



Name of project: Improving nursing communication between health trusts

Project leads: Jo Hockley, head of service community nursing west Kent and Ashford



Kent Community Health
NHS Foundation Trust

What was our aim?

To improve channels of communication between west Kent community nursing teams at Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT) and colleagues at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (MTW).

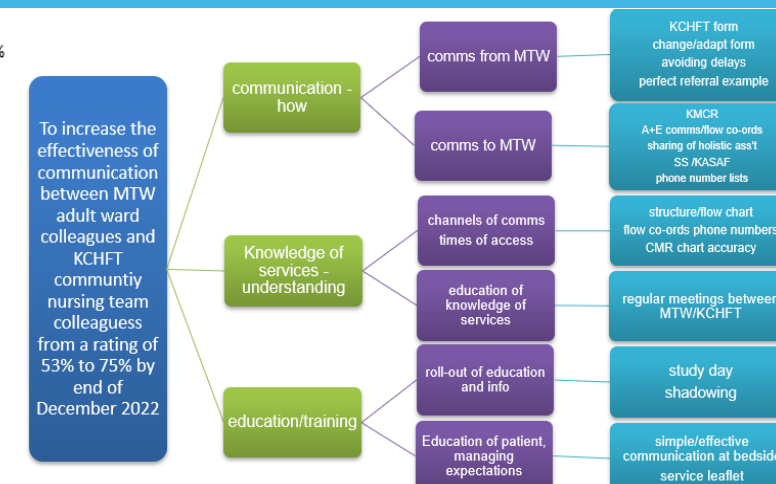
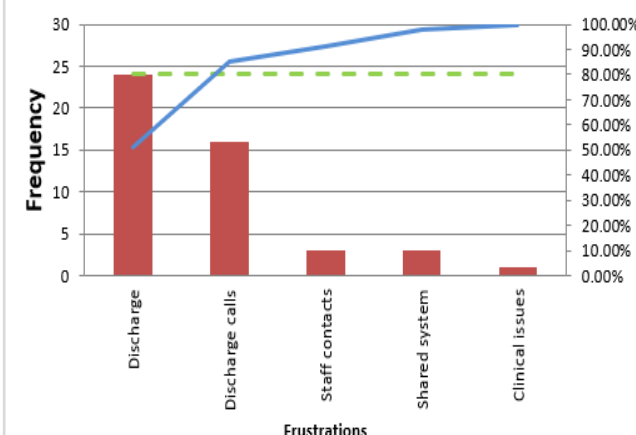
The nursing teams currently rate this as **53%** (the total of “somewhat good” to “extremely good” responses) and we aim to increase it to **75%** by 31 December 2022.

Why is it important to service users and carers?

The KCHFT Quality Strategy (2021-2025) promotes collective action with partners to deliver the ambitions of the NHS Long Term Plan. These centre on delivering more proactive approaches to health care and prevention of ill-health: embracing technology and health analytics; delivering services more efficiently across the system; and focusing on workforce through the People Plan.

The project lead has worked for both organisations, with first-hand experience of the challenges surrounding effective and timely communication for patient care. This has enabled her to facilitate inter-organisational collaboration to create solutions to the issues, that will be both achievable and beneficial to KCHFT and MTW, improving care, safety and patient experience.

