

Bay Medical Group: Morecambe GP practice

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Midlands and Lancashire
Commissioning Support Unit

Background

Bay Medical Group (BMG) is a large GP practice (~54k population size) that is facing increasing pressures with an ageing population and an encroaching GP crisis. With issues recruiting or retaining partners to the practice the aim was to initiate several projects to address GP workload and lower locum spend. The aim was to identify work that could be completed by different resources within BMG, or to employ newly available roles within primary care. The Improvement Unit were approached to provide project experience and to assist the practice in delivering their vision.

Action

The Improvement Unit worked with the GP partners and management team to review, set up and deliver projects aligned to key target areas or new primary care roles:

- GP admin assistants;
- First Contact Practitioners – Physiotherapists;
- Mental Health workers;
- Paramedics / Advanced Clinical Practitioners;
- Physicians Associates;
- Pharmacy / Medicines Management;
- Holistic Review / Recalls;
- Visiting Service;
- Micro Team delivery.

For each area a tailored approach was used to advance the review and initiation of projects using small workshops to identify key priorities or to review internal capacity. Due to the long term nature of several of the projects the team worked alongside members of the BMG staff to create documentation, set up the project teams and task and finish groups. The intention was to leave experience within each area to ensure project continuity.

The IU team also worked closely with the practice management to help them react to any new challenges. This included the roll out of a new practice data and workforce planning tool (Apex Insight), PCN's, business planning, GP list sizes, standardising processes / process mapping, and a range of other support.

Impact

Since the work began there have been a range of benefits to the practice including:

- **FCP** - After a review of potential options the community iMSK team (UHMB) has been contracted to deliver FCP's into BMG – replacing locums by delivering over 8,000 FCP appointments annually;
- **Mental Health** - A mental health team is in place delivering over 6,000 appointments across the BMG sites. The plan is to expand this service over time as the team develops within the practice;
- **Visiting Team** –The project was to move away from all GP's delivering home visits at the end of their clinics, giving a small chance of relational continuity of care, to a blended approach. A small team of GP's was set up to deliver visiting sessions, linking them to select homes and adding the home patients to their list. Benefits are a greater continuity of care, a standardised approach to visits, GP travel time savings, and an expanded workforce (Paramedics, ANP's and Physicians Associates);
- **GP Admin Assistant** – Upskilling members of the scanning and coding team to work at a higher level in the GP Admin Assistant ensured that more documents could appropriately be shifted away from the GP for minimal financial spend;
- **Holistic Review** – With over 2000 patients on multiple lists for COPD / CHD / Asthma / Diabetes a PDSA process has begun to review delivering one appointment for all their needs utilising the HCA role;
- **Apex Insight / Slot type review** – The roll out of a new workload / workforce planning tool enabled the practice to easily review their practice data. The system required considerable local system amendments, including a full review of slot types due to legacy issues with the merged practice data;
- **GP list size** – Aligned patient list sizes to GP's more accurately, replacing the previous manual process with an automated approach that factored in GP type, patient frequency of attendance, and patient location. This was introduced to create a list for a new GP.

Neil has been invaluable in helping us deliver new services and ways of working, including Mental Health and MSK services in the Practice. Throughout his time with us, Neil has developed excellent professional relationships with the management and Partners at BMG, which has helped us work openly and honestly together to improve and develop services.

He has also helped us as an organisation by sharing his knowledge and skills to improve working practices. We are more aware of the opportunities open to us, the skills gaps we have within the Practice team in terms of project management and have been able to reach a position where we can move forward with further organisational development, building on the work Neil has delivered.

Helen Freschini,
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Medical Group, Bay PCN Lead