

Delivering Integrated Care: A Development Programme for Managers working in Health and Social Care

Key findings from qualitative research

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Executive Summary

This small-scale evaluation was commissioned by Health Education England (West Midlands, now Midlands and East) to gain feedback from respondents on a range of topics:

- Initial engagement and motivation to participate in the programme
- Views on the programme content and delivery
- Impact of the programme on the participant, team and organisation
- Areas for suggested improvement.

In total, 6 in-depth telephone interviews took place including participants from different sectors.

Key findings

Initial engagement and motivation to participate

Initial awareness of the programme came through various routes including websites, management, other providers through networks and personal contact. This reflects the strength of the marketing of the programme, which facilitated various routes for initial awareness raising.

While improving leadership was a key motivator for engagement, there were a range of other reasons quoted including the opportunity to:

- Make contact with others and share learning
- Learn more about particular behaviours
- Understand more about leadership at different levels
- Develop effective leadership skills for current economic conditions
- Understand the implications of integration and leadership

Expectations of the course varied as some felt there was very little information available in advance on which to base expectations. This is something that could be addressed for future events.

Programme content

Feedback on the content was incredibly positive, and there was only one suggestion for change from one participant.

The involvement of service users was incredibly positive and well received by all respondents. Some described this as a 'highlight' and felt that it was really useful to hear personal experiences, challenges, barriers and ways to help facilitate change and positive impact.

The role-play was useful for all respondents, however, there was a comment from one that the second running of the role play was less useful and perhaps missed the point a little. While this was only one participant, there may be some value in revisiting this element of the course to ensure it is adding, rather than distracting from the programme overall.

Leadership and effective communication were crucial elements of the work and respondents felt the sessions around these were interconnected and valuable. For some this was affirmation of existing knowledge and personal style, for others this helped change or expand current approach, facilitated application back in the workplace and influenced direction of future travel.

Service improvement was an important aspect of the programme, however the longer-term impact of the project could be enhanced if the mix of the group was more structured. For example, some felt the group lacked senior management, others were disappointed there were no partners present that they could work with beyond the life of the programme. While it is difficult to ensure everyone is happy, it might be worth setting out some parameters for group structure in advance if longer-term working is a goal from the programme itself. It certainly was important for respondents.

The action learning approach and opportunity to learn from each other was highly valued by respondents. It offered both a chance to hear new thoughts, approaches and challenges as well as affirmation of current decisions and choices. Having the opportunity to input and listen was comforting as well challenging but ultimately informative for respondents.

Building networks was a really important aspect for respondents and they reported a strong appreciation of this opportunity as it helped build networks outside of the programme as well as share learning and experience.

Programme delivery

Most respondents felt that the three sessions were needed and while there were some suggestions as to how far apart these were, generally there was support for the current format.

There is an appetite for course notes to support the programme, either in advance or during the delivery of the workshops. This has a dual purpose of helping with the programme itself as well as potential use in the future.

Impact of the programme

All respondents felt the course had achieved its learning objectives and in addition were able to describe the impact of the programme on their practice through:

- Changes in organisational structures
- Changes in processes internally
- Changes in individual perspectives especially noted in terms of delivery of person centred care
- Changes in communication styles and approaches
- Changes in understanding of different perspectives leading to changes in approach and patience
- Improved confidence as a leader
- Time set aside to think and reflect
- Overall leadership abilities.

Recommendations

In summary, the programme was reported to be well constructed and delivered, informative as well as empowering and definitively influential in change. There are however a few areas for future consideration which might help strengthen the already popular programme.

- Consider improving information in advance of publicising the programme, focusing on learning outcomes, course content and requirements from respondents.
- Continue to place a strong emphasis on service user involvement focusing on expanding knowledge and understanding of different points of view. However, there is an opportunity to consider the value of the second use of the role-play.
- Consideration of the group mix in advance to ensure the service improvement project can play a role in establishing useful and longer term partnerships.
- Continue to allow time for both formalised and informal group interaction as this is an incredibly valuable vehicle for learning.
- Consider developing an online portal for learning materials which programme participants can access during and after the delivery of the workshops.

