



South West
Academic Health
Science Network



CEO Work Shadowing Programme



The South West Academic Health Science Network (SW AHSN) launched its industry/NHS Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Work Shadowing Programme in 2014 and has since paired CEOs from the pharmaceutical industry and NHS for a day spent working together.

The SW AHSN introduced the CEOs and facilitated the day, including the setting of aims and objectives and collation of feedback. Participants from both sides have commented on how useful it was to gain insight into their counterpart's world, resulting in increased empathy and a desire to work more collaboratively in the future.

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Challenge identified and actions taken:

The pharmaceutical industry sells its products into the NHS. As with any customer-purchaser relationship there can be scepticism from both sides regarding each ones motivation.

This means the benefits of both sides working collaboratively to achieve better patient outcomes is often over-looked.

The SW AHSN's Industry Event in 2014 was attended by both pharmaceutical and industry professionals. One of its products was a CEO Work Shadowing programme, designed to foster collaborative working by getting top management buy-in from both sides.

The programme has successfully placed three CEOs from the pharmaceutical industry into an NHS setting, to learn more about the day-to-day challenges faced at Health Trust level, by CEOs and members of their Senior Management Teams.

Impacts/Outcomes

- Successful placement of three pharmaceutical industry managing directors/CEOs with the equivalent role in South West Acute Trusts.
- All participants found common ground in some of the issues faced in running an organisation of comparable size but in a different sector.
- Each person emerged from the day with a desire to do more collaborative working moving forward with the other organisation.

"Learning from others about the issues they face, the approach they take and the processes they use, is vital in helping us continue to deliver high quality healthcare safely and sustainably."

– Angela Pedder, Chief Executive of the Royal Devon & Exeter Trust

Plans for the future

The Work Shadowing programme is going to be expanded to be inclusive of more operational but strategic roles from both sides. The SW AHSN plans to make the shadowing days more opportunity-focused by match-making people based on mutual areas of interest, with the

"Today's visit was a fantastic opportunity to see first-hand the work of the NHS, its incredible impact and its immense challenges."

– Stephen Whitehead, CEO of the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industries

hope that this will enhance the potential for collaborative working after the shadowing day.

Tips for adoption

It is important to identify stakeholders from both sides who are committed to developing cross-sector partnerships to understand the problems faced in other sectors, in order to match-make based on possible mutual benefits.

Comprehensive feedback should be captured straight after the shadowing process. The SW AHSN has worked with its local CLAHRC (Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research & Care) to understand how qualitative feedback can be used to create impact from the programme and is using this to structure the project moving forward.

Which national clinical or policy priorities does this example address?

This provides an example of how Academic Health Science Networks can build a culture of partnership and collaboration by promoting inclusivity, partnership and collaboration to consider and address local, regional and national priorities.

For more information call 01392 247903 or email info@swahsn.com