

Case Study – North East London Sustainability and Transformation Partnership

Introduction

Dr Anwar Khan is the Clinical Chair for the North East London Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (NEL STP) and Waltham Forest Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). He attended a series of bespoke Staff College Leadership Development Programmes for London Cancer in 2011-12.

In 2016, he and colleagues from Barts Health, Tower Hamlets CCG and Newham CCG, asked Staff College to develop a programme to support their Outpatient Transformation Programme and Programme Board. In 2017, they approached Staff College to develop a pilot programme to support the STP.

In his case study, Anwar reflects on what he learnt from attending the London Cancer Programme and what he's done differently as a result. He talks about why this experience led to him asking Staff College to support the Transformation Programme and STP.

What did you learn from the London Cancer Programme?

“The London Cancer Programme had a huge impact on me. I had done leadership development before but nothing as formal. I was used to going to various lectures but these were all about the theory. The Staff College programme was completely different. To be honest, I found it quite disturbing at first, being thrown in with the honesty and challenge of the feedback that people shared! No one had ever really given me proper feedback like that before. I got to know my strengths and weaknesses without really realising it, just through the exercises and feedback.

It really got me thinking about leadership and seeing that you need to lead by doing and having the courage to do things when you think it's the right thing. I think now more about the higher intent. Particularly with the integrated care agenda, I think more about why we're trying to work together, what we're trying to achieve for the good of our patients and putting this first, before our organisational ties.”

What have you done differently as a result?

“I've become much more inquisitive about people and their lives. I take the time to find out more about people and focus now on the quality of relationships I have with them. Before the programme I had a consultant colleague who I had some differences of opinion with and a difficult relationship with. After attending, I reached out to him and started to invest my time in getting to know him better and understand his views. Just by taking this time meant our relationship became stronger and we became good friends to this day. Now, we can have different opinions and disagree with each other without it becoming a personal battle.

I realised that I was spending a lot of my time with the refuserists, and it was taking a lot of my energy. Staff College helped me see I need to use my energy wisely and work with the early adopters. I found in the period afterwards I was less anxious and felt more confident, particularly when working with the refuserists!

I also realised that I was trying to do everything and that I couldn't. I started to employ Clinical Leads, younger leaders who could lead the work in their particular specialties. I now have a group of followers in the community and have discovered that they can often be better than me at spreading the word! It's led to distributive leadership in a practical way. We can bring around change much more quickly when we're working through this group, rather than everything going through me. This freed me up to take more of an overview of what was happening across the community.

I selected the Leads for their enthusiasm and competence. The positive side effect has been we've now actively supported a group of young leaders across the patch. We've set up our own leadership academy to continue to support them and we've seen a shift in the demographics of our leaders, with more young leaders and more females taking senior leadership roles with more time to give. This has meant we have more resilience for the future as well – I think one of the great failures of leadership is when there's no succession planning.

It was hard to take a step back. As doctors, we all want to feel indispensable and wanted. There's still sometimes a fear of what do I do if I'm not looking after patients? I've had to have a mind-set shift to become a coordinator of care not just a deliverer of care. I've discovered that I can influence so much more by enabling those around me to lead and can achieve more for my patients as a result."

What made you ask Staff College to work with the Outpatient Transformation Programme?

"In 2016, Sir Sam Everington, Chair for Tower Hamlets CCG, suggested asking Staff College to support us as we embarked on an ambitious Outpatient Transformation Programme that would require Barts Health, Newham CCG, Tower Hamlets CCG and Waltham Forest CCG to work together to design a new way for patients to access Outpatients services in the community.

I reflected on my experiences with Staff College and the straight feedback I'd received. There's something about the personalities of team members, the ethos and the overt openness and honesty that runs through Staff College and the focus on awareness raising that really makes it different to anyone else.

In the early meetings for the Outpatient Programme I could see that organisations were being polite to each other but were still tied to achieving their individual targets behind the scenes. Within this politeness there's something synthetic that happens. We all talk the talk in meetings but then we go away and nothing happens.

I wanted Staff College to come and say a lot of the things we didn't feel we could say about what was happening. Their focus on process and behaviours, and how behaviours can have a positive or negative impact on how we work together forms the basis of development."

What difference did having Staff College's involvement make?

"When we're stuck in the discussion it's hard to see the bird's eye view. I loved the provocation and the way Staff College helped pull us back to think about what was really at the heart of what we're trying to achieve.



People began to feel more confident to be honest about how they felt and what they thought. We paid more attention to what was going on in the room for people. Meetings became more focussed and open with greater trust between members."

Why ask us to support the NEL STP?

"Having seen the difference working with Staff College had made within the Outpatients Programme, many of the Clinical Leaders across the patch were keen that Staff College work with some of our teams taking the complex and important work of the STP forwards."

What difference has this work made?

"I've seen the impact the sessions have had for the Medicines Optimisation Group. They seem much more positive now and are finding new ways of working together. They've got the will to bring in a way to do things once across the patch which will make decision making much quicker for the future."