

ODS ROUND UP | Sept 2009

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Pioneering NHS team shortlisted for national award

A pioneering team from NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan has been shortlisted for a national award just months after completing an intensive team development programme with ODS.

The Homeless and Vulnerable Persons team is one of three finalists in the Innovation and Progress: Diversity and Equality category of the Guardian newspaper's Public Services Awards 2009.

The shortlisting follows the completion of a comprehensive training programme designed by ODS to help the team to improve its innovative service and face the future with more confidence.

The Homeless and Vulnerable Persons team - the only dedicated PCT team of its kind in England - works to improve access to healthcare for vulnerable groups. Wigan has some of the highest homelessness rates in the country.



Following the rapid expansion of the team in 2008, it was felt that an intensive programme was needed to embed new and more effective ways of working together - in order to improve clinical outcomes and demonstrate the value of the service to commissioners.

ODS created a bespoke, six-month course designed to bring the different team members, who span a range of healthcare disciplines, together. The course was hosted at ODS' on-site training suite and involved 10 members of the PCT team attending at the same time.

It culminated in a successful 'showcase' event at which the team re-launched their service to multi-agency stakeholders including local authorities and regional NHS groups and organisations.

Margaret Fairhurst, Manager of the Homeless and Vulnerable Persons team for NHS Ashton Wigan and Leigh, said: "ODS has made a real difference to our team - helping us to recognise how to work together more effectively to improve and develop our service for the future.

"To receive a shortlisting in these prestigious national awards is the icing on the cake!"

ODS Consultant Stuart Taylor, who led the programme, said: "This is an exceptional team that needed an exceptional development programme.

"The intensive approach we recommended really paid off - we could see a measurable difference in the dynamics of the team by the end of the programme."

Having successfully completed the course, the team will now receive formal certificates from the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM), which provides official recognition of the ODS course.

The winners of the Guardian Public Service Awards 2009 will be announced on 24 November.

Inspiring better patient experiences

ODS is helping to deliver a pioneering project to improve the quality of patients' service experience in hospitals across the North West.

The 'Vital Signs Care Cards' project - the first of its kind in England - involves using themed playing cards, carrying a range of statements, as a device to encourage patients to voice their emotional needs and care preferences.

Around 500 patients across the North West will have taken part in the pilot when it concludes at the end of September.

ODS is project managing the scheme for NHS North West as part of the Inspiration North West initiative, which was established to raise the profile of service experience and benchmark best practice. The pilot is being funded by the Health Foundation.

The consultancy has helped the five pilot sites to implement the care cards and provided change management support and guidance to ensure the smooth implementation of this innovative scheme.

ODS is also sponsoring an award at the Inspiration NW conference, which takes place in Manchester on 9 October.

Health Secretary Andy Burnham MP recently highlighted the importance of patients' experience of the NHS - announcing plans to make patient satisfaction a new criterion in determining hospital budgets.

Mandy Wearne, Director of Patient Experience for NHS North West, said: "Vital Signs care cards is an innovative project designed to draw out the emotional needs and care preferences of patients, and to tailor their care accordingly.

"The playing card device is familiar and non-threatening to most patients, and the initial feedback from the scheme has been very positive. In many cases, the cards have sparked discussions which might never have happened without them."

Jackie Barringer, Senior Consultant at ODS said: "This is a truly inspiring project and a very timely one. We have really enjoyed supporting the pilot sites to implement this change and look forward to sharing their learnings at the conclusion of this first phase."

Carol Brooks, Joint Managing Director of ODS, will present the 'Inspiration on the Frontline' award - for service improvement ideas from NHS North West employees - at the Inspiration NW conference.

Visit us on stand 13 at Inspiration North West Conference - on 9 October.

(<http://www.cynergyevents.co.uk/inspirationnw/inspnw/live;diaryFlyer.pdf>)

WCC tool to help Dudley PCT earn autonomy

As WCC assurance enters its second year, Dudley PCT is to implement ODS' bespoke Commissioning Qualities Tool to benchmark its performance against the key WCC competencies.

The unique tool - already successfully used by Liverpool PCT, one of the top-ranked PCTs at World Class Commissioning - provides detailed data and action plans to support WCC assurance assessments.

Dudley PCT also wants the tool to deliver data to support its bid to achieve "earned autonomy" within the WCC assessment process, which will see results published in summer 2010.

Dudley is to implement the online tool - which will be customised to meet some specific local needs - across its 330 commissioning employees.

Wyn Jones, Senior ODS consultant, said: "This is a powerful yet easy-to-use tool that can deliver both strategic and practical support to PCTs as they prepare for the second year of WCC assurance.

"As with all our services, we were only too happy to customise the tool to meet Dudley's specific needs, and to ensure that the process is as user-friendly as possible for employees."

The ODS Commissioning Qualities Tool delivered strong results for Liverpool PCT. In addition to the detailed data and action plans, the tool also identified new issues to the management team and raised the profile of WCC across the whole organisation.

To find out more about Liverpool's work, please visit:
www.odsuk.com/files/liverpool_pct_the_road_to_world_class_commissioning.pdf.

Meet us at NHS Employers Conference

Come and meet us at the NHS Employers 'Leading workforce thinking' Conference in November.

ODS Managing Directors Carol Brooks and Donna Bradshaw and members of the team will be attending the conference and exhibition, which is being held at the ICC in Birmingham from 3 to 5 November.

The focus for this year's conference will reflect the fast-changing NHS landscape, with maximising productivity and improving quality two key themes.

The ODS team will be taking the opportunity to showcase its latest projects, and to demonstrate how applying strategic workforce thinking can transform organisations.

ODS Joint Managing Director Carol Brooks said: "In these challenging times, organisations are becoming increasingly open to new ways of working.

"The conference will be the perfect opportunity for us to share insights from our own work and to listen to delegates about their specific needs."

Visit us on stand 19. For more information, visit: www.nhsemployers.org/2009

Soap Box

Do your customers receive a first class service from your organisation, or should you be doing more to meet their individual needs?

These are the questions that NHS Trusts will be asking themselves following a landmark speech by Health Secretary Andy Burnham which indicated that patient satisfaction is to become a factor in determining hospital budgets. (<http://www.hsj.co.uk/news/policy/patient-satisfaction-guaranteed-the-future-of-payment-by-results/5006489.article>)

Signalling an end to what he described as the 'like it or lump it' culture of the NHS, Mr Burnham's announcement is a timely reminder of the importance of softer, people-facing skills in an increasingly target-driven era.

The message is relevant to the whole of the public sector, and it chimes strongly with all of us at ODS as we continue to highlight the importance of an organisation's people in shaping its culture and service.

Our work with NHS North West on the 'Vital Signs' project is an excellent example of inspiring frontline employees to deliver a more customer-focused service.

In our workforce planning activities, too, we are continually urging our clients to keep the customer at the heart of all their thinking - recognising and anticipating their current and future needs.

The good news is that better service experiences and efficiencies are not mutually exclusive; a good organisation development and workforce planning strategy can deliver both.

Take a look at our work with NHS Bedfordshire to find out how we helped this organisation to transform its urgent care service - making it quicker and easier for patients to use and saving the Trust £1.4m in efficiencies in the first year alone: http://www.odsuk.com/files/ods___bedford_pct_case_study.pdf

Donna Bradshaw