Ideas and tests of change

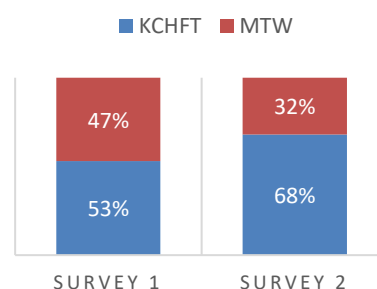


The tools we used

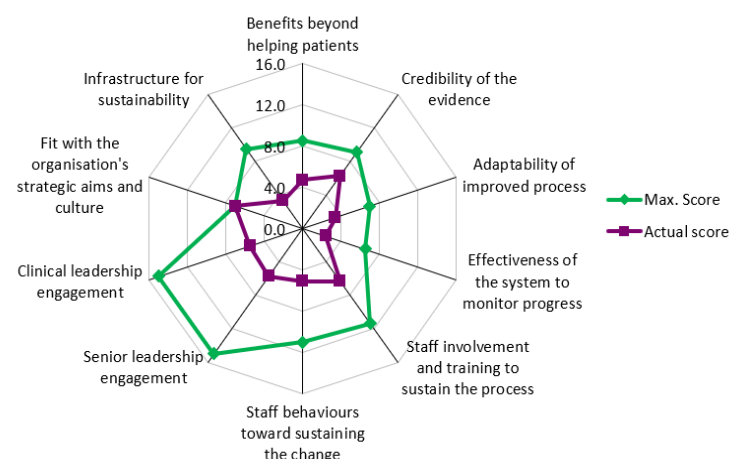
Colleagues in both trusts were surveyed in November 2021 to understand barriers to communication. A Pareto chart from the results formed the basis of the change ideas.

Colleagues were surveyed again in December 2022 to see what improvements had been made and a Pareto analysis to inform the sustainability group.

TRUST RESPONSE RATES



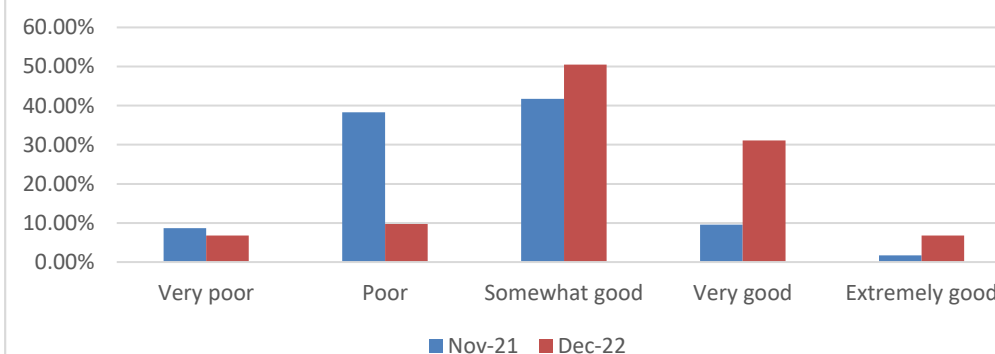
Sustainability Model - Portal Diagram



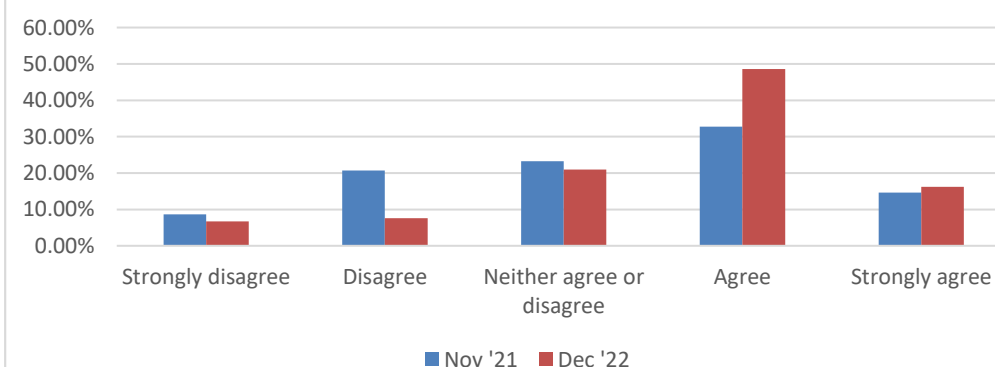
The sustainability model was used to identify gaps to ensure that the improvement work would continue once the project was completed.

Results/How did we do/Anticipated outcome

How would you rate the level of communication between KCHFT and MTW colleagues?



If you have a specific concern, do you know who to contact in the other organisation?



What we learned and what's next

- The goal of 75% wasn't achieved but communication did improve from 53% to 62% of colleagues surveyed
- The biggest frustrations are referral process and discharge phone calls, followed by communication between organisations and discharge documentation
- One person is not enough to make the change, it would have been worth starting the QI process earlier with a project team
- Senior buy-in is required to ensure sustainability and trying to get a message out to all nursing colleagues over two organisations is challenging
- Establishing the sustainability group will help to agree how best to progress with the work and continue to make improvements in communication between the two health trusts.

