

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust (STNFT) – Case Study

Background

In September 2017, we approached the Head of Learning and Development, Dave Morris, at STNFT with a proposal to deliver a Level 3 Team Leader/Supervisor apprenticeship to first year (F1) doctors. Our Head of Clinical Leadership, Dr Bill Kawai-Calderhead had been delivering an ad hoc course to F1s for 2 years prior to this, however despite receiving awards and accolades for the training, it was too reliant on goodwill to be sustainable and was ultimately a local solution to a national problem.

In October 2017 we agreed to proceed with the plan and the first Cohort of learners was signed up in December 2017.

The Need

The requirement for the course was driven by an increasing amount of research showing that medical students receive next to no leadership and management training, yet poor leadership and management results in poor patient outcome. Nationally, 63.2% of Junior Doctors wish for more leadership and management (LM) training¹, yet 54.4% rate LM training received as 'poor' or 'very poor'². Locally, surveys of F1 doctors in the period 2016-18 show that 87% agree that doctors are leaders, yet only 27% agree that medical school prepared them for the LM and challenges of F1 practice³. Finally, a 2016 national survey showed that 25% of F1 reported pathological stress levels⁴, a figure which has since risen to 29% and has been associated with the inadequate level of training in 'soft-skills' including leadership and management, delivered at medical schools.

The Development Process

Over the course of a 2-month period we worked with Dave Morris and his vocational training team as well as the foundation programme team to develop a bespoke course, based on the Level 3 Team Leader/Supervisor apprenticeship which would fill the training deficit identified above. The challenge was to make the course engaging and relevant to F1s and to fit it alongside their role as practicing junior doctors.

We did this through a close cooperation with the STNFT. We understood the need and followed the cycle of developing the course and associated material, getting feedback from STNFT and then adapting our work as necessary, all in quite a short period of time.

Delivery

The pilot cohort of learners started the apprenticeship in December 2017. Over the course of the programme we have evaluated their progress and encouraged feedback from them learners and STNFT. We have conducted reviews of progress with STNFT approximately every 3-4 months since starting the course.

¹ Rouhani, Maral J et al. (2018)

² Rouhani, Maral J et al. (2018)

³ Kawai-Calderhead (2018)

⁴ Van Hammel, C. and Jenner (2015)

The feedback allowed us to further develop the course, in particular, making it more clinically relevant so that the knowledge learnt could be put into practice better developing skills and behaviours appropriate to the clinical environment.

Results

At time of writing the pilot cohort are going through the EPA process with 2 passes currently (1 x distinction and 1 x Merit). The course has been considered a success and we started a second cohort of F1s in September 2018 and a third cohort will start in July 2019.

Developing on the above methodology, STNFT have since asked us to deliver a Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager apprenticeship to their Ward Managers (Band 7 Nurses) which started in March/April 2018. We are also now in the process of developing other courses based on these two apprenticeships, targeting other job roles within STNFT. STNFT have been so pleased with the results that they have been kind enough to refer us to other organisations and NHS Trusts where similar programmes are planned for July and September 2019.