Improving Global Health through Leadership Development

Overview

The programme is a truly unique and innovative experience. Participants have the opportunity to develop leadership skills through the application of quality improvement methods whilst at the same time contributing in a sustainable way to the health needs of the local area.

The programme has 2 different partnerships - The Maddox Jolie Pitt Foundation in Samlaut Millennium Village in Cambodia [www.mjpasia.org](http://www.mjpasia.org) and the United Nations Development Programme in Tabora Millennium Village Cluster in Tanzania [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org) Both are linked to the Millennium Villages Project [www.millenniumvillages.org](http://www.millenniumvillages.org) which aims to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs for health include a reduction in child mortality by two thirds, a reduction in maternal mortality by three quarters and combating diseases such as HIV, malaria and TB [www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

Past participants of the programme have found it to be hugely rewarding and enjoyable with opportunities for both professional and personal development that would be hard to come by in a UK setting.

South Central SHA is responsible for identifying and developing leaders for the future NHS and offers a broad portfolio of development opportunities. It recognises the value of stretching individuals and broadening their experiences beyond the NHS. The International Fellowship scheme is a prime example where NHS staff have to use sophisticated leadership and teamworking skills to improve health, healthcare and health services of communities who suffer truly shocking clinical outcomes. The initiative is a partnership between the South Central SHA Leadership team and the Innovation and Development team within NESC and engages clinicians of all professional groups and managers sponsored by the NHS Institute Graduate Schemes Programme.

The scheme has two simple but very powerful objectives:

- To support the delivery of sustainable improvement in health and healthcare in developing countries
- To provide an unparalleled personal and leadership development experience for staff from NHS South Central

Many of the initial challenges which have been addressed, were subsequently highlighted in Lord Crisp’s report, Global Health Partnerships (2007). The Department of Health’s response to this report
has added significant legitimacy to the scheme and its objectives. Furthermore, the concept of clinical fellowships, well established in South Central, has been endorsed by Lord Darzi and features strongly in the NHS Next Stage Review (2008).

Sustainability is always a major challenge to international development programmes in healthcare. The scheme has opted to pilot the use of quality improvement methods, developed in the NHS, to embed sustainable change in the developing world. This is the subject of an ongoing rigorous evaluation. It is anticipated that the skills International Fellows gain through deployment training and practical experience will be of significant benefit to them and their employers on their return to the UK.

Fellows undertake pre-deployment training to prepare them for the experience, to maximise their safety and equip them with skills to help to bring about change.

This includes:

- Quality Improvement methodologies
- the Medical Leadership Qualities Framework
- an understanding of nutrition in the developing world
- Cultural awareness

Each of the International Fellows takes a lead on a major topic but there is significant collaboration across projects. Importantly, they are part of a wider team giving the opportunity to experience and understand the inter-dependencies of agriculture, housing sanitation, water, transport and health.

**Cambodia**

Fellows from different healthcare backgrounds have been working in Battambang Referral Hospital and in Samlaut Millennium Village with MJP since August 2008. They have been involved in a variety of projects including:

- Conducting a Health Needs Assessment survey
- Setting up a family planning service in the local health post and community
- Training in the use of antenatal care records to recognise complications
- Promotion of exclusive breast feeding
- Developing the paediatric ward at the local referral hospital
- Teaching and training in the management of common childhood illnesses
- Advising on equipment for a new health centre
- Raising awareness of mental health issues

**Tanzania**

Following on from the success of the programme in Cambodia another partnership has been formed with Mbola Millennium Village and Kitete Referral Hospital in the Tabora region of western Tanzania. The first four Fellows joined the project in October 2009. Tabora has a more established health programme than Cambodia but a shortage of trained health staff, long distances from health services
and high incidences of TB, HIV and malaria create plenty of opportunities for service improvement. Current projects include:

- Training on the recognition of TB by Community Health Workers
- Increasing community awareness of sexual health
- Supporting staff to offer HIV testing
- Developing family planning services
- In-service training for hospital staff
- Reviewing the hospital drug management system

**Leadership Development**

The Medical Leadership Competency Framework (MLCF) describes the leadership competencies doctors need to become more actively involved in the planning, delivery and transformation of health services. The view of the Leadership Division of NHS South Central is that this framework is equally applicable to non-medical staff and it may be adopted nationally by other clinical professions.

The MLCF highlights five domains in which staff need to become competent, and the application of the framework differs according to the career stage of the staff member (i.e. undergraduate, postgraduate and post-specialist certification). The five domains are

- Personal Qualities
- Working with Others
- Managing Services
- Improving Services
- Setting Direction

The International Fellowship Scheme gives participants exposure to each of these domains in a relatively short period of time, while contributing positively to the development of health services and gaining experience in quality improvement work.