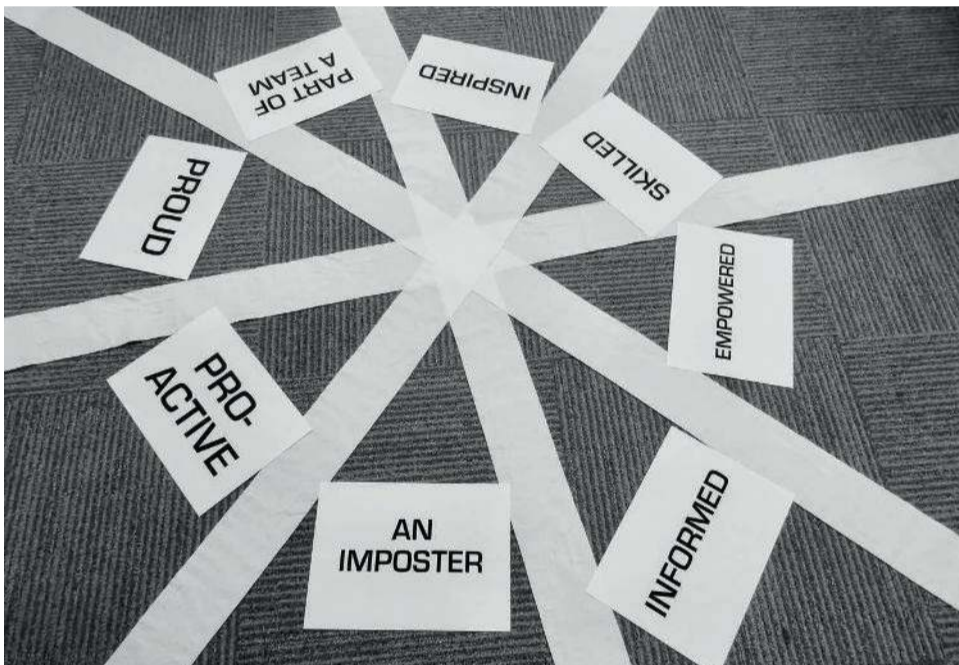


The Integrated Team

Issue 1 Oct '17 - Mar '18 - AQuA Leading Integrated Teams Programme



HEALTH & CARE LEADERS SHARE THEIR JOURNEY



Here we share reflections and learning from delegates of the AQuA Leading Integrated Teams Programme, with Affina OD.

By Rob Young, Editor.

The work we do is generous. We graft, above and beyond the call of duty, to save, heal and improve people's lives.

We are so busy, we rarely take a moment to reflect on our own wellbeing to view our profession with a fresh pair of eyes, or seek out 'areas of improvement'; not just for ourselves but for our teams, network and wider healthcare family. Yet it is an essential part of our development; how else will things improve?

It is a credit to everyone involved in this Cohort, that it was such a success. The learning experience was tackled head-on, with zest, vigour and passion. No-one rested on their laurels but used that great slab of collective experience as a springboard to dive into the future and the challenges it brings.

We face it armed with a firmer stance, an Affina toolkit and a new set of allies. We learnt a lot and while we were doing it, forged a community.

This newspaper is a celebration of that; an attempt to capture a few fleeting moments from the past few months; a snapshot, a snatch of conversation and sometimes, a searing truth.

It is impossible to capture the firework-thoughts that learning (and unlearning) ignites, but that's not what we're capturing here; just a reminder that they exist. That together, we planted seeds that continue to bloom in our work and that Professor O'Brien's inspiring words still echo in our thoughts.

It lives on in the words of encouragement that we gave to Cohort 2, so the learning curve continues to rise for the good of all our service users, patients, carers and families.

This newspaper is a small memento to say thank you.

"It releases a sense of permission and gives you confidence."



All images and quotes are drawn from participants evaluations and feedback on the programme.

**"In three words?
Inspiring, Caring,
Engaging."**

FEEDBACK

It takes a particular skill to write reflectively; to be self-aware while 'in the moment'. One participant summed up the Leading Integrated Teams programme by saying that it had **"given her permission to approach her management role on an emotional level, as the right way to engage and enable."** It is a sharp insight that acknowledges both heart and brain.

Words like *Inspiring, Engaging and Caring* were peppered throughout the feedback; underlining the mood of generosity that permeated throughout. It bloomed in many ways; from the early bonding of the group, to a uniform desire to share what was learned.

According to Professor Michael West, this generosity is at the core of collaborative leadership, **"I think we have to go back to the heart of what this is all about, a compassionate and inclusive system."**

NHS staff have virtually all made a de-

ENGAGE

INSPIRE

cision to dedicate an enormous part of their precious, unique, mysterious lives to caring for their fellow human beings, so they too have a core work value of compassion. **In short, we are all patients. We must care for ourselves.**

As NHS Leaders, we play a powerful role in crating a culture of compassion. By working together with an open mind, we must find new ways to make our roles more creative, to flex our muscle and question the embedded style of our learning.

Creativity is often misread as a playful add-on. The truth is, it boosts efficiency. Every day, we face the thousands of challenges and each one is unique. The creativity required to respond to such a workload is infused into our DNA but

like many of our softer skills, it is easy to overlook and undervalue.

