

## **Inspiring and motivating leadership for the future workforce**

### ***Set up- what was happening- background and context***

Leadership is a key factor in the shaping of culture within any organisation therefore, ensuring that the necessary leadership skills are instilled in nurses early in their careers is essential. This is because nurses are expected to be leaders no matter what their job title and experience is. As soon as a nurse completes training and assumes the role of a certified and registered nurse, there is an obligation to lead and manage care. Also, 1 in 10 patients admitted in NHS are estimated to have patient safety issues. Therefore, there is a need for the development of leadership skill amongst newly qualified and junior staff nurses from their very first days in the role. However, accessibility, availability and support for the development of leadership skills for junior nurses can be complex and riddled with challenges.

I joined the NHS as an internationally educated nurse and started out as a band 5 nurse. From the moment I started, guidance and leadership were expected from me. This was quite overwhelming as I had to learn and lead at the same time even at my junior level. When I took up the role of practice development nurse, I realised that Sussex Community Foundation Trust (SCFT) was full of opportunities for growth and development and the trust was carrying out a substantial amount of work around developing and supporting leadership skills in the workplace. However, I saw that there was a need to inspire and motivate interest in career growth, leadership and developing leadership skills which also serves to include the ICUs in all the work that was being carried out at SCFT. In response to this need, I sought to know what can be done to improve attitudes and inspire growth and development, and how can this be achieved. I posed these questions in the form of a survey and as a response, came up with the Nurse In Charge leadership programme (NIC).

***Implementation of nurse in charge programme-*** types of trainings and speakers and why those were picked- relevance

The NIC training was designed to provide junior nurses or nurses new in their career with skills that will enable them to lead as well as inspire growth and leadership in others. The NHS is a dynamic and fast changing organisation with the vision of becoming a transformed health care system that is fully equipped to meet the needs of patients, staff and communities alike and SCFT shares this vision. However, strong leadership is imperative for the achievement of this.

As part of the training that makes up this programme, I chose core skills that will equip the nurse clinically as well as empower them with the right communication and attitudinal skills to act as fully competent partners in the multi-disciplinary environment in which they work. The intention was to equip them with skills that will enable them to contribute to making SCFT and the NHS a truly transformed health care system. To achieve this, I had to work toward improving their leadership skills and therefore, leadership was a core concept in all the trainings delivered. I wanted to encourage nurses to imbibe and demonstrate practices that show and positively influence standards of practice, work ethics and morale of others. In other words, I wanted to give them the foundational tools required to become strong and effective leaders.

The programme consisted of training sessions such as leadership training, Datix training, Slip & NMC revalidation, having difficult conversations, documentation, resilient people in compassionate organisations and learned optimism to mention a few.

The training sessions were implemented by liaising with nurses in the various specialties such as safeguarding nurses, practice educator nurses, infection control, executive nurses, and the QI team to aid in the successful implementation of the programme.

### ***Feedback and Impact on nurses***

There has been verbal and non-verbal feedback from the nurses who attended the programme and their managers and patients. Non-verbal feedback entails observed practice and growth rate. Over 50% of nurses who attended the NIC leadership training have taken up leadership positions as band 6 nurses within and outside the Trust. Some of them have enrolled in leadership training courses such as the FNF leadership programme and the PNA course.

### ***Conclusion and next steps***

The training programme has been modified into a pathway that can be completed within three to six months with a set nurse in charge during the day to allow staff to study and grow at their own pace as well as to support safe staffing and reduce pressure on the release of staff. This will also allow for easier implementation.

I would like to conclude this piece by stating that although the public and even some nurses themselves don't see themselves as leaders, there still exist the need for nurses to lead in the advocacy, shaping and transformation of SCFT, NHS and any health service for that matter. I hope I have succeeded in mapping out a road to leadership through this program.

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