Introduction

As part of its work for the Integrated Care Transformation Theme, Health Education England West Midlands set up several workstreams including Workstream 4 which was to oversee work on competencies and development programmes. At the outset, this included a potentially diverse set of activities, each addressing a different aspect of integrated care. Towards the end of 2016 it was decided that an integrated care leadership programme should be developed and run as a pilot.

The programme (*Delivering Integrated Care: A development Programme for Managers working in Health and Social Care*) was led by the West Midlands Leadership Academy with support from Skills for Care and it was aimed at managers working in health and social care (in the private, public and voluntary sector). The programme was designed to provide them with the skills and knowledge that would help them to deliver coordinated, person-centred care within their locality. The pilot took place over three sessions commencing on 24 May finishing on 19 July 2017.

Research approach

This was a small scale approach to reflect the feedback from the initial cohort of participants in the programme funded by HEE. Six of the eighteen participants were interviewed in order to establish:

- Initial engagement and motivation to participate in the programme
- Views on the programme content and delivery
- Impact of the programme on the participant, team and organisation
- Areas for suggested improvement.

The telephone interviews lasted between 25-35 minutes, they were recorded for convenience and transcribed for analysis. This report highlights the key findings from discussion with participants.

We were keen to speak with participants who had attended all 3 workshop sessions in order to establish full feedback on the course content. However, this wasn't possible so we spoke with 4 participants who had attended 3 sessions and a further 2 who had attended 2 sessions.

There was representation from the private, voluntary and independent sector (n=2), local authority (n=2) and the NHS (n=2).

Quotations will be used to illustrate points throughout this short report, however, it is not possible to provide any detail on the individual making the quotation as the small number

of participants mean that respondents could be identified which goes against data protection.

Key findings

The report will be divided into the following sections:

- Initial engagement and motivation
- Programme content and delivery
- Impact of the programme.

Initial engagement and motivation

Awareness of the programme

Routes into the course varied with some participants and included:

Management in their organisation.

We were nominated to attend the programme so my line manager told me about it

I was nominated to go by my line manager

Local learning providers:

It was the local training organisation that told me about the course – I did a management qualification with them before and they thought I might be interested.

From other providers.

It was another provider who had an email about the course and she passed on as she thought it looked interesting

Via the internet.

It was advertised on the organisational website...internal page for staff

Motivation to participate

While there was a common motive for engaging and participating in the course, i.e. to improve personal leadership, there were other factors reported by participants.

For some it was around sharing knowledge, learning from others and making contact with others.

As a member of the integration team, I was keen to learn how other organisations had integrated and see if we could learn and share ideas.

The organisation was keen to find out about how different sectors could work more closely together.

I've been working in this area for a while but there are only a few of us that work with other agencies and get involved in care leadership ... so keen to meet others

We need to find out more about how we can work together better and how we can work smarter

One participant described an interest in learning more about destructive behaviour among staff leaders in the organisation.

I wanted to be able to identify poor leadership style...I want to be able to identify destructive behaviour in my team managers so we can address this

Others described the desire to learn more about motivating staff and passing on some leadership responsibility to team members:

I wanted to drive forward staff at different levels to manage their own teams better

One participant described the importance of the programme in the context of financial austerity and how partnerships and integration might be able to help with this.

The organisation wanted us to find out more about leadership and how to 'bend not break' – more ideas on how we can cope in an organisation with budget cuts and yet higher demand.

The organisation wanted me to find out more about working better together and to share that with colleagues and implement learning.

For some it was about the desire to find a course that really met their needs, and had practical applications and outcomes for their organisation.

The networking aspect of the course was also important for some.

I am looking to find out more about NHS care packages so thought this might be a good opportunity to meet people and make more contacts

Finally, one participant described the lack of courses locally which addressed leadership beyond one's own organisation, i.e. leadership and working with others. This course seemed to fit that bill, and although there was limited information available at the time of sign up, it was met with enthusiasm in the absence of alternatives.

