



Name of project: Increase staff skills and knowledge to improve patient safety

Project lead: Sarah Denton collaborating with Lesley Allen, Joy Giles and Julie Abberley



Kent Community Health
NHS Foundation Trust

What was our aim?

Improve patient safety by reducing avoidable harms and complaints to the service and increase autonomous working through effective leadership strategies by May 2020.

Why is it important to service users and carers?

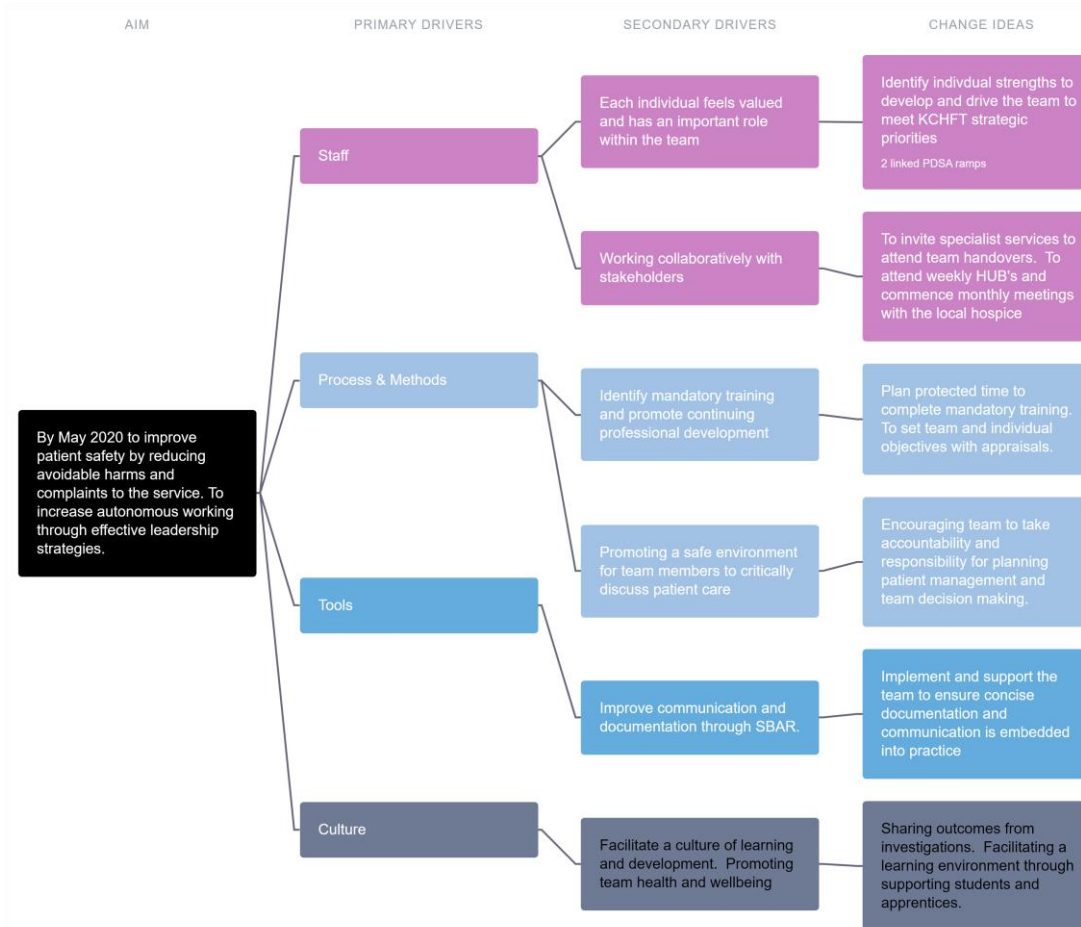
The junior workforce requires further training and education in order to facilitate safe, effective patient management. The workforce has limited experience and a diluted skill mix. The caseload managers are new in post with limited leadership skill, which we think we could work together to improve.



Ideas and tests of change

- Identify individual strengths to develop and drive the team to meet KCHFT strategic priorities.
- Invite specialist services to attend team handovers. Attend weekly hubs and start monthly meetings with the local hospice.
- Plan protected time to complete mandatory training. Set team and individual objectives with appraisals.
- Encourage team to take accountability and responsibility for planning patient management and team decision making.
- Implement and support the team to ensure concise documentation and that communication is embedded into practice
- Share outcomes from investigations. Facilitate a learning environment through supporting students and apprentices.

The tools we used

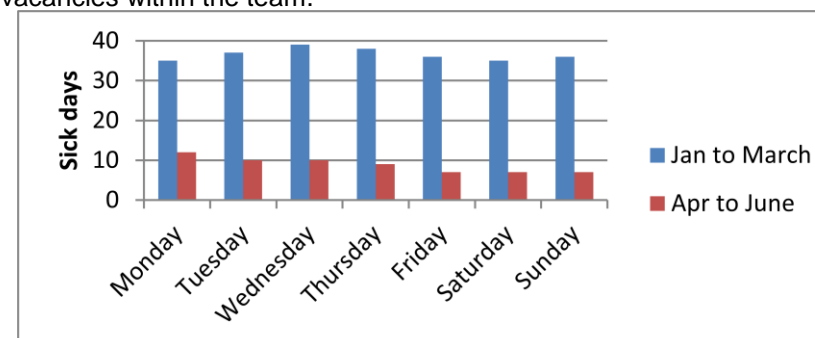


Results

With a culture of transparency promoted, staff felt more comfortable reporting incidents. By June and July 2019 there were 12 incidents reported each month. This additional reporting was welcomed, with colleagues learning from incidents and thereby the risk of a serious incident was reduced.



Learning and development environments helped staff feel valued and by encouraging transparency and empowering clinical decision making promoted a safe culture. This was reflected by the levels of sickness reducing by 76 per cent, improved staff retention and reduced vacancies within the team.



What we learned and what's next

Summary of what was learned

Engaging the team developed a robust foundation of knowledge and skills which created a strong learning environment and assisted with the decline of a hierarchical culture. The inauguration of compassionate and inclusive leadership facilitated an efficient and effective, happy team, which led to improved patient care and experience.

Statements from staff members and a GP service

"Training is always encouraged which has helped with in my role and given me confidence to move forward with learning. I enjoy my job and I do think it is because of my supportive network, through my team." (Healthcare assistant).

"I began to be seen as an individual, an asset, and as the nurse that had worked so incredibly hard to stand where I now stood; and for that I was grateful." (Nurse).

"The team became more cohesive and we started to socialise regularly." (Nurse)

"Just letting you know how impressed I am with your service and your colleagues in visiting our patient." (GP).

Next steps - The project will be shared with community nursing teams and the professional lead nurse.