

# Big Splash

Interim Management and Support



Information for NHS IMAS pool members

Welcome to the October edition of **Big Splash**, the monthly newsletter for NHS IMAS partners.

**Big Splash** will give you news about progress with the NHS IMAS programme and assignments as well as the support that's available to you.

In this edition:

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## Further support for partners

During the past month we have been working to provide additional support in terms of both leadership development and tools to support partners on assignment.

### Leadership development

We are organising a series of half day workshops between January and July 2009 to introduce you to the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement's service improvement tools and methodologies.

Initially we will run a half day market place event where you will have the opportunity to explore a sample set of the most pertinent tools to NHS IMAS assignments.

Following this, three or four product specific workshops, spread over six months, will be offered to you. The methodologies covered in these workshops will be decided by you. Wherever possible, the workshops will be facilitated by the same clinicians and managers who designed, delivered and tested them in the NHS health environment setting.

We will be in touch with more specific dates soon.

### Scoping tools

As we have mentioned in previous issues of Big Splash we have been working with experts to develop scoping tools that you can use when out on NHS IMAS assignments.

The tools will help to guide you through the scoping process and allow you to input information into template documents to generate reports and powerpoint presentations covering a number areas, including leadership, financial health and governance.

We are arranging training on how to use these tools in the next couple of months and the documents will be available to download from your SharePoint page. If you would like any more information on this, please contact Steve ([steve.bridge@nhs.net](mailto:steve.bridge@nhs.net))



# Value of the peer review

Jan Filochowski has been working for the NHS for over 30 years and, in the last few years has found a niche working in troubled Trusts. Jan took over at West Herts Hospitals Trust just a year ago and has helped it make a remarkable turnaround in its fortunes, with huge improvements in finance, access and infections.

The year was recently reviewed at a Peer Review meeting with NHS IMAS. Jan said, "The meeting was a useful opportunity to reflect on the changes and the progress made over the last year and it was very helpful to have input and challenge from the experienced NHS IMAS team. One of the key things that emerged during the review was the need to be honest about how things had gone"

In reflecting on some of the things introduced over the last year Jan identified some of the areas that he found needed changing urgently. One was the need to improve internal communications and the visibility of himself and the executive team. Part of that visibility was ensuring that there were clear lines of responsibility and accountability. This was evident in the way that the 18-week targets were being managed. Jan introduced focussed small teams and weekly monitoring, by him and the lead Director leading to a redesign of forms and the establishment of "clinical champions".

The Trust moved from one of the worst performers in the country to meeting targets within a few months. Theatre utilisation was poor and needed a similarly



Jan Filochowski

focussed approach, from better systems, realistic scheduling to (even!) the replacement of theatre lifts. Identifying exactly how good or bad performance was and tracking it weekly or even daily became the characteristic approach.

"It is about not having one pre-determined solution. Rather it is about communication and clear information and telling people what is happening, highlighting and reinforcing the need for a performance culture and then holding people to account to achieve", according to Jan.

The peer review learned that the organisational culture 12 months previously was one where decision-making tended to drift up to Executive level and once there decisions tended to be put off rather than made. This removal of autonomy from the front line resulted in disempowerment, frustration and, of course, an unwillingness to be held to account for outcomes.

## Who's in the NHS IMAS core team?

The NHS IMAS core team consists of:

Antony Sumara,  
Chief Executive

Janet Walter,  
Programme Director

Neda Hormozi,  
Director, Leadership  
Development

Heather Sheard,  
Programme Manager

Steve Bridge,  
Programme Manager

Gemma Jones,  
Business Coordinator

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This could have been avoided by setting clear parameters to allow managers at all levels to take decisions.

This has now been done. Autonomy and accountability have been married up to where they should be.

Other lessons from the review were the need to consider the whole “pathway” of a process, not just the one that obviously presents and when engaging external contractors for an urgent issue, to nail down timescales and deliverables up front.

## **Some of the key factors for success - as analysed by the peer review:**

- Personal management style and experience suited to the assignment
- Visible leadership, clear communication of explicit expectations and goals
- Open communication with organisation and visibility of CEO and other managers
- Model the behaviours you are asking of others – deliver what you promise
- Have an open and honest approach – be clear about what you are trying to achieve and stick to it.
- Don't make assumptions, talk to as many people in the organisation as possible – what conflicts and what confirms what you have seen / heard?
- You may have the right people but they may need moving to roles that better suit their skills and experience
- Be realistic about what can be achieved. This in turn helps to change attitudes towards change and convince people they can succeed
- Hold people to account. Have a process to gather the correct information and then performance monitor and manage that in a routine, consistent manner
- The SHA needs to be signed up to what you are trying to achieve (assuming you are not a Foundation Trust!)
- Particularly if it is an organisation that has been through lots of organisational and cultural change, real care needs to be taken about embedding these changes and sustaining them

## News in brief

### Costs and savings

NHS IMAS supports the NHS by providing top quality solutions that are cheaper and better value than using the private sector.

