

The Culture and Leadership Programme: Case Studies

Working to create a health and social care ecosystem where everybody consciously works together compassionately and inclusively, so every person can perform to their best ability.



The Junior Doctor

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Factfile

Trust:

Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust (PHU)

Stage at time of writing:

Scoping
Discovery
Design

Delivery

PHU is an acute hospital Trust on the south coast employing more than 8,000 staff. The Trust’s main site is the Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth, with additional sites across Portsmouth and south east Hampshire. PHU is of the largest hospital Trusts working with the Ministry of Defence to provide care for serving personnel and veterans.

Eda Yardimci has worked hard to become a junior doctor. But she describes herself with two job titles: senior house officer and culture change agent – PHU’s name for members of its culture change team. By pulling together these two roles, Eda feels she is getting the most well-rounded development possible, while giving her maximum to the Trust.

I’m quite early on in my career as a doctor, but I’ve always been keen to develop myself as a whole person. Of course, developing my clinical skills and knowledge is very important to me and it’s something I do regularly. But I also want to develop – creatively, as a leader and as a team player. The Culture and Leadership Programme sounded like a great way to have positive impact on my workplace, while becoming more well-rounded in myself.

Personal development

As team members, we receive a lot of support to help us carry out our culture change agent role effectively. For example, we did the MDTI personality test to help us understand our general personalities and how each of us might fit and work with others in the group. We also did sessions on presentation skills, wellbeing and even sketch noting, to develop our creativity.

It's been a really nice counterbalance to my medical studies – learning completely different skills. Medical training places strong emphasis on retaining facts. Using my creative skills and working with qualitative data helped me develop new ways of thinking outside the box as well as relating to people differently. In addition to helping the Trust, I feel these skills will make me a better doctor – and a better person.

What I worked on

A lot of the projects piqued my interest because I'd had personal experience of the problems they were addressing. For example, as a newcomer to the Trust, my induction wasn't particularly warm, welcoming or useful. So, when I spotted the project on making the induction process more welcoming, I was really keen to get involved.

To approach this task, we looked at other Trusts' inductions and considered what worked well and what didn't, and then broke the processes down to develop a framework of useful elements. We used this to develop a pack that managers can easily update, adapt or personalise for different staff members. It still needs to include standard information about things like health and safety, but it also includes more about our values as an organisation and how we support staff wellbeing. We have also made the overall tone less formal. By ensuring the induction is more welcoming will encourage staff to feel happier, but to also be warmer in their own approach towards new staff and patients. It sets a standard.

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Overcoming fears

I did have a few doubts. I wasn't sure how much of a difference we would be able to make, so I was really surprised to see the level of control we were given. I have had a direct, positive impact on my place of work, and the trust they have placed in us has, in turn, has given me a greater sense of belonging within the organisation.

I was also worried that it might be difficult to set aside the time, but that was set out very clearly. At the start, each of the team members had a discussion with their line managers to agree how much time we would give up for the project. We usually have one all-day workshop together each month, which includes a learning development session with the organisational development team, who lead the programme. We also meet up during or after work in smaller groups to focus on our individual projects. It's worked really well.

Finally, I was worried that we'd receive a lot of push back from the senior executives and that we'd have to really battle to get our ideas accepted. However, they've been really receptive and enthusiastic. With every project, we've been given the opportunity to present and pitch our ideas and plans to the executive team. We usually state the 'problem', discuss findings through gathering information and discussions with staff, and then pitch our plan and our predictions for how it will impact staff in a positive way.

The executive team has always been keen to discuss our findings and are always open to implementing changes – they have even role modelled culture change behaviours, to set a precedent for the Trust. To me, this shows ultimately that they trust and appreciate our work.

Changing relationships

The prospect of working alongside colleagues with a similar mindset was a real draw. The change team is like a family that spans right across the organisation. I've made some really great friendships with a lot of other amazing healthcare professionals working in completely different roles, people I probably wouldn't otherwise have met.

In the team, we also work quite closely with senior leaders like the chief executive and board members. Through the process of pitching ideas to them or receiving updates from the senior executives, I've realised that they're very involved, very approachable, and keen to learn about what's happening on the ground.

For me, this has been a fantastic experience. I've developed insights about people working across the Trust. From the work we have done, we've received really positive feedback from other staff. In my day-to-day clinical work, I'm far more aware of the team dynamic: it's not just the doctors who make all big decisions – it's all of us, working together, that creates the magic and helps keep patients safe. We've focused our work on staff, but ultimately this can also have a positive impact on patient experiences as well.



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People Promise links

This case study highlights work in the following People Promise themes:



We are **compassionate and inclusive**



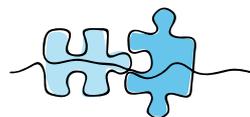
We are **recognised and rewarded**



We each have a **voice that counts**



We are **always learning**



We are **a team**

Got a question or want to know more:

W: [NHS England » Changing healthcare cultures – through collective leadership](#)

E: NHSI.Culture@nhs.net