



Case Study

in association with

THE OASIS SCHOOL

OF HUMAN RELATIONS

Background to St Oswald's Hospice

St Oswald's is a charity that values the life of each person and is committed to excellence in Specialist Palliative Care.

The philosophy defines the values of the organisation for patients, families, carers and all those involved in its work. St Oswald's describe their philosophy as;

- We value each patient as an individual.
- Put quality of life first.
- Provide care without discrimination.
- Facilitate integrated care.
- Provide support for families and carers.
- Value all those involved with the work of the Hospice, in whatever capacity.
- Are committed to providing a quality service.
- Provide a major resource in palliative care.
- Manage the Hospice effectively.

Impulse for involving Oasis

Margaret Kindlen, Education Officer and Deborah Heron, Human Resources Director had been developing the human resources infrastructure of St Oswald's with the Senior Management Team and Chief Executive. Both were looking for an intervention that would involve all staff at all levels as well as the volunteers. The purpose was to pull together the different parts of the organisation in terms of valuing the contribution staff and volunteers make; enhance and bring awareness to the interdependent nature of the work they are all committed to; and to attend to the development of the organisation through development of individual staff and volunteers.



It was a time when a lot of energy was going into the Jigsaw appeal to raise funds for the Children's hospice (to be built on the same site as the well-established Adult hospice). The tension between maintaining the ongoing adult services and bringing attention to the children's services St Oswald's were pledged to develop was actively being attended to, as was a general feeling of tension within and between the staff.

Margaret Kindlen had already experienced Oasis at first hand through a two-year Advanced Diploma in Practice of Human Relations and the Management of Change. She felt that the ethos and values of Oasis matched those of the hospice and that our expertise could be of use to St Oswald's.

Developing the strategy

Deborah Heron and Margaret Kindlen worked together to create the interest and commitment needed from the CEO Richard Parker and the SMT. Initially, St Oswald's wanted a development programme for their SMT and senior clinical managers to explore Coaching Mentoring and Supervision and commissioned The Oasis School of Human relations to deliver this as part of the HR strategy. Whilst Richard did not attend the initial eight day programme, he fully endorsed the programme and the HR strategy, as did the SMT.



During the programme there were some case study examples of how to develop a whole organisation strategy regarding development and reflection-in-action. This was a stimulus to those present to develop an organisational response that they wanted to take back to the CEO to roll out to the rest of the organisation.

In essence they wanted to create a learning organisation where mentoring was a cornerstone to all reflective practice. There was recognition that all services from clinical to facilities to catering could all benefit from taking stock on what they were doing and how they are doing it. They wanted to use the Seven Stage Model of Human Relations across the disciplines and link mentoring into the appraisal system as one way of developing new practice.

The senior team developed an appreciation of the overlaps and distinctions between coaching, mentoring and supervision and developed a model so that all were included across the organisation. There was recognition that this needed a 2-3 year period to implement.

Approach

Through discussion of experience and practice a development package was developed with Oasis. A common framework for working effectively together was wanted that travelled across professional boundaries. The Seven Stage Model of Effective Human Relations does that. The model was first developed out of best practice.; taking effective meetings, supervision, management meetings, mentoring, coaching and analysing what made them effective. Out of that process the model was developed and has been tried and tested across disciplines and across cultures, including Uganda.

The educational methodology used was experiential and participative. The staff had been gradually introduced to this way of working and found it difficult to adjust to begin with.

What happened?

There were several strands to the strategy;

- Margaret and Deborah ensured they had mentoring regarding the development of the strategy both individually and together to review learning, progress and plans
- Staff support booklet was developed and circulated to all staff and volunteers
- Appraisal System
 - Staff were consulted about the development and implementation of an appraisal system
 - Appraisal documentation was developed; training designed, piloted and delivered

- to all those delivering appraisals
- A preparation day was designed, piloted and delivered to all those receiving appraisals so they could make best use of the process
- Clinical Supervision/reflective practice
- Mentoring was available formally and on an ad hoc basis
- Senior managers committed to participate in the eight-day programme of Coaching, Mentoring and Supervision
- First line supervisors were offered a three-day programme
- A one-day programme was open to anyone wanting to make effective use of supervision, coaching and/or mentoring

Learning during the process

There was a tremendous amount of learning along the way as there always is – personally, at a content and at the level of process including;

- This kind of initiative needs a champion
- That once this kind of development is needed, it needs to sit within an OD strategy
- Attention to sustainability is crucial for this way of operating to become the norm
- Managers need to model the process
- It can be tempting for the commissioners to try to implement but they are unlikely to be able to give the time

Output

- 28 senior members of staff attended the eight day development programme
- 4 three day programmes were delivered for staff who wanted to offer supervision or mentoring to staff reaching over 40 people
- 8 one-day courses offered for staff and volunteers who wanted to know more and make more effective use of supervision, coaching and/or mentoring reaching over 60 people

Outcomes

Most of the outcomes are anecdotal as a formal evaluation was unable to be carried out due to changes in personnel and increased pressure on those covering.

- The appraisal system has been in operation for three years and continues to be used
- Reflective practice has increased particularly in clinical areas although is not yet practised across the organisation
- Staff are more engaged in developmental opportunities having built their confidence in participative and experiential approaches to learning
- There is greater appreciation that asking for help is a strength not a weakness
- Staff booklet outlining the options available to staff and volunteers for support
- There is a steering group who are developing a Clinical Supervision strategy
- A Leadership Development Programme has been developed which builds on the CMS work
- Greater awareness and use of mentoring for immediate problem solving and longer term developmental initiatives.

Legacy

The whole process over this 3-year period gave St Oswald's the opportunity to create a way to demonstrate the value they give their staff and a springboard for a more systematic approach that Leigh Marrs is taking in the newly developed role of Learning and Development Manager. Leigh is focusing on Organisational Development and ensuring that the foundation work completed is embedded, sustained and built upon over the coming years.

Local facilitation is now used for the clinical supervision training and the one-day course and the facilitators involved have participated on the Oasis courses to ensure there is compatibility and continuity in terms of message, content, and methods of delivery.

"The Seven Stage Model has given staff at St Oswald's the resources they need to develop the organisation in a time of continual change and challenge. The subsequent initiatives on Leadership we have introduced have their foundation firmly in coaching and mentoring".

"The principles of the Seven Stage model have been the cornerstone of the leadership development work of the last year at St Oswald's"

Leigh Marrs, Learning and Development Manager



Adult Cloisters

Day Centre

Adult Support

Children's Hospice

Deborah Heron – Human Resources Director, St Oswald's Hospice

Zena Bernacca – Co-Director, The Oasis School of Human Relations