

NL/jp

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Dear Jimmy

It is our pleasure to provide a reference for Meridian Productivity Ltd, who worked on a 19-week project within our Trust between 5 February 2015 and 12 June 2015.

The scope of the programme included 5 Adult Acute Inpatient Wards, Intensive Home Treatment Teams, Community Mental Health Teams, Assertive Outreach and Early Intervention in Psychosis.

In commissioning work with Meridian, the Trust set out with two key goals: to eliminate Out Of Area (OOA) placements and to increase CMHT productivity.

Actions relating to Out of Area placements were part of a range of Trust independent and partnership interventions linked to the Crisis Care Concordat and including collaboration with commissioners to develop a First Response service to bridge gaps in historic care provision.

We found Meridian's approach to be professional, effective and inclusive. Following an intensive initial 3-week scoping period, Meridian identified two key levers for the Trust to progress:

1. targeting average length of stay reductions of 10 days to impact OOA placement pressures
2. increasing face to face CMHT contact time to target a 20% increase in productivity

The Meridian team spent the majority of their time with staff on our five Adult Acute Inpatient wards or in the CMHTs. Meridian staff acted as 'enablers' helping teams to develop processes, systems and tools, providing coaching and support, following up on implementations and supporting real behaviour change. The Programme required real commitment and the determination of senior Trust managers and the Executive, but supported by daily and committed Meridian interventions and engagement.

Meridian helped Trust teams to achieve the following results for the Trust:

- 125 days without an Out Of Area (OOA) placement at the time of writing - the longest consecutive period for the Trust since collation of data began in 2012. Prior to the project, the Trust faced 61.8 average weekly OOA bed nights.
- The lowest recorded bed occupancy (with leave) in recent years - the average figure recorded during the last eight weeks of the project was 91.8% (albeit with some notable peaks and troughs), compared with pre-Meridian average bed occupancy of 102.4%.

- The average length of stay (ALOS) for patients admitted after the project began was 26.1 days (base ALOS 53.1 days). Whilst this does not in itself generate equivalent cash releasing efficiency savings the impacts via reduced ward bed pressures, ability to contain previous OOA placement pressures, improved patient flow and an overall team focus on 'discharge' cannot be over-stated.
- A visible behavioural change on the Adult Acute Inpatient Wards and the installation of a discharge-driven culture.
- Creation of four 'flexi-beds', which not only freed up ward staff to provide more nursing care but is also in line with the Trust's strategic goals.
- The number of contacts per day per CMHT clinician (outcomed & un-outcomed) increased by an average of 38%, between February and May
- Removing agency staff in the Intensive Home Treatment Teams, achieving cashable savings of more than £3k per week in conjunction with the Trust's wider Crisis Care Concordat action plan.
- Reducing CMHT agency costs through reallocation of work to more productive substantive staffing.

Notably, the cumulative Out Of Area savings throughout the duration of the programme equated to £537k, which means that the project paid for itself around 2.2 times before it ended on this metric alone - an outcome that we had not envisaged being able to achieve so rapidly.

The programme has contributed towards wider work the Trust is progressing to become a national demonstration site, and we have already begun to share our achievements more widely.

As a result of the success of this project, we have commissioned further scoping work with Meridian to explore other opportunities within the Trust.

The Trust's experience has been extremely positive. Meridian's approach has been different to other projects we have commissioned from external companies as demonstrated by the 'hands on' approach to not just identifying, but really enabling, coaching and equipping teams to 'deliver', monitor and embed change.

Overall, we have found Meridian to be an engaged partner with a refreshing approach that we hope has delivered enduring behavioural, service and financial impacts.

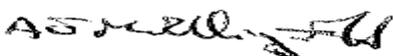
Yours sincerely



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Chief Executive Officer



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