

Press Release

1 April 2015

Nurses play key role in Trust efficiency plan

The NHS Trust which runs community nursing, therapy and mental health services in Worcestershire has saved more than £300k by changing the way it buys and orders goods and services - and has put clinical staff at the heart of identifying more opportunities.

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust's SMARTER programme encourages staff to work and do things differently in order to meet its financial targets without impacting on the quality of patient care. Part of the programme has been about introducing better ways of procuring goods and services, and its in-house Procurement Team has revealed this alone has saved more than £300k over the last financial year.

Changes to the types of stationery, medical devices and other equipment staff can order have all contributed, with the in-house team providing greater control over purchasing, and with it achieving better value for money.

The savings follow the launch of a national campaign called *Small Changes, Big Difference* which calls on front-line nursing staff to be more involved in procurement to save money. The Health and Care Trust established a Clinical Procurement Group last year which is made up of front-line staff including nurses and clinicians. The knowledge they have has helped identify new savings plans and also means that quality of care is not compromised.

The Clinical Procurement Group has already implemented change to the types of examination gloves the Trust purchases, and this has so far contributed £15k towards the overall £300k figure.

Jeremy Pewton, Head of Procurement, said: *"We quickly identified that there were potential efficiencies just by looking at how we procured goods and services and we are really pleased that so far £300k has been saved. This is real money which goes a long way to helping the Trust meet its financial targets and clearly the more of this we can do, the more we can protect jobs and front line services. The knowledge and experience our clinical colleagues have is invaluable and the Clinical Procurement Group has been able to tap into that knowledge to develop new projects and processes which will deliver more savings for the organisation without having a detrimental effect on the quality of care we provide."*

Sandra Brennan, Director of Nursing at Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, said: *"Quality is our absolute priority which is why we are working with staff to identify how we can save in areas which won't compromise the high standards of care we provide to patients. Small changes in how we procure things like gloves or dressings and other equipment can have a really significant impact and by putting clinical staff at the heart of this process we are ensuring that the focus on quality is maintained."*

The Trust's SMARTER programme articulates the three step approach the organisation is

under-taking in response to having to save around £35million over the next few years.

It's about trying to be more efficient, so as well as saving money through procurement the Trust is also supporting staff to reduce things like travel and energy costs. But its strategy also includes identifying appropriate business or growth opportunities, and looking at re-designing or transforming some of its existing services to they are better equipped to meet the expectations of those who use them.

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