Expectations of the programme

This was a difficult question for some to answer. For some, there were clear motivators around supporting a local leadership programme and to meet others,

My expectation was around how to work with colleagues and partners more effectively and we don't always get to meet people we're working with which doesn't always go well ... it was good to have opportunity to meet with people and build a relationship. That's what I was hoping to achieve.

However, expectations from this particular course were limited as little information was received in advance. This was raised by 5 of the 6 participants and perhaps something worth considering for future cohorts.

The information about the course was a bit slow off the ground and it came through very late ... I was lucky as I was able to ask questions about the course from Judith but others might not have that access.

It would have been good to have had more information about the programme from the start – what to expect, who was coming and what we were going to cover and what was expected of us

I didn't know what to expect as all I knew was the title and maybe a little blurb in the email. I assumed it was about improving how we work with partners and other organisations to improve services.

They identified this as a slight concern, and could see this would be off-putting for some especially if they were in a position where they had to convince management to support attendance. Information in advance outlining clearly the aims and learning outcomes from the programme would be helpful for future recruitment.

...a clearer idea of what outcomes might be and benefits to our service and service users ... I know they struggled to get people on the course ...so it might have helped with recruitment to the course if they had more information in advance.

However, one participant appreciated the opportunity to make contact with the programme organisers and really felt it useful to input into the course development.

There was also an opportunity to respond and tell the organisers what we wanted from the course.

Programme content

Feedback on the programme content was incredibly positive overall, with participants feeling everything that was included should have been. One participant felt there could have been more service user involvement especially focused on integrated working and experiences. Another felt that more time spent on building genuine working relationships with people would have been good, especially if the mix of participants was better planned. However, the overwhelming feedback was incredibly positive about the content.

There was a mixed audience so people had different knowledge and were in different position so while there were things that I was already aware of, others might not have been so it was a good mix and that was important.

One participant felt there could have been more time devoted to the service improvement project with a view to longer term sustainability and partnership working.

More time working together with other agencies...probably a bit more time spent working on the SIP and opportunity to develop this into something real.

Service user involvement

All participants felt this was the real highlight of the programme. The opportunity to hear from people with personal experience of care services was described as 'invaluable', 'grounding' and 'thought provoking'. It allowed participants to hear about care from a different point of view.

For participants, hearing how policies and practices are perceived was useful and challenging. One participant gave the example of protected mealtimes, which from a care home perspective ensured staff were not pulled into other activities, therefore a positive thing. For people using services, was seen as a 'rule' and their choice over meal times was taken away.

Simple examples like this illustrated the importance of engaging with people using services on a regular and ongoing basis to ensure a common understanding and development of service delivery.

The big thing was service users talking about their experiences, role plays and that linked everything that we were learning. It was good to have their [service user] views rather than the professional view and they were there for the whole thing.

It's common sense but you lose touch when you are dealing with processes all the time. The presentation was possibly the most valuable part of the course.

It was a pleasant surprise to have user involvement ... to listen to the problems they have on a daily basis and how they start to address them. It made you think about other avenues.

It was really good to hear from their perspective ... the role play was really good

In the area I work in there are lots of challenges ... it was really great to hear from service users and be able to find out more about how to raise difficult subjects and have conversations that might not be welcomed.

There was one comment about the rerun of the role play – while positive the first time round, for one participant, this didn't work when it was delivered for the second time.

Leadership

This was a useful session and was described by many participants as a real chance to reflect on self and others and identify leadership styles, constructive and destructive behaviours and identify potential for change.

I had identified some aspects of my leadership before the course that I wanted to change but the course gave me the focus and the tools to help me identify exactly what I need to think about and how to do it.

Or to reinforce current perceptions of leadership style

I am fully aware of my leadership style but it was reaffirming and useful to have this confirmed through the programme

Effective communication

For some, communication went hand in hand with leadership styles as they felt effective communication was integral to good leadership.

This goes hand in hand with management styles as how you communicate depends on this – you can't separate the two.

Service improvement

Service improvement and the associated project were felt to be useful attributes of the programme. For some, the use of tools to focus on goals for improvement was useful.

I use a tool to help me set goals every year but I have never been told how to use it properly...it really helped me to find out [through the programme] how to! It has motivated me to keep focusing on goals and writing actions plans and has improved my skills to do that.

