Practice Leader Programme

This innovative programme will focus on practice level service development and improvement as the means of developing leadership skills amongst a small group of newly qualified GPs and mid-career GPs. Two pilot localities have been chosen as the focus for the intervention and practices interested in participating were invited to submit ideas to the Programme Directors regarding potential areas of development. In total the programme has recruited 16 mid-career GPs and their practices, plus 8 newly qualified GPs.

Evaluation
This programme will be evaluated by the NESC R&D Team. The evaluation will:

- follow the development in leadership thinking and practice amongst participants as a result of an educational intervention;
- determine the nature and scope of any changes in leadership thinking and practice amongst participants in the context of the educational intervention;
- record changes in the learning and CPD needs of participants over the course of the educational intervention;
- assess the scope and impact of the service improvement projects in primary care.

The evaluation will be interpretive, multi-focused and draw on mixed-methods data collection strategies, specifically pre-post data sampling and longitudinal data collection for one year. It will consider:

- Programme outcomes;
- Programme processes, and
- Programme context.

The data sources to be used to provide the evaluative evidence for the aims of the programme will be varied. The emphasis of the evaluation is to generate detailed case study evidence for the two approaches to implementing the programme in the pilot locations, and to this end, the data collection methods will be largely qualitative.

All programme participants and leaders will be involved in the data collection.

Outcomes
The programme will be evaluated to identify the benefits and outcomes for all participants. The outcomes relating to development and change for the practices, and CPD for the participants, will be considered in depth. The following outcomes are anticipated:

- Programme participants (newly qualified): development of non-clinical business, and management skills; completion of a service improvement project; the opportunity to complete a Postgraduate Certificate in General Practice.
- Programme participants (mid-career): completion of a service improvement project relevant to the particular practice context of the GP; CPD in the areas of leadership and management.
- Practices: additional access to a GP; service development / improvement.
- NESC /Deaneries to inform future learning: the Programme responds to the hopes of Lord Darzi in his report High Quality Care for All in which he calls for the fostering of leadership for quality healthcare. Recently the Tooke report (2008) made a recommendation to lengthen GP training to five years. This programme has been conceived as a pilot for the fifth year of the proposed five year GP specialty training.

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This programme has been funded by NESC and is being overseen by the Primary Care Taskforce (NESC) and the Research and Development Team based in Innovations, Development and Wider Workforce (NESC). The programme is supported by the Oxford and Wessex Deaneries.

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References