Feature - Jo Murphy on The Drama of Communication

At the most recent development day held 15th January 2015 Jo Murphy gave us a wonderful introduction to the work she does with trainees referred to her for help in developing their communication skills. She uses approaches drawn from the world of acting of which she has considerable experience as a theatre practitioner of long-standing.

A typical session with a trainee explores their communication issues and moves on to work with facial expression, articulation, vocal modulation, head and body posture, breathing regulation and gesture.

Her work is undertaken in three sessions which each last two hours. Throughout her talk she was passionate about how communication skills are our ‘power tools’ that need to be switched on, so that we can “come back to our own centre, in the key of who we are” and so express ourselves with authenticity and effectiveness.

PSU Feedback

Every trainee that has been supported by the PSU is asked to complete an anonymous survey on the quality of the service that the PSU provides; here are some of the responses-

- **What was the most helpful aspect of the service received?**
  - “Friendly support from a professional who was independent from the issues raised and therefore able to understand my actual position.”
  - “I felt supported all the time. It was a learning opportunity and a chance to improve my professional skills.”

- **How would you rate/describe your Case Manager’s overall support?**
  - “Outstanding - a really good service and one that gives me faith in the profession and the deanery.”
  - “Absolutely amazing.”
  - “10/10”
  - “Fantastic”
  - “Very understanding and supportive”
PSU Quality & Governance Group

The inaugural meeting of the Quality and Governance group was held on the 4th November 2014.

This group is to replace the PSU Operational Panel which had been established in 2005 but is no longer a feasible forum as PSU has grown in size and complexity over the years, and it is no longer possible for this group to be truly operational.

The aim of the newly formed Quality and Governance Group is to examine critically data presented by the PSU team regarding quality and governance of the PSU.

The Q and G group is to meet bi-annually and is to serve as an intermediate between the external annual meetings of the PSU Reference Group (Stakeholder Board) and the internal monthly PSU team meetings.

One of the action points from the meeting was to set up a ‘PSU Dashboard’ to regularly monitor ‘key indicators’ of the PSU’s performance. The team are currently gathering the data for this and it is planned to become a regular feature in the PSU newsletter—watch this space!

PSU Dashboard— watch this space!

Changes to the PSU Team

Georgia Drew will be leaving the role of Acting Assistant Programme Manager for Revalidation & PSU on the 18th February 2015 to be replaced on a temporary basis until Anna Parsons returns to the role in May 2015.

PSU Reference Group

The PSU Reference Group met on the 11th December to review the year of the PSU and to allow members of the PSU to provide feedback.

Two very successful workshops were run using a ‘fish-bowl’ technique. These were designed to work on solutions to two challenges that had been raised at the previous year’s reference group. These were whether supporting trainees with significant challenges is simply ‘kicking the can down the road’; and how all parties might improve communication around PSU work under the title ‘Is communication a one way street?’. Some of the points raised from these debates included:

- Expand the PSU to work with departments that show high rates of trainee referral to help change the culture and so improve the training context for trainees.
- Referrals are often too late—prevention is always better.
- Identify indicators of likely success in the real world and indicators of ‘poor prognosis’.

These and other ideas generated by the workshops will be considered and brought forward if feasible by the PSU team over the coming year.

PSU Contact Details

You can contact the Professional Support Unit whenever you have a query relating to our work, or if you’re looking for advice on a referral or active case.

If you have a general query you may find the answer on our web pages: http://www.wessexdeanery.nhs.uk/support/professional_support_unit.aspx

Alternatively you can contact us individually as below:

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