Throughout the course, we came to appreciate creativity's worth and give it a sense of precision. This took many forms; from a six-hat exercise to a seven-stage cycle, from a ten stage programme to a five year plan.

We forensically analysed our own creativity and used what we learned to improve our efficiency. By studying the mechanics of storytelling and community building, we found ways that we could improve.

It is extraordinary work that we do. Our jobs are complex and every detail, down to the absolute minutiae, is loaded with consequence. We flit from

crisis to crisis because lives, literally, depend on us. In prolonged, high-pressure situations, we make a flurry of decisions where there is no time to ask, "How am I doing?" But taking stock is essential. How else can things improve?

One participant's presentation skills went from 0 to 10! Imagine how much money that the NHS could save if such progress were rolled out nationally.

Our learning was not conceptual. Concepts like PDSA and SMART, that can

easily have become entrenched in the quagmire of NHS jargon, became real-life, real-world problem-solving tools."Confidence" was not just an aspiration but something we could work on, bit by bit.

System leaders from the North West like Professor Sarah O'Brien forged their careers with grit; elbow deep in everyday challenges. That's why their knowledge is fluent. It is ingrained, hard-earned and shared. It was a privilege to witness.

CARE

"I really like the tools!"

"IT BROKE DOWN BARRIERS"

"The programme gave me a structure"



Su Fowler-Johnson, Senior Consultant, Affina OD.

It is difficult to assess the impact of a course, though the feedback has been very positive. The nature of our work is that we enable those who enable, so it is not just our drops that ripple but those we help to drop.

Having said that, there are moments of pride that we do share, like one participant saying her team seemed happier and another delighted that it has re-ignited her interest in emotional intelligence.

It is a brave thing to come on a course that challenges you not just to learn but to 'unlearn'; to change modes of behaviour that are ingrained. We are often unaware of their influence but in this particular group, the ice wasn't just broken, it was shattered. Or to put it more kindly, melted. It is a wonderful group and we are very proud of what we achieved.

Professor Michael West believes that by listening to each other with fascination, we create a compassionate team and that such teams have lower areas of errors, stress, injuries bullying and harassment, while increasing innovation and efficiency.

What is not to like about that?

"Tremendous benefit"

"Courageous and constructive"

"The staff seem happier"



Dr Claire Harris, Senior Consultant, Affina OD.

"I'm much more confident."

"I am developing my skills as a leader and developing the team to develop their skills too."

"I have learned new things to use with our team."

"Gives you confidence, permission to do fun things."

"It gives confidence."

'The programme has given me an injection of confidence to try different things.'

"The Affina Journey is my own journey"

also care about the development of them as a very important factor of what we achieve in outcomes for the team, service and organisational objectives.

have been provided with management and leadership tools which enable me to work with my team to drive our business plan forward in a way where we can have fun, contribute, own as a group and develop a healthy sense of competition whilst putting collaboration at the heart of our ambitions.

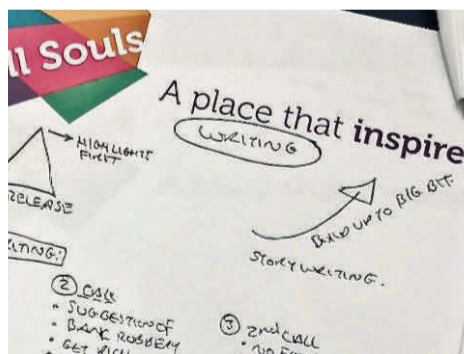
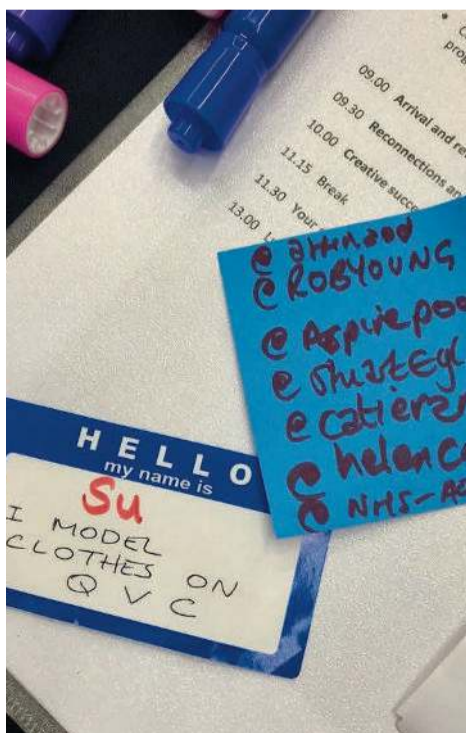
ENGAGING

The journey has enabled me to learn about myself in a way which allows me to work with the Affina tools with confidence and be right here on the front line applying the learning knowledge and skills in a way which is meaningful to the development of the team in achieving cohesion, integration and shaping the way for further confident collaborative working.



"It's great"

"Snippets from the programme keep coming to mind and I say I am going to try that now."



"Positive."

"I am better at engaging people in a positive way."

