



ENABLING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN PRACTICE

Tower Hamlets Our Latest Newsletter (09/12/2019)



Meet your old friends with a new hat: Consultation Skills Consultants!

As you may know (I certainly do *hope* you know!) part of the EQUIP offer is to offer support to people, practices and teams who may be struggling to embrace change due to system dynamics (often held or located in one or more individuals). As the request for this support has increased, both in terms of practices asking for it, and in terms of number of sessions, about a year ago we went looking for “psychologically minded”, passionate, local team players to help us better deliver on this request to support teams and people, above and beyond direct “Quality Improvement”, process-focused work.

So. Following one of the most rewarding learning journeys in my recent years, these incredible people (including me!) have now graduated, and we are currently in the process of understanding how we can best offer their expertise to you, our local people and practices. In the meantime, who better to explain this learning journey and the group’s ambition than someone from the group itself. Take it away, Ian!

“Some of you will know that part of the Equip offer to practices is sessions with Phillip Stokoe. Phillip works with teams to help them focus on their core purpose and to identify any blockages that are getting in the way of the practice working harmoniously and effectively. His focus is on the dynamics within teams and on building healthy and respectful relationships.

Equip hopes to broaden this offer and has trained a group of 12 people in the method. The group has been facilitated by Jina Barrett of Philip Stoke Associates. Over a range of sessions we have studied, through videos and academic papers, the many aspects of personal development and group dynamics. In the sessions we have had the chance to practice consultation skills in role play

situations. We have presented difficult issues to the group and have acted as consultee, consultants, observers and timekeepers. Through the process we have learned to identify areas where we ourselves struggle, are awkward, or difficult or uncertain. We have learnt more about the art of listening carefully and holding up a non-judgmental mirror to what is going on in a group.

Although we do not claim to be specialists in this field we now know a lot more than we did. We will continue to be supported by Jina who will help us reflect on what we are doing and refine our knowledge. And, perhaps critically, we are all passionately committed to the wellbeing and health of general practice in Tower Hamlets. We are a mixed bunch of GPs, front line non clinical staff and managers. We are now ready to offer ourselves to practices/teams/groups who wish to do some thinking and exploration of how things are going for them and how things might be improved.

We are Anne, Leon, Obi, Naomi, Gosia, Famida, Shahzad, Mike, Valentina, Virginia, Ruth and Ian. We are ready to work with you!"

Ian's words offer an idea of what this learning journey has felt like for those involved, and of the support you might be able to receive from these new local "consultants". I feel unbelievably humbled and grateful for the time and trust shown by this group, who was asked to share a lot of personal vulnerability in order to open itself to the possibilities on offer through this training. Their support and expertise is one of the best gifts of 2019 – and we are excited to be able to offer this to practices. It's opportunities like those offered by Ian and his colleagues that make us stop dreaming about change, and wake up and achieve it.

Virginia