



Case study: **Primary Care Network Development Programme**

Craig Milne
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Clinical Director Preston Park Community Primary Care
Network
Brighton and Hove

Craig is a GP partner with the Preston Park Surgery in East Sussex and leads on Mental Health, Alcohol addiction and IT. Craig also looks after staff development and is a Caldicott Guardian, making sure that patient information is used legally, ethically and appropriately, and that confidentiality is maintained.

Preston Park Surgery is part of Preston Park Community Primary Care Network and has been working together with neighbouring practices and other NHS providers to integrate their services and to ensure they remain able to adapt and cope with the increasing and changing demands.

Craig represents Preston Park Surgery on the local Primary Care Network as a Clinical Director. When Craig took on this new role, he felt that the way he was managing the change process in his own practice was challenging. "I felt I didn't have the right skills and I lacked confidence. The news of the pilot for the new Primary Care Network Development (PCN) Programme starting in my area could not have come at a better time."

About the programme

Primary Care Network Development Programme supports the local development needs of General Practice at scale across the current Primary Care Network Clusters. The programme helps to increase the understanding between multi-disciplinary professionals of the key issues and challenges facing the delivery of health and care in a complex adaptive system. It also helps to build relationships and trust and offers individuals a unique opportunity to continue to grow, develop, and strengthen their leadership capability, providing a very practical and applied learning experience.

The programme uses a range of learning methods including techniques such as scenario-based learning, case studies, action learning and peer coaching, work-based stretch assignments, and masterclass workshops. Learning is grounded in the contextual reality of the clusters taking part and is personalised to the needs of each cluster. The programme offers safe and supported opportunities to practise techniques and skills that enable the successful transfer of learning and sustainable behavioural change.



Impact

Craig is a skilled and experienced project manager and this was the first leadership course that he participated in. Craig signed up for this programme in the hope that it would help him develop his leadership and people management skills and give him more confidence. He was also keen to improve his facilitation skills. Having attended all 5 sessions Craig has found the programme very interesting and useful both in terms of personal development as well as relationship building and networking. Each of the sessions offered both theoretical and practical examples.

Like many other surgeries, Preston Park is in the process of planning how they will deliver the extended GP hours. This is all part of the changes required and can be met with resistance in meetings. As Craig reflects “Looking at human behaviour in relation to change and the theory behind resistance was very insightful. Being able to identify where my colleagues are on their journey through change and where the resistance is coming from helps me deal with difficult attitudes and get people on board. I can tailor my approach and make sure I offer the right support to individual team members. I believe this will have a positive impact on the whole team and will reduce frustrations and stress level”.

Craig is confident that this programme offered him the skills and tools that will help him, his practice and his colleagues to introduce changes more effectively and improve the way they work as a team.

It's only been a couple of months since the programme ended but Craig has already been putting the things he learnt into practice. This is particularly visible in the way Craig approaches meetings with staff, partners and other practices or his local PCN and how he communicates with people. Having learnt a number of new practical techniques and relevant tips, including negotiation skills, Craig is now more confident in his personal impact and his ability to influence people. He takes the time to listen more and understand different points of view and he is more aware of people's individual needs and ways of working. “I feel that I'm being more considerate, more aware and more effective now. I knew some of these things already but having someone help you formulate your ideas and having the chance to practise has been very helpful.”

This programme offers attendees an opportunity to connect with other people from their local primary care network and with other networks representatives. This had led to increased connections, new relationships, understanding and enthusiasm to work with others across health and social care. For Craig it was invaluable to discuss and do things together, as a wider group. Meeting others, hearing their questions, problems and having the opportunity to address these together was very insightful.

“Attending this programme has helped me to become a better leader, given me more confidence and skills to support my team and my local PCN in the future. It also gave me the confidence to go out there and learn from others. I'm very excited to be involved in developing our PCN, making sure that we work well together, utilise the connections and resources appropriately and progress.”

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