The 'Service Improvement Project' (SIP) was for many participants a core part of the programme. Giving an opportunity to focus on goals or plans previously set out but which never had the space in a busy work schedule.

This was quite fundamental for some participants who made changes to the structure of the organisation as a result of the course and the SIP.

For my SIP I focused on our company structure – we have now developed 'department' and responsibilities are much clearer, better communication and clearer auditing.

As well as this, participants felt the programme directly influenced the direction of the project and led to better outcomes.

I was able to merge learning and tools from the course to move forward with my project

It was good to discuss and share with other participants and have ideas and suggestions to take back and think about

One participant felt the SIP offered confirmation of decisions made and action taken. The time to reflect on how things were progressing internally, and shared with others helped to reaffirm direction of travel.

It was gratifying that people thought the work that I was doing was helpful to others, and that somebody thought it was good enough to use elsewhere

However, one participant felt that while the SIP was useful, it didn't quite achieve. For them, the main aim was to pull together a new project with other programme participants to help start a process of partnership working locally. However, in part due to the difficulty with participant mix, it wasn't possible to build SIPs around potential partnership working as there was no one else there from their area to work with.

Action learning

The action learning sets were multifunctional in that they provided a sharing opportunity.

Everyone did a presentation and that was really useful.

They also gave participants confidence, not through offering solutions but reassurance that participants were facing similar challenges and also struggling to overcome some of these challenges. In addition, it was an opportunity to integrate and talk to people more about their particular role and outlook.

It was interesting to hear about challenges that others have and how to overcome them...that sharing of knowledge and practical information is really helpful

However, for one participant the drop in attendance impacted on the effectiveness of this aspect of the programme. Both in terms of the range of experience that was available but also the fact that there was a lack of continuity in the shared learning.

Building networks and partnership working

The opportunity to hear about different partnership models was highlighted by one participant as crucial for the organisation.

I can take them back to my business which is hit by a lack of funding so having alternative ways of working is great...so even for a small company you can still use models and systems to improve.

In addition, the networking opportunities were a great feature of the programme for many participants.

I have kept in touch with some people outside of the programme, and I have joined the local Care Association which I wouldn't have found out about otherwise.

There were two key elementsthe opportunity to network and build relationships that will last beyond this course ... relationships are the things that matter and help you embed the learning

It was good have providers there and meet with them, hear about the challenges they are facing and understand more about how they work

Programme delivery

Programme delivery and duration

There was a great deal of praise for the delivery of the programme.

It was delivered really well, it was interesting and really focused and managed to keep me engaged throughout.

All participants we spoke with felt that three days for the course was appropriate, and welcomed the opportunity to have input in the current climate of limited learning and development. There was a sense that there was sufficient content to require 3 days, and additionally this length of time allowed participants to build relationships and network.

It was just right – I got to meet good staff that I'm still in contact with now

One participant felt it could have been longer – maybe five days altogether rather than over a period of months.

However, another felt it could have been squeezed into 2 days as the project aspect of the programme might not necessarily take all of the time allocated.

Participant mix

There was some criticism of the mix of participants attending the course. While this was not directed at any one individual, in fact, participants were very complimentary about fellow participants, there was some disappointment expressed for various reasons.

For one participant, the lack of senior decision makers present or participating was challenging.

For me, people who make decisions should have been there and it was real drawback that they weren't there

For others, the lack of integration experience within the group was disappointing.

The people that were there were useful but the make up of the group needs more attention. I was expecting some experience of integration that we could have learned from and shared ideas...it would have been good to have had more experience there.

As stated above, one participant felt the programme missed an opportunity by not having people together from the same locality who could in theory have initiated partnership working through the course.

If there had been other people there from the same area then we could have built a project together ... a positive outcome would have been to have had a project and build links outside my organisation but there wasn't potential to do this

Yes...I felt healthcare in my area was really missing from the group which is the people I wanted to encounter...even if I had worked up something, then I wouldn't

have been able to develop through the project...if you're really trying to work in an integrated way, then it's important that all are part of this training.

