



ENABLING QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN PRACTICE

Tower Hamlets Our Latest Newsletter (07/12/2020)



The work of Harford Health centre

I want to say close to nothing about today's comms, which speak for themselves – other than, it's one of the single most personal, meaningful pieces we've ever published. Leaving the stage to Harford Health:

Many will look back on 2020 and mark it as a year to forget. The year didn't have the best of starts for Harford Health centre. With personal tragedy befalling the team with the loss of a young team member, 2020 also brought about the complexities of Covid 19. Prior to this, CQC had visited and we knew we had failed miserably. It was hard not to feel the odds were against us, times 100 **with a rotten fish thrown in for good measure.**

Two days after the bereavement, the nation went into lockdown leaving emotions unprocessed and raw. The speed at which the country moved into lockdown made the priority covid preparedness. In the face of adversity the team adapted to the new normal, an example of the amazing strength and commitment that is reflected and seen throughout the NHS.

Less than 2 weeks later, we receive news our GP Partner had been admitted to ICU, news followed he was in an induced coma. The outlook was grim, all we had was each other and the basic human instinct to carry on and do the job.

In April, the CQC report was published with the hefty slap of an inadequate rating. Although expected, it was another blow, the respect we had achieved was left in tatters.

Despite the damning CQC report, the obstacles and blockers were still present. It would be fair to say, they are far more stubborn and resistant knowing we were on the eve of transformation with the CQC findings to support this. Life experiences

have taught us all when the chips are down (with a clear vision/plan, **tonnes of love**, hugs and **lots of food**), a glimmer of hope can be instilled into the hearts of people. On this one slither of positivity, one can rebuild and recover, using the human resources available. We could even reach for the stars, and we did to spur the energy on to move around the obstacles placed in our way.



(Hug-gy picture taken pre-COVID!)

Our aim was to work towards an outstanding rating, some peers dismissed this aspiration off as unrealistic, this did not deter us from the objective. Project CQC was under way by breaking things down to bite size projects and delegating it to the most skilled person irrespective of hierarchy. We had lots PDSA's on the go at one time, always tied into the master plan. The communication had to be clear with transparency, it wasn't easy all the time, and not everyone enjoys change.

A lot of the skills and knowledge to allow us to do this came from having two members of staff being qualified QI coaches. This direction in our daily operations would not have been possible had it not been for the work and finances the CCG had invested into Quality Improvement idea. We are also fortunate to have probably the best QI coach from the EQUIP Team (no disrespect to other coaches), Harford needed someone extra special.

During the early lockdown, our coach made himself available and hooked us up with training resources via the EQUIP Team. The training provided fine-tuned skills to adapt to the new normal and reacquaint staff with their confidence and self-

belief. In partnership with our QI Coach we embarked on our Total Triage (TT) journey. It was easily implemented and we it was quick to feel the benefits. On collecting staff feedback, they never want to return to the previous systems. The robust structure our version of TT provides has boosted the value of teamwork, their output and patient/service relationships to name but a few of the positives. All the teams were engaged in the planning and implementing of TT. This positive change in staff wellbeing was all the outcome we needed to believe TT was the correct path to continue.

We often talk about resilience in general practice and constantly strive to bolster this ideal in the ever challenging area we choose to work in. Now, it wouldn't be right for us to say that the EQUIP team has provided ALL the resilience we have at Harford, certainly not. What they do provide is expert support, guidance and resources outside of your own organisation. There's a wealth of resources at our fingertip to tap into, boy did we!

Despite the pandemic and all other bumps along the way, It has never felt so good to be a part of the wider Primary Care team in Tower Hamlets. Harford Health Centre has achieved what some said would be impossible, 6 months after being rated inadequate, we have flipped the rating to an overall of 'good'. This outcome is worth celebrating together because our success is your success also. We could not have got there without the support from our wider teams such as fellow GP surgery colleagues, EQUIP, CEPN, NHS E and the CCG. Mostly, our thanks goes to the team at Harford Health Centre, they truly deserve the accolade for this outcome.

The new Harford Health Centre feels positive, we are looking forward to a brighter future full of hope and promise.

The Harford Health team



Lots of food – a celebration feast