North of England SPF Meeting

Working in Partnership during System Change

Welcome

The North SPF conference was held on 20 January 2017 in Horizon, Leeds. The meeting chaired by Charlie Carruth, Regional Officer for Unison, focused on working in partnership during system change with particular focus around the STP workforce issues and the implications for staff in the North of England. HR Directors, Clinical Commissioners, trade unions and other key stakeholders attended.

The objectives of the meeting were to work in partnership to learn what is happening in the system around STPs; to give a better appreciation of the workforce issues and implications of STPs; and to discuss the position of the North of England Regional SPF and how the group should engage with the system.

Staff at the centre? Patient at the centre

At the North SPF finance summit on 15 April 2016 Sue Holden, Improvement Director at NHS Improvement presented some thought provoking suggestions, based on her personal experience. At the meeting Sue was following up on these suggestions and put forward the following points to set the thought direction for the day.

- With different organisational forms now emerging, the breach of the psychological contact is increasing, and we need to be supporting individuals through change.
- Leadership – How do we prepare chief executives and leaders who are affected by organisational change through lost boundaries, and ensure that we don’t lose experience? What is the role of staff side with this?
- How do we keep pace with these changes so members are informed and able to make right decisions? Individuals feel bereaved when leaving the NHS, how do you enable them to be still engaged?
- During system change we need to be using the values as part of the NHS Constitution, not recreating new ones.
- We need to enable leaders to take staff with us to work collaboratively with organisations to deliver care in the new system.

Sue asked the following questions:

- what we are doing as an SPF to tackle senior teams?
- who are your reps in CCGs?
- are you at the top of the table during system change, not just at service level?

Partnership working during system change – clinical commissioning viewpoint

Dr Paul Bowen, Chair of Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), discussed how developing relationships and engaging with all key stakeholders in the system can enable effective system change. Paul talked about the commissioning cycle and the intention of CCGs to put the patient or service user at the centre, but what about the workforce, have we done this with them?
Paul discussed getting it right through consultation and collaboration within his CCG on recent mental health service reconfiguration. He noted that for every success there are also failures, and with failures you lose confidence and pay a price if you don’t engage and listen to staff.

Paul talked about the importance of engagement with staff, if they are involved in planning services they are more likely to deliver them. Paul asked how many people know their local chair and chief officer of their CCG, and how many conversations has the chair had with staff side? CCG leads expect to engage with the public but what about engaging with staff side, is this happening?

**Supporting the workforce during system change**

Jon Restell, Chief Executive of Managers in Partnership (MiP) discussed his role within the national SPF and the Staff Passport Group.

Jon told the meeting that engaging with trade unions should be the way to engage with staff in the NHS. If you believe that the NHS is important then staff engagement through trade unions is a priority.

Jon recalled Sue’s point regarding the NHS Constitution, and how the NHS Constitution and partnership working can collectively reunite a fragmented system and bring people back together.

Examples of tools and resources produced in partnership include the staff transfer guide and guidance for social partnership working in developing and implementing new care models and system transformation which had been developed with STPs.

Negative behaviours are a consequence of system change. The Tackling Bullying in the NHS – A collective call to action has been developed to encourage leaders in the NHS to work in partnership with trade union colleagues, to take further action to tackle bullying in the NHS.

The group discussed Jon’s presentation and agreed that a key action going forward would be for the North SPF to develop a “dummies” guide to organisational form to help support the workforce in understanding the changes to their environment.

**Understanding your local environment**

Michael Wood from the NHS Confederation spoke about his role as local growth advisor. His aim is to help health economies engage with local leaders of growth to build new partnerships. Resulting in driving improvements in public services for local communities and bringing regional economic prosperity to benefit local service design and delivery.

As STPs are looking at more than just NHS services, we need an understanding of and involvement in local economic planning that can help the health and care sectors to improve public services, have a greater say in devolved strategic discussions and secure long term, external funding.

Michael referred to Liverpool CCGs establishment of a strategic framework to strengthen the capacity of commissioning to address the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of its local population. This framework underpins all of Liverpool CCG’s procurement and commissioning decisions and helps drive the implementation of its transformation agenda, Healthy Liverpool.

Michael told the meeting that the local growth agenda is about understanding how a *place* can be its most productive and prosperous (whether via Devolution deals or otherwise). The health and care sector is a key part of the economic success of this *place*, whether your local leaders of growth know it or not. By explaining our role in driving local growth and jobs we can help shape local place-based discussions, work with others to improve our services and bring in extra funding.
Getting on with it

Liane Langdon Chief Officer, NHS North Lincolnshire CCG talked about the Humber, Coast and Vale CCG STP plans and the challenges the current system is facing. Liane said they need change through STPs and they have been working in partnership through every stage of the change process.

Liane talked about how to support people to move into new roles, what the new structures look like for career development and the importance of empowering staff and giving them a voice.

Q&A panel session

A Q&A panel including Sue Holden, Paul Bowen, Jon Restell, Michael Wood and Liane Langdon took a questions from the audience, both direct and through Slido. You can find the question and answers here.

The North West approach to partnership as part of STPs

Sue Green, Director of People & Corporate Affairs, Aintree University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and joint management side chair of the North West SPF Sub Group talked the group through the North West approach to STPs. Sue emphasised the need for everyone to own system change and work together in partnership through regional engagement forums.

The North East approach to partnership as part of STPs

North East SPF joint chairs Ursula Ross, BMA and Ann Burrell, North Tees presented the journey to establish the North East SPF. They were supported by Sheila Wilson, Unison and joint staff side chair of the North East SPF and Lisa Crichton-Jones from Northumberland Tyne and Wear and vice chair of the North East SPF.

Ann talked about the importance of engaging with staff and the public. The establishment of the SPF has provided a forum for all key stakeholders from STPs to come together including communication leads. The forum has also looked at the North East STP landscape and mapped it out to avoid duplication of effort. Ursula said that the SPF has allowed people to come to the forum and talk with trade union reps, rather than at them.

Ann and Ursula spoke about the broader agenda for the North East SPF, and the need to manage priorities other than STPs. The plan going forward in the region is to create anSTP SPF which will focus on STP plans, leaving the North East SPF to focus on other strategic priorities.

Developing an anthem for the North SPF

Ann Burrell facilitated group work looking at the following questions.

- How can the SPF support the North of England workforce to get ready for change?
- How can the SPF support two way communication at a local, regional and national level and ensure there is an open and honest dialogue (in the context of strategic, transformational change)?
- What does good partnership working look like across STP footprints at both at locality and regional levels?
- What, if any, is the role of the SPF STP in decision making?

The group were asked to discuss the questions and feedback to the meeting. They were also asked to create a North SPF collective vision and ambition for patients and staff.
Questions and feedback can be found in the presentation slides and group work document.

**Plenary**

Charlie closed the day thanking attendees for their contribution and emphasised the importance of regional SPF meetings to facilitate networking, sharing learning and looking at change collectively. Following the meeting the North SPF will take forward the following actions.

1. Develop a dummies guide to organisational form to help support the workforce in understanding the changes to their environment.
2. Develop a podcast with Liane Langdon and Dr Paul Bowen on partnership working in CCGs during system change.
3. Develop a case study with Dr Paul Bowen on IAPT [in full please] Commissioning in Eastern Cheshire.
4. Working group to be set up to take forward the North SPF anthem.