

Improving staff empowerment, motivation and performance

Background

The Health Advocacy Partnership (HAP) provides support to Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPI forums) in Wiltshire, Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset. It is one of a national network of Forum Support Organisations (FSO's) contracted by the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) to provide a range of support services. It is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee.

PPI forums were set up in 2002 to ensure that the public are placed at the heart of the NHS and have real power in health related decision-making. Every primary care, hospital, ambulance and mental health trust has a PPI forum.

Support services provided by HAP include; information and advice to forum members and the public, developing networks between interested voluntary and health related organisations, providing training and development to forums, providing accessible premises for forum activity, carrying out survey to ascertain views, and supporting the wide range of activities carried out by the volunteer forum members .

Motivations for involvement in C3

- With a major change in funding and procurement of public involvement looming on the horizon HAP identified that they needed to review their position and plan for the future. They considered a review of performance to be a key part of the planning process.
- Certain key staff members were also aware that the organisation needed to improve the way it communicated with and involved staff in decision-making. It was hoped that this process would facilitate an open and productive dialogue.

Process

- C3 Quick Perform completed anonymously by all staff.
- C3Perform self-assessment held in one day (5 hours)
- Action planning sessions held over 2 sessions (total of 6 hours)
- A performance improvement champion was identified from the start. All actions on the action plan were given to a specific person or team.
- The management team took responsibility for driving the plan forward and keeping it alive.

Improvements made

The most significant outcome was an improvement to mechanisms for inviting feedback from staff. This included a staff survey and a review of the appraisals process.

The staff survey (based on the C3 resource) obtained honest and fairly critical feedback. Each point was addressed by the organisation over the course of several meetings and the organisation feels that staff moral, empowerment and performance has increased. This was evidenced by a second staff survey six months after the first, which showed significant improvements.

Many other specific improvements were made, including: progress on organisational business plan, staff aspirations survey, product and service development workshops and appraisals, improving structure of management team, reviewing organisational roles, communication improved, process flow charts started, environmental policy written.

Feedback from participants.

'We now know that the organisation has the capacity to overcome difficult issues and relationships, draw positive strengths and move on. The organisation is more adaptable than we thought and we have the confidence in the capacity to involve staff.'

'External facilitation and the C3 process facilitated a culture of dialogue within the organisation.'

'HAP is now more than the chief exec's organisation'. (i.e. the staff now feel more involved in decision making)

'Our approach to Performance Improvement has grown from inside the organisation over time with fertilization from C3 and the external facilitation.'

'The C3 process (and the way the organization has tackled critical feedback) has greatly increased my respect for management.'

Next Steps

HAP has completed a year one review. They now want to conduct the Workshop Perform session to involve all staff in the PI process.

HAP has also written a PI policy, which they will attach to the business plan when completed. They are reviewing whether they would benefit from any specific quality marks.