

Case Study

Implementing e-KSF in a Primary Care Trust

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Name of Organisation	NHS North Yorkshire & York
Number of employees	5,600 approx
Number of Organisational Sites	<p>North Yorkshire and York Community & Mental Health Services are an arms length body of NHS North Yorkshire and York (North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust).</p> <p>The organisation covers an area that has as the same boundaries as North Yorkshire, the largest county in England, covering a population of around 790,000 and covering 3,200 square miles</p> <p>Services offered are community, mental health and out of hours services as well as community hospitals and walk in centres.</p>
Healthcare Business	Primary Care

KSF Implementation

Following the re-organisation of Primary Care Trusts in 2007, where four Primary Care Trusts merged into one, two previous PCTs had introduced e-KSF for their staff. A pragmatic approach was taken to allow the localities to use e-KSF or to continue using paper based appraisal systems. The use of e-KSF is becoming well embedded across the organisation with a rigorous reporting mechanism in place.

As part of the organisation's priority to increase appraisal activity and to increase the use of e-KSF the PCT employed a KSF Coordinator to support a programme for outline development, face to face training and the use of e-KSF. The factors that influenced the decision to implement e-KSF were part of the wider desire by the organisation to implement e-solutions for many corporate functions, improve reporting of appraisal activity and to give staff the opportunity to complete their appraisal using an electronic web based tool

The Project Team

The team involved in the implementation of e-KSF includes:

- Workforce Development Manager
- Workforce Development Senior Project Officer
- KSF Co-ordinator
- Staff Side KSF Lead

Approach to Implementation

The Trust has a process that incorporates both paper and electronic processes to record staff appraisal. The KSF Coordinator delivers appraisal and KSF Training, where all staff are made aware of the paper and electronic (e-KSF) processes for completing their appraisals. Once the local manager decided on a preferred recording method, then the KSF Coordinator arranges to meet with the manager and/or staff to support e-KSF deployment, and to gather the information needed for the system set up e.g. appraisal structure, staff names to assign to managers/reviewers, job titles to assign post outlines. A plan for training any further staff is then agreed and this is delivered locally by the KSF Coordinator, either on-site where the staff are based or at a central IT suite.

The process of rolling out e-KSF is very much based on the enthusiasm of the service managers who want to engage with the tool and proactively request to use the system. In each service area the system is rolled out on a full self service basis.

The factors that support this success is the use of an approach which fully engages the manager in embedding full self service use of e-KSF in the service area, encouraging staff members to support and help each other following the initial training, having KSF Champions & KSF Cascade trainers throughout the organisation and full support from the Staff Side KSF Lead in the use of e-KSF.

Following the introduction of ESR and the OLM system the organisation decided against a formal timetable for the roll out of e-KSF, however if a service area expresses an interest in using the tool, the implementation for that service areas is completed within approximately one month.

Constraints

Some of the difficulties in implementing e-KSF that the organisation faces are:

- Limited access to IT facilities
- The age of the IT equipment
- Geographical location of the services across the large geographic area
- Resistance to the use of computers by staff & managers
- Future uncertainty of the role of ESR/OLM for reporting

Some of the benefits that the organisation is seeing in the areas that have implemented e-KSF are:

Benefits for individuals and managers:

- The ease of access to e-KSF and the ease of entering information and keeping it up to date
- The fact that all records are held on a centralised database therefore replacing the need to keep paper records
- Improved staff IT skills

Benefits for the organisation:

- Linkages between e-KSF and ESR; ease of reporting on appraisal activity
- Increased rates of appraisal activity
- Closer working arrangements between the e-KