

Case study: Torbay Care Trust and Devon Partnership Trust

Using a variety of approaches to recruit GPs to the Practitioner Development Programme

What we did

In order to make the Co-Creating Health initiative to develop self management support a success, Torbay was committed to providing the Practitioner Development Programme to as many clinicians as possible. To attract local GPs to the training, the local project manager undertook a variety of activities. As part of the ethos of working collaboratively with patients, patients were involved in each of these activities as far as possible.

Activities included:

- At the start of the Co-Creating Health programme, the project manager delivered workshops to clinicians to introduce them to the programme and to highlight its purpose and benefits and always included patients in its delivery.
- The project manager and patients held presentations in GP practices to raise the awareness of the Co-Creating Health work and to explain how GPs could get involved in the programme.
- The project manager and patients delivered presentations to practice managers from all Torbay practices.
- The project team also used the media sources available in the trust (e.g. mail outs, bulletins and newsletters) to raise the profile of the Co-Creating Health Programme in the local area which always included anecdotal evidence from patients telling their story.
- The project manager initiated the first GP training session with 3 GPs from three different practices.

In addition, the clinical lead for the Co-Creating Health programme, David Pearce, is a true advocate of the programme, passionately promoting self management support, and has become a Health Foundation Self Management Support Fellow.

The impact

Through this pro-active communication of the benefits of the Co-Creating Health programme, GPs felt involved from the start. Furthermore, the involvement of patients and hearing them tell their story also influenced the GPs and enhanced their commitment to co-shape the initiative.

As a result:

- The 3 GPs who attended the initial training course were extremely enthusiastic and started talking to their colleagues about the Co-Creating Health programme, which had a positive influence on the overall perception of Co-Creating Health in the local practices. Since the start of the programme, the Co-Creating Health project team has trained 55 GPs.
- The committed GPs liaised with consultant colleagues, as a result of which the project team delivered a training course for 10 consultants at Torbay Hospital.
- The project team has further trained many multidisciplinary teams consisting of GPs, nurses, AHPs, OTs, Physiotherapists, Social Workers and CPNs.

Four years into the programme, 60% of the local GPs have completed the Practitioner Development Programme.

Next steps

Although many GPs now act as trainers on the Practitioner Development Programme and the overall perception of Co-Creating Health is very positive, the project manager continues to work to maintain enthusiasm and momentum.

This involves continuous marketing activities:

- The project manager still visits GP practices and encourages patients to talk about their experience of Co-Creating Health with GPs.
- Further developments have included videos of patient stories to demonstrate the benefits to GPs.

Our learning

- Paying GPs backfill locum cover to attend the Practitioner Development Programme has increased attendance.
- Appointing a Co-creating Health champion employed by the Trust enhances the ability to network with GP practices.
- It is important to appoint a committed project manager who keeps ‘banging on doors’ to convince others to put self management support on their agenda.
- In order to build a business case you need to provide evidence of the effectiveness of the programme. It is therefore essential to collect as much local evidence as possible, commissioners want to see QIPP cost savings made, anecdotal evidence is not enough!
- The willingness of the local Practitioner Development team to modify techniques and adapt, including ‘letting go’ less effective tutors.
- The desire of the team to enhance the Practitioner Development Programme by adding to the available repertoire of courses (‘gold’, ‘silver’ & ‘bronze’).
- The continued emphasis of the importance of providing support to both clinicians and people with long term conditions in a climate of increasing recognition of the importance of self-management.

Views from facilitators

The project manager asked three facilitators on the Practitioner Development Programme what they thought had contributed to the success in primary care, their response was:

Dr Andy Haytread

I am a GP in Torbay, and Torbay Care Trust’s GP Mental Health Lead. I was trained on the first ADP programme 3 years ago, and trained to become a tutor on ADP courses soon afterwards. I have tutored 6 courses now.

I believe several factors have contributed to the success of the ADP programme in Torbay, especially the high proportion of GPs trained in Torbay:

- The continued drive, energy and persistence of the Project Lead, Chris Bullen.
- The involvement of a GP as a tutor from early in the programme, acting as a ‘champion’ in primary care for the Practitioner Development Programme.
- The willingness of an increasing number of clinicians to become tutors.

Dr Deb Avery

Firstly it was the fact that places/attendance was funded for GPs enabling us to have cost neutral training. And I think other health and social care staff were not funded but didn’t have to pay either - so again, that is immediately ‘good value’ for them and their bosses.

Second, as soon as initial people had done the course it was apparent HOW MUCH they had GAINED and ENJOYED it. That is the biggest catalyst: word of mouth!

For GPs it was a wonderful highly practical look at what we spend hours of our lives doing. We had chances to try and learn with our peers, so that critical conversion of theory into practice was started IN THE SESSIONS.

There was feedback and encouragement at every stage. Being asked how you have got on trying out a skill is massively encouraging to having a try!

Some of the messages from the course are so simple yet SO PROFOUND. Health and Social Care staff care helped to step back, stop preaching/doing things to people/using jargon and start LISTENING actively to patients/clients, and starting to build together to progress things for each individual.

It’s a big relief, actually, not to feel that everything depends on the professional. Everything depends on the partnership between individual and professional(s), and on patience and trying different things.

Hollie Vercoe

I think the Practitioner Development Programme has been a success because of the high quality tutors, actors, and content. The tutors are passionate about Self-management and this comes across in the presentations.

I feel Torbay has worked hard to put the Practitioner Development Programme into the bigger picture of the wider programme of work to promote self management support.

The initial recruitment of GP's was helped by the project manager presenting to GP's and asking people to become champions of the training. Persistence has been key.

Word of mouth has increased the uptake of the training. The champions of the programme are Doctors who the GP's respect and are also delivering the workshops.

The Practitioner Development Programme provides clinicians with the extra tools for motivating behaviour change in their patients which are the missing piece to clinician training, so clinicians have welcomed the skills and tools that the programmes bring.

We have taken on board participant feedback in order to improve the workshops.

GP's have valued having the patient perspective in the workshops.