To show just how much the NHS is saving the NHS IMAS core team is tracking the cost of each NHS IMAS assignment from start to end.

When you join an assignment the NHS IMAS core team will provide you with an easy way to track your time and expenses so we can demonstrate the value and savings that we're providing from day one.



# Richard Kirby: views from the front line

*Richard Kirby is an NHS IMAS partner and Director of Strategy at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust*

Having been approached through NHS IMAS early in the summer to help a London PCT with its work on demand management, I am now nearing the end of this piece of work which is part of a broader package of support being provided by IMAS to the PCT.

It was agreed with the PCT early on that the work should be undertaken in two stages: an initial assessment of the demand management schemes that the PCT had in place identifying what was working well and what needed to improve followed by an action planning stage to leave the PCT with a clear, deliverable plan to make a success of its plans.

When I started the work, it was clear that was a strong perception both within the PCT and amongst external stakeholders that existing demand management schemes had not delivered raising questions about whether their long-term future. On closer analysis, however, it emerged that, although there was still much work to be done to ensure the schemes delivered to their full potential, they were beginning to have some impact and the right strategy was to stick with them and focus on making them work better.

The main issues for the PCT arising from this work include:

- a recognition that delivering major change takes time – expectations of what can be achieved in the short-term need careful management;



Richard Kirby

- that major change also requires clear leadership and proper planning and project management which may require investment;
- that a series of issues still needed to be addressed to make the schemes a success including commissioning arrangements, clearer performance management and stronger engagement of external stakeholders.

From a personal perspective the opportunity to work with another organisation on a different problem has been both challenging and rewarding. Challenging because it had to be done on top of an already busy “day job”, involved arriving as “yet another” source of external “help” and was trying to tackle a genuinely difficult issues.

Rewarding because it provided an opportunity to work in a different local area on a different set of issues (and to be poacher-turned-gamekeeper since I work in a large acute hospital trust) and, hopefully, to help another organisation make progress with a longstanding problem.

## NHS IMAS Flyer

The NHS IMAS 2-page flyer is now available for you to download from our website at <http://nww.imas.nhs.uk/nhs-imas-2-page-flyer>

Don't forget to pass this on to the top NHS experts that you know or send their details to Steve ([steve.bridge@nhs.net](mailto:steve.bridge@nhs.net)) and we'll do the rest!

## Availability

The central team is continuing to update its records of your availability to carry out NHS IMAS assignments.

Please help us by letting us know of any substantial periods of time when you won't be available. Contact Gemma on: [gemmajones@nhs.net](mailto:gemmajones@nhs.net)





# Team changes

This month has seen a couple of changes to the NHS IMAS core team.

Heather Sheard has joined the team on secondment from NHS Connecting for Health. Heather will replace Matt King as one of our Programme Managers.

Matt's secondment to the team has come to an end and he is joining the NHS Information Centre. Matt has helped establish much of the NHS IMAS infrastructure and managed a number of our assignments and we would all like to thank him very much for his support.

Heather will take responsibility for all areas previously managed by Matt and will be in touch with Partners as appropriate.

Also joining NHS IMAS in November is Farhat Hamid. Farhat, who is a member of the Breaking Through programme is joining NHS IMAS for her 18 month placement.

Trained as a dietician, Farhat has been a Senior Manager at Brent PCT for a number of years and has strategic experience and a particular interest in World Class Commissioning. She will be working out on assignments as Programme Director (Assignments) supporting Partners in London and the South East.

## Progress with assignments

We are currently working with fifteen NHS organisations. The scope of the assignments includes;

- World Class Commissioning assurance,
- Strategic financial support,
- Commissioning,
- Executive peer level support,
- Clinical governance and development of a performance framework,
- Reconfiguration of Pathology services for a whole health economy in line with the requirements of the Carter review,
- Regional development of a plan for 2012 commissioning,
- Review of maternity services,
- Patient safety and Board development

We are continuing to talk to a number of other NHS organisations about how NHS IMAS can support them.

