



Nye Bevan Leadership Programme: A Personal Journey

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I started this journey as a 'Bevanoid' and now 16 months later I am a 'Bevanite'. I am immensely proud of what I have achieved and looking forward to the celebrations ahead at the Graduation on the 9th of March 2016.

The Beginning

My journey started in July 2014 when I decided to apply for the Nye Bevan programme. Although I was not in the most obvious role of a deputy executive I was able to show that my leadership aspirations and passions for NHS improvement were enough for me to rise to the challenge. My role at the time was in Service Improvement for Children and Young Peoples Services in the Strategic Clinical Networks in NHS England. I have always had a plan to enhance my career and improve my leadership behaviours since my first staff nurse post as Children's Nurse 21 years ago.

Luckily it all went to plan and I was successful in securing a place in Cohort 7. I won't forget the both exciting and nerve racking selection process. I decided to make a House of Leadership Poster with 24hrs notice and collect my toolkit of props to explain what I can bring to the programme. I was delighted to be told that there must be no use of power point.

In preparation for the 1st Residential in Leeds I and my colleagues completed several diagnostics about me.

This was the start of holding up the mirror to myself and others around me. At this point I did not quite believe that I would be pulled apart and rebuilt like a robot as one colleague said. I can certainly say 16 months later I am still learning about myself, but feel more comfortable in my own skin with a growing confidence. This style of learning has been the best I have experienced in my career to date and not just professionally, but personally too.



During the Programme

What has had the most impact?

Submitting 8000 words of evidence to support my learning contract to my set, practising the kind of behaviours that differentiate executive performance at board level during the learning scenarios, holding my peers to account for their impact, and making pass or fail decisions on each other's work has had the biggest impact on me.

All of the above was easier in a safe environment where I could tackle the situation-relevant learning and I was taken out of my comfort zone!

My most memorable scenario was being called to a meeting with a 'real' MP in my role as Director of Commissioning in a CCG to discuss the potential closure of a hospital in her consistency and the impact of the media.

What have I gained from an individual perspective?

- Being critical of myself has not been an easy task. I have kept a personal learning diary and embraced the whole concept of reflexivity. This is now part of my day to day thinking.
- Working in a learning set (like a mini board) is a fantastic way to learn about giving and receiving feedback. I have personally found this the most beneficial part of the programme. I can honestly say that my resilience has been tested many times and I am now stronger.
- Using this programme as my golden ticket to having the courage to knock on the door of other leaders who I would not have normally rubbed shoulders with has been an experience I will never forget.
- Using the study time effectively to think differently, observe other board meetings and collect my evidence of learning has had a double bonus as this also supports my Nursing revalidation due this year.
- My daughter who is nine would say I am happier at work and she has noticed the impact on me at home too. She often says that she is proud of me as a single working mum and she is glad that all my hard work and time away from home has been worth it.
- I have gained further learning across wider systems not just health. I have embraced learning from National and International Leaders.
- My performance and satisfaction at work increased when I was able to secure a promotion half way through the programme (Lead for Quality Assurance for Specialised Commissioning in the South East). This role coupled with the programme goals and coaching has been the stepping stone I needed to accelerate me into future executive roles.

- I have continued to focus day to day on high quality patient care even when I am not in a frontline role. The impact from day one of the first residential where I heard two patient stories remind me of why I work in the NHS and how I am proud to be part of it.

Next Steps

On 9th of March at the graduation I will receive my NHS Leadership Academy Award in Executive Healthcare Leadership along with another 195 'Bevanites' from Cohorts 7-11.

I am excited about my future career and currently planning my next steps, whilst at the same time still adding to and embedding those readiness executive skills that I have been working on over the last 16 months.

Final Thoughts

My final message to colleagues who are considering this programme is to go for it and apply to become one of the next cohorts of executive healthcare leaders of the future. It will open doors on a journey that you won't ever forget!