Course notes

Participants were appreciative of the access to course notes and reading outside of the programme itself. This enabled them to either read between workshops, use tools and materials in other parts of the organisation and beyond the life of the programme.

One participant suggested having electronic rather than paper– for various reasons including cost, ease of filing and access as well as updating.

Venue

While not significant, one participant was put off by the location of workshop 2 and 3. There was a feeling that this might have contributed to the drop in attendance as it was very difficult to park and find the venue. While a small point, worth considering for future events.

Impact of the programme

While there were some comments made about the lack of expectation from the course due to the limited information available, all felt the learning outcomes outlined had been met through the course delivery. They included:

- Understand yourself / your behaviour and the impact on others
- Understand communication style preferences
- Develop leaders who have knowledge of service improvement and project management techniques
- Design and improvement project and be able to demonstrate potential impact on end users

In addition, all were convinced the course had made an impact at both a personal and organisational level. Various examples were given in the course of the interviews that included changes in organisational structures as a direct result of the programme.

I promoted a leader within the organisation and have devolved some responsibilities to give teams more autonomy – I know this will help improve the care in the organisation and should lead to more effective teams.

The programme gave me a structure ... and realisation that it's not about the size of the company but the quality of care. [Having made changes to the company structure] we are not operating as a big company and setting foundations for when we grow as we will have processes in place.

As well as changes in structure, some reported changes in process.

There was a presentation from the ambulance service and he gave examples of documents they had produced...I have now implemented this in our care plan review and this is working well.

For one participant, the view of service users was the key factor of the programme and sharing with the team enabled changes to be made to their service to ensure more consideration of service user views as part of ongoing practice.

I focused on the view of service users, what is good, bad and experiences that impact on service users – and we talked about how we can make things better...it was really interesting and a good chance for discussion.

I am more open now when people are telling me things and taken a step back to reflect on the situation and from their point of view – so it has changed me in that respect.

One participant described a change in focus and a more person centred approach to service delivery.

The other thing that has changed is my customer focus ... we deal with large volumes and I do a better job now of trying to pick out the people that really need to be treated more as individuals with specific needs that our processes aren't well designed for and making sure their needs are met rather than trying to fit everyone into the same box and giving everyone the same services. We do that to a degree but I am more aware of that and less trying to fit service users into our processes and more about adapting our processes to the needs of the users.

We are hearing about the challenges from people using the services and that was really good.

Effective communication was another area for change as a result of the course.

It was good to be reminded of how to communicate well ... within the team we have thought about how we communicate and we've changed how we do our team meetings now and things are much better.

I communicate with people differently and am more patient and understanding with how people may be hearing what I am saying...I need to change the message to suit how they are understanding...it's not just about putting the message out there but making sure it is understood.

One participant reported a much deeper understanding of challenges facing others and how this has impacted on their perception of different situations.

Was really good to understand more about provider challenge and why they behave in certain ways, this has helped...and how they perceive us...there are a lot of challenges between health and social care so it was good to hear about their challenges.

At a personal level, some participants reported a change in confidence as a leader and a networker.

The course has made an impact on my confidence ... I'm now getting in touch with others which I couldn't have done before. It's also let me know that it's worth looking outside the organisation to access knowledge and others experiences.

The networking opportunities were fantastic ... and that is really valuable as I have learnt so much from others and from their perspective. I can't stress it enough ... we're not aware of the problems they face so it is good to hear that and then match it up with our experience and you can understand why things happen and build a relationship.

Some felt the programme was useful in carving out space to think and reflect.

I don't think it has made any difference to my leadership style but you just need the space to be able to reflect and share with other people and it was great to be able to share this with other people and make changes if necessary.

Others felt the programme had improved leadership ability as well.

I'm definitely a better leader...without a shadow of a doubt...around communication, delegation, my ability to empower staff and prioritise my work.

All of our managers should do the course ... I think it would be incredibly beneficial to anyone who went on it.

Recommendations

In summary, the programme was reported to be well constructed and delivered, informative as well as empowering and definitively influential in change. There are however a few areas for future consideration which might help strengthen the already popular programme.

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