

## 2011 UNIVERSITY ANNUAL LEARNING & TEACHING CONFERENCE

### *Changing Times: Refreshing the Learning & Teaching Strategy*

Theme: A university for the region

13:25 - 14:05

#### **Leading Change in Infection Control & Prevention: A Development Programme for Link Nurses\***

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***“The Learning and Teaching Strategy should facilitate innovative approaches leading to identifiable impact of the learning.”***

#### **Abstract:**

##### **This contribution**

This contribution reports on an *action learning* initiative designed and implemented in partnership between Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Acute Trust and Hull University Business School. In doing so it highlights the:-

- mutual benefits of collaboration between the University and one of the region’s most significant organizations
- potential to develop bespoke and innovative partnership approaches to meet identified requirements of regional organizations
- value of a teaching and learning approach that is transferable to other organizations and other problems
- need to create space in learning and teaching strategy and practice to develop ‘impactful’ approaches that ‘call’ the learner to action and lead to visible outcomes and benefits

##### **The initiative**

The central initiative was the implementation of an action learning programme entitled *Leading Change in Infection Control and Prevention Best Practice , A Development Programme for Link Nurses*. The purpose of the initiative was to primarily foster ‘leadership’ in best practice, in front line nurses who have a specific ward based role regarding infection control. The approach engaged the active involvement and commitment of nursing staff to become problem solvers and key influencers in improving practice.

##### **The context**

Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Acute Trust is among others in the UK and internationally, in being increasingly concerned about the prevalence and the implications of the recent increases in the number of patients identified with infections such as MRSA, C.Difficile, Norovirus and other HCAs. The programme was conceived and designed to meet Trust targets relating to ‘infection prevention and control’ and to address the increasingly important agenda of patient safety (National Audit Office 2005).

##### **The intervention**

The action learning intervention targeted the ward 'infection control link nurse practitioners' as potential champions in leading change in behaviours around infection control issues. The programme comprised a total of 6 meeting days over a period of 6 months. These were structured around individualized processes of problem identification and action planning. Additionally, specified work based activities were undertaken weekly and reported on in set meetings. The design of the intervention is such that it could be applied in other regional contexts to address different problems

### **The outcomes**

1. Serious reportable infections have dropped by around 300 over the duration of this initiative. The intervention described here is not exclusively responsible for this improvement but the Trust is convinced of a strong contributory link
2. Contribution to savings of £3 million in reduction in reportable infections
3. Significant behavioural change, motivation confidence and up-skilling of the link nurse practitioners.
4. Enhanced 'ownership' of the issues at ward level
5. The success of the partnership working stimulated the Trust and HUBS to apply this approach to another ward based initiative, and contributed to changes in culture and practice more generally.

This conference will provide an opportunity to report on and showcase the initiative and its outcomes together with reporting on the mutual benefits of partnership working.

\*The initiative was supported and partly funded by the Strategic Health Authority part of its commitment to 'Patient Safety'.