

Small Changes Lead to Bigger Things



A close look at how the Quality Improvement and Change Agent Programme (QICA) has changed staff thinking.

Michelle Sutherland, Performance Manager and colleague Emma Gillespie, Specialist Paramedic, work together on the Urgent Care Desk (UCD) at the Trust's Cheshire and Merseyside Regional Headquarters in Liverpool.



Emma handles 999 calls which are not life-threatening, sent by control, and works hard to source the most suitable and efficient resource for patients so that they get the best care possible.

Michelle oversees the dispatch of Urgent Care vehicles and manages performance with a focus on arrival times and other performance measures and thrives in this environment. Their roles complement each other.



Emma: My favourite parts were the half day on resilience and all the creative elements. It really helped to change the way we thought about everyday things. I think it's great that the Programme involved staff across the trust; different people share the same inherent change and can be positive. For me it's about a structured approach of how to achieve something, how to identify gaps and how to overcome barriers. I really liked learning how to 'nail' a Lift Speech - just 30 seconds to share your thoughts - it really makes you prioritise and focus on what you really want!

Michelle: I really enjoyed coming together with different people from all over NWAS that I would not necessarily have contact with in my role. The Appreciative Inquiry learning was a highlight for me. It opened my eyes to realise that doing more of what is already working, rather than focusing on fixing problems, is liberating. It also enabled me to realise that through the language we use, the questions we ask and the stories we tell collectively shape our own future direction of travel. I left that day feeling empowered and an overwhelming sense of positivity about myself and my ability.

What were the highlights of the QICA Programme?

How has it helped you in your roles?

Emma: The partnership between us has improved too as we both have the same attitude and same goals. It's great that regular people, like Michelle and I, who have the ideas to improve have been given the opportunity to express them. People on the Programme feel empowered, like they have been heard and are able to make changes. It's amazing how if you think positive you are positive. This is about making change, not about preaching about it. It's about identifying what works but also why it works and how the positives can be applied in other areas. Once something is started, it all seems to follow and click into place and our working environment now is a prime example of this as the general atmosphere in the room has improved!

Michelle: I have used it a lot in work to promote positive conversations and positive thinking, which I have learnt is vital for a productive working environment. Focusing on what has gone well rather than what has gone wrong has been a game changer for us and the team. If someone starts being negative, then the team actively counteract it with positivity to lift the energy in the room. I have noticed that our changes in behaviour has started to rub off on our colleagues and when an appreciative approach is adopted, the atmosphere starts to change for the better as it is something new, it is refreshing.