

Mr J Quinn
Meridian Productivity Ltd
36 Atholl Crescent Lane
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Dear Mr Quinn,

In November 2015, Meridian Productivity Limited was invited to carry out a free productivity analysis of the Integrated Community Services and Specialist Services. Following the results of the analysis, Meridian and the Trust embarked upon a 17-week transformation programme to improve management control and overall productivity within the Children's Young People and Adult Specialist Services. The main reason for engaging Meridian was to initiate and support the transformation of the services, many of which have worked in the same way for years and have never undergone any changes, or a review.

The objectives of the programme was to:

- Develop effective forecasting and improved control of the volume of activity, clinic times and home visits scheduling and utilisation and identify productivity improvement opportunities
- Support the Trust in realising its financial cost improvement targets for the Children's Young People and Adult Specialist Services
- Increase productivity by setting SMART objectives for the proportion of time which should be spent in direct clinical care, agreeing reasonable activity norms, improving the management of the performance through having more visibility and transparency of the key indicators as well as a robust follow up mechanism

It was crucial for the success of the project to ensure that the staff are engaged in every step of the programme and the work is done WITH them rather than to them, as that was the perception when similar initiatives were carried out in the past and the managers were not involved in the process and therefore the changes were not followed through, or were not successful.

Working with the Management of all levels, including the CYPASS Services Directorate, Heads of Service, Service Managers, Clinical and Team Leads, Meridian assisted in designing and implementing a new management system to enable a robust and dynamic way of demonstrating the levels of direct clinical activity within the service in a way that allows to:

- Ensure there is the right level of resource and skill in the services to be able to meet the service demand
- Establish a productivity target expressed as a reasonable % expectations of time spent in direct clinical care per service and skill level
- Plan work using the agreed activity standards in order to meet the direct clinical care expectation
- Measure the activity levels against a SMART expectation to be able to identify variances and act on them to improve productivity
- Improve the number of face to face contacts delivered by the services

By introducing a SMART productivity indicator (% Direct Clinical Care), a more effective workload planning and assigning process, as well as a regular follow up system, the Managers have been equipped with the controls to support their teams in achieving the best performance and identifying negative variances in time to minimise their consequences.

Apart from working closely with the management, Meridian Productivity has also cooperated with many other departments within the Trust, including the Information, Performance, and Change teams, in order to ensure the ownership and perpetuation of the installed system. The Performance and Change team managers also attended the workshop sessions and have worked with Meridian to develop a robust reporting mechanism. The teams have designed a series of service reports which allow for a review of the current situation in the context of the selected points of control and identify the need for actions. Not only does it provide information over a period of twelve months which will allow for identifying trends and patterns in the performance and activity changes, but also gives a weekly summary of those indicators which is a key element of an effective management control system.

Meridian has also worked with the Business Analyst in the Dental services, which uses a different patient record system, to develop a service report for the Dentistry services. Completion of this was a major step forward for us as it finally brings this service in line with the mainstream reporting.

Further work is already being completed by the Information Team, and it will continue after the end of the project, which is aimed to develop the same level of reporting for all other services in the Trust which were not in the scope of the project.

Apart from all of the above, the Trust will benefit from realising a planned cash improvement of £654,400 during the first full financial year after the completion of the project following a demand/capacity analysis carried out with Meridian's assistance.

Meridian's methodology was very personal and approachable, and we were impressed with their professionalism and a high level of commitment. Meridian worked with the staff on the ground providing guidance and support throughout the duration of the project which helped to develop a good working relationship. I would recommend Meridian to other organisations to assist them in achieving their targets.



Yours sincerely,

Lisa Edwards

Assistant Director Children's Young People and Adult Specialist Services

Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust