



Best Clinical Service and Treatment Pathway Transformation Project

PwC and North Bristol Trust
Digitally Enabling Patient Flow

WINNER

The winter of 2017-18 was incredibly tough for North Bristol Trust with bed occupancy above 100 per cent, average four hour performance of just 71 per cent and outliers at well over a hundred. Something had to change – but the trust realised that an approach which engaged staff from across the trust, not just those in A&E, was needed to produce a sustainable solution.

The trust articulated an ambition of “OneNBT” with a series of commitments – valuing patients’ time; ensuring empty beds each morning and eliminating delays in care; always having a patient bed available; enhancing its reputation as a surgical centre of excellence; and using the full skills and capabilities of staff.

It worked with PwC to introduce “Perform” which was designed to change behaviours across ward, site and discharge teams. The aim was to make individual members of staff realise their role in patient flow, use the tools which were available to them to improve this, and to redefine roles and responsibilities. Data was to play an important part in this, helping staff to make decisions and encouraging accountability.

The programme was launched through 10 one day simulation events, bringing together more than 1,000 staff from porters to consultants – and also involving partners, such as the local authority. Many members of staff then went back into their own areas and started to use the tools they had been shown to make changes.

A “Perform Academy” of staff from all background trained in the techniques started to deploy the approach in other areas of the trust. Staff are seconded to the team but then carry the knowledge back into their own areas. Each ward has an “executive buddy” to provide feedback and support.

The initial phase of the programme ran from April to June 2018. Shortly after that, the programme went into its sustainability phase with the gradual withdrawal of PwC staff and the Perform Academy taking over.

Communication was essential to all of this – as has been celebrating the success of staff in bringing about change.

Challenging targets were set to reduce length of stay, bed occupancy rates and the number of stranded patients. In four months this winter, length of stay was reduced by 13 per cent compared with the same period last winter and 50 beds were released. The impact on A&E performance was marked, with an improvement against the four hour target by more than 10 per cent, but the trust was also able to admit more elective patients. The number of outliers and “stranded” patients also decreased and patients are now more likely to be discharged in the morning.

But the positive outcomes go beyond this. Staff talk of enjoying coming to work again and that seems to be affecting morale and ultimately patient experience. Family and Friends test scores have improved.

Judges’ comments: “This compelling project was an impressive demonstration of staff engagement around change. It focused on flow that then helped to transform the way staff feel about their organisation and in the confidence to make decisions to take control of where they work. The golden thread of clinical service and treatment pathway was throughout.”