

Leadership and Action Learning: a local approach to delivery within NHS GGC Pharmacy Services

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Introduction:

Pharmacy personnel have access to formal leadership training through national organisations such as NES. This specialist training is generally accessed by senior staff only.

NHS GGC Pharmacy Services successfully piloted an in-house Action Learning Set (ALS) for senior pharmacists. The pilot was adapted to introduce and deliver a programme that:

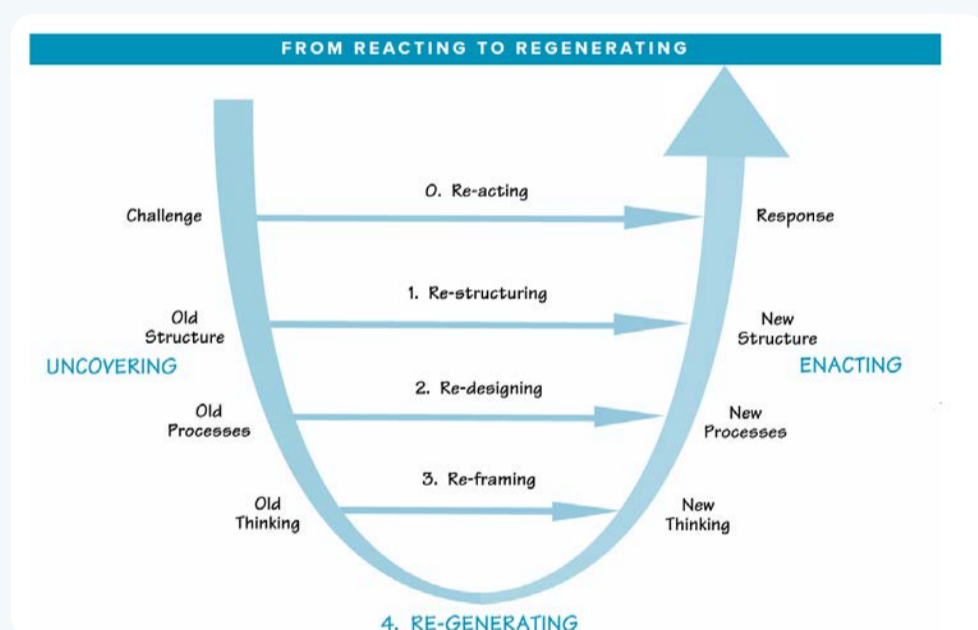
- Offers protected time for Leadership reflection and development
- Increases access and understanding to leadership tools
- Encourages Action Learning amongst a defined peer group

Results and Discussion:

Participant Type	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
Pharmacist	6	7
Pharmacy Technician	2	3
Pharmacy Support Worker	2	0
Total	10	9 (1 did not complete)

What are Action Learning Sets:

ALS aims to use small groups to solve real workplace problems through structured questioning and action planning. This programme uses the U Theory as shown:



Ref: <https://thesystemsthinker.com/connecting-to-source-the-u-process/>

At each session participants:

- Contributed to discussions exploring key leadership tools.
- Shared real life experiences to contribute to enriched peer-supported discussion.

Feedback throughout the programme highlighted successes such as:

- application of leadership tools in working practice
- successful job promotions

Quotes:

"Thanks for the advice at our last [ALS] meeting. My team presentation went well and I got good feedback"

PSW, participant cohort 1

"All topics were relevant, helpful and well thought out. Learning from other members of the group and facilitators was really useful"

Pharmacist, participant cohort 2

"The sessions are beneficial as they build up your confidence and with help from other people who are also on the course make you feel part of the experience and helps you fit in."

PSW, participant, cohort 1

"The variation of staff groups in the programme has also been great. This [learning] has been something that I have taken away and have used in practice."

Pharmacy Technician, participant, cohort 2

Method:

Cohort 1: Staff submitted applications detailing service level projects they would lead throughout the programme.

Cohort 2: After evaluation of Cohort 1, the project element was deemed non-essential for completion of the Leadership ALS course and was removed from the application process.

Participants were enrolled into a locally developed programme of eight, 3-hour sessions, led by 2 senior pharmacists experienced in ALS and leadership training. External specialists were employed to focus on key areas of learning.

Each session offered learning and discussion relating to a leadership tool and participation in facilitated action learning set.

Conclusion:

The expansion of this pilot showed that local delivery of leadership and action learning training was feasible across pharmacy services. Non-formal training allowed a wide range of staff to access leadership materials and learning, which has been applied to the service. Further work is required to analyse the long-term impact and sustainability of the programme.

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