology screening, immunisation and ear care.
- Further study modules are designed to broaden clinical skills and understanding of public health nursing issues.

Delivery of training



- Clinical Mentors deliver training which runs in tandem with the University course (a 2 year degree or post graduate Diploma in Primary Care (Practice Nursing) delivered by City University London
- This enables work based learning which is embedded in clinical practice as academic learning progresses
- The training was independently evaluated by London South Bank University staff and found to be highly **effective, speedy and safe.** (Blunt, C., Griffin, R., Evaluating the effectiveness of a Practice Nurse Development Programme in Tower Hamlets, London. Journal of Nursing Education and Practice, 2013, Vol. 3, No. 10)

Opening doors, developing people: our first graduates in 2010, City University London



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CCG investment per practice January 2014-January 2016

(all salaries include on costs @ 22.5% and are
uplifted by 2.5% in year 2)



- Recruitment costs (year 1 only) for 7 nurses = £i.e. £1427 per practice. This covers occupational psychology team to assess and interview 16 short listed candidates, and costs of the 'speed dating' practice recruitment event).
- Salary costs Manager (0.8 WTE) = £48171 per year with 50% of time attributed to programme = £6968 per practice.
- Salary costs for Clinical Mentors is WTE £57950 per year. 4.5 hours per trainee per week in year 1 = 6954 and 2.25 hours per trainee per week in year 2 = total per practice = £10518.
- Travel expenses for staff = £ 367 per practice
- CPD expenses per year = £86 per practice
- **Total CCG costs = £19366 per practice, or £135,562 for 7 nurses for the whole 2 year programme.**

Outcomes

- 17/37 practices have one or more PNs from the programme (46%) in post or in training
- 6 practices have 2 graduates from the programme, 2 have 3
- 4 Lead Nurses in practices were recruited via the programme
- 3 nurses moved into senior leadership at CCG level

How does this relate to the GPN 10 point plan?



- Action point 2: “Extend Leadership and Educator roles”
- My role and the programme I developed has demonstrated what can be achieved by people with a background in clinical Practice Nursing
- The key to Practice Nurse leadership lies in clinical training which creates expert primary care staff who are respected by peers and employers
- No tree can grow high without deep and firm roots to sustain and nourish it.

Outcomes of training for Wapping Group Practice



- Wapping Group practice have a very positive and rewarding experience with the Open Door Programme.
- We employ one nurse who is a graduate from this programme and our second nurse Grace will complete the Programme at the end of January.
- The programme is very thorough and it was a pleasure to see Grace progressing with her knowledge and experience throughout the 2 years.

Type of work PNs can help with

- Training is structured in a way that nurses start with simple nursing jobs such as cervical smears, immunisations and ear syringing.
- Later the course progresses to more complex tasks such as chronic disease management including Asthma, COPD and diabetes.
- By the end of the second year nurses are able to undertake all Practice Nurse's jobs which really helps to share workload within the team and helps to free more appointments with GP's.

Examples of Effects on the team

- Tower Hamlets follows the Year of Care programme for Diabetes care which has been shown to deliver excellent results.
- It works by making yearly care plans with patients, motivating and empowering patients.
- However to deliver this programme 30-45 min appointments are needed depending on a patient's complexity.
- Therefore it really helps to have fully trained nurse to be able to do Care plans, it utilises nurses appointments better and creates more appointments with GP's.

Other effects on the team

- The programme helps to integrate new nurses into the team by having mentor sessions with a senior nurse in the practice and GP. It gives the opportunity to ask questions and discuss any concerns, especially that there is allocated time for mentoring sessions.
- It also helps with sharing and developing new ideas and creating learning a environment within the practice.
- The length of the Programme allows nurses to consolidate their knowledge and become valuable member of the team.

Impact on patient care

- Creates better access for patients by freeing more appointments with GP's.
- Benefits patients care as any more complex patients can be discussed with GP before or after their appointment.
- Diversity of the team helps to utilise each member's skills best by booking patients with a member of staff having the most relevant expertise eg. when lifestyle changes are needed a Practice nurse will be best person to see the patient, but if the patient is on Insulin their care plan is best done by a Diabetic nurse.

Summary

- All in all the Open Door programme is a very good programme, which is having a beneficial impact for the Tower Hamlets Practice teams and patients.

References

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- Souster, V., 'The Open Doors practice nurse development programme' Independent Nurse, 2 September 2013, pp34-35. MA Healthcare Ltd.
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