



Restructure and Change Programme in Care Organisation, London

Context

This care organisation had successfully tendered for a large local authority contract to deliver services across 3 London boroughs. However, the expansion in delivery put the existing back office services (administration, HR, Finance, Quality Assurance functions) under a significant strain. Frontline service managers complained at the time it took to get a response to their support requests while central office staff complained of being overwhelmed with conflicting demands. At the same time the CEO was spending less time at central office as he attended external meetings with commissioners and funders.

Process

The process of the review was highly participative involving face to face and phone interviews with key staff and trustees and group discussions with staff teams. These discussions started by considering the overall strategic direction of the organisation. In that context, the conversations identified and prioritised the support needs of service delivery staff. The discussions then considered the strengths and weaknesses of current support and we spent time with support staff who talked through existing processes and where the bottlenecks and jams were occurring.

Findings

Frontline staff were frustrated by delays in HR processes which slowed down recruitment and CRB checks. A new finance IT package was also taking time to bed in as Finance staff got used to new functionalities.

Many staff were nostalgic for how the organisation had been, when it was smaller and everyone knew everyone else. There was also a sense that the CEO was not as present as he had been. Whereas he had previously been regularly visiting services he was increasingly being called on to present to funders, local authorities and was regularly missing internal team meetings. In his absence other managers were reluctant to make decisions.

Recommendations

The recommendations included restructuring, new posts as well as culture change and management skills development.

Key Recommendations included:

- Recruitment of HR Assistant
- Developing from existing managers a small Senior Management Team to support CEO
- Senior management training to develop strategic thinking and delegation skills of senior staff
- Coaching for CEO
- HR and Finance Procedure Manual developed and this being implemented through line managers.
- Acknowledge and celebrate success. In the rush of everyday work, staff still had not been congratulated on their achievements.