Resilience support for general practices and primary care networks
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About us

PCC has spent more than a decade at the forefront of primary care development, providing practical, expert support to general practice and the wider NHS.

An independent, not-for-profit organisation with roots in the NHS, we believe that primary care is the heart of the NHS and key to sustainability and transformation. We provide training and support to help solve pressing problems today and build longer term capability.

We run hundreds of events and workshops each year on different aspects of personal, team and organisational development. We also support national programmes – most recently the clinical pharmacists in general practice initiative, where we have helped hundreds of practices successfully to embed pharmacists in their teams.

We have delivered resilience support to hundreds of practices and design our support around your needs. Diagnostic reviews have really helped to shape many practices and implemented new ways of working or in some cases merged organisations which we have supported from initial discussions to application.
Resilience support

The general practice resilience programme was announced as part of the General Practice Forward View. At the time it stated that the programme would provide £40 million over four years (until 2020) to support GP practices and to build resilience into the system.

An important part of the remit of primary care networks is to ensure that quality and performance of the member practices is of a consistently high standard. Being part of a network will not automatically confer resilience on weaker practices. It may serve to highlight the problem.

Network or not, individual practices concerned about retaining their independence and remaining viable need to ensure that they address areas that might compromise their sustainability.

We define resilience simply as the attributes needed to keep going, including the ability to withstand changes of circumstance, eg the loss of a GP partner or an increase in list size as a result of a new residential development. A resilient practice is one able to offer high-quality care with healthy finances and a stable, well-motivated workforce.

In other words, resilience is not only for practices already in choppy waters but for those who can see them coming.

Resilience is not all about fixing what’s wrong. To be fit for the future practices also need to understand what demands are likely to be made on them in future by new ways of working. Anticipating these changes and planning for them reduces the risk of disruption and distress in future.

Flexible support

Because no two practices are the same and because the issues they face will vary, we offer a menu of support options under the broad heading of resilience. These can range from intervening to help stabilise a practice at risk of closure to working with a practice or group of practices to get transformative work underway to ensure that systems, processes, financial and workforce plans are in place to ensure resilience in future.

In every case our approach is to help you to build the capability and resources you need to take charge of your own destiny.
Diagnostic review and baseline assessment

A great starting point is a diagnostic baseline assessment comprising:

- Half-day preparatory work, collating and reviewing available data
- A full-day practice visit with conversations with key staff to build a thorough understanding of the situation of the practice – its strengths, weaknesses and the morale of staff. The review covers:
  - Services to patients
  - Practice organisational structure
  - Practice performance
  - Infrastructure
  - Preparedness for the future
- Half a day to produce a report with our recommendations.

Such a review can also be invaluable when practices are in the early stages of discussions about merging.

Action planning

A return visit to the practice to meet with those who will be taking forward the plan will include agreement of an improvement plan which would cover each areas of the diagnostic, in particular:

- Management – strategic and operational
- Human resources - skill mix and potential recruitment needs
- Financial management
- Future business models
Practice management capacity support

Collaborative working

We will help practices to look at creating partnerships and collaborations with other practices and providers in the local health and social care system. Time will be spent looking within the localities at what each practice does on a daily basis and how this could be delivered in a collaborative way. We will explore clinical, non-clinical and management activities as agreed with the practice.

This will help practice managers working in local networks to identify areas where they could collaborate to save time and money, build collective strength and improve services for patients.

Hands-on support

Experts can provide hands on support in general or specialised areas either following on from the diagnostic or as standalone support.

Rapid intervention and management support for practices at risk of closure

Facilitated sessions

There may be many reasons for practices to be at risk of closure so we offer an initial fact-finding discussion to understand the challenges. After that we can provide facilitated sessions to agree management support.

CQC support

Our CQC experts can carry out a compliance visit and provide advice and guidance before or after a CQC inspection. We can produce a report and provide a toolkit to evidence compliance.

Short-term capacity

Capacity can be provided to support the management of the practice if required for a specific piece of work. This can include specialist support for finance, workforce planning and other areas as required.
Co-ordinated support for practices with workforce issues

Clinical correspondence management

Our experts will work with a lead clinician and the admin team to agree and implement a protocol to reduce GP admin workload by up to 70%.

Capacity and demand

Our sessions provide tools to calculate demand and review current capacity highlighting any gaps. Our team can then work with the practice to propose solutions.

Specialist advice and guidance

We can provide specialist advice and guidance on these areas to deliver operational improvements.

- Dispensing optimisation
- Premises
- Mergers
- Finance

Change management and improvement support to individual practices or groups of practices

Managing change

Successful change agents are able to adapt to changing circumstances and to bring their teams with them. This requires sound judgement, decision-making skills in an uncertain environment, personal resilience and an ability to understand and support others at different stages of change. We will equip you with tools to manage change such as Kotter’s steps and the transition curve as well as looking at how culture underpins our behaviour in the NHS and breaking down some of the associated trends and behaviours that we come across regularly in a culture rich organisation.

Organisational development

We support practices to focus on maximising the value gained from the organisation’s resources, strategy, goals and core purpose with a planned, ongoing, systematic change that aims to embed continual improvement in the culture and working methods.
Coaching, supervision and mentoring

Learning needs assessment

A personal learning needs assessment will be completed covering the following areas:

- Leadership
- Risk management
- Partnership
- Patient services
- Finance and contracts
- Human resources
- Premises and equipment
- PCNs and working within the integrated care system (ICS)

The areas are then prioritised and summarised in a personal report and development plan.

Supervision and support

The development plan informs how the mentor can provide support and expertise to improve the individual's capability in the practice manager role. This can be done both with hands-on and remote support and will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual.

Other support and personal resilience training

We deliver various personal and team development training including:

- Effective communication
- Care navigation and signposting
- Smarter working
- Improving conversations
Feedback

- “We really found the diagnostic assessment and report helpful. The assessor was so easy to talk to and put everyone at their ease. The recommendations made in the report really identified what support we need, and we look forward to working with PCC on the next stage of this programme” – Manor Medical Practice, Walsall

- “Excellent examples, very good slides, very well presented as presenter knew her stuff” – Deena Woodhall, acting practice manager, Dudley CCG (CQC workshop)

- “We have changed our approach to dealing with other organisations, how we work internally within our federation, and how we work to our strengths. We have some good ideas still to take forward”

Our team

As well as our practice specialists and team leaders, we have an extensive network of associates with experience of practice management, business planning and strategic development.

Find out more

To talk to a member of our team about resilience support, email enquiries@pcc-cic.org.uk with “Resilience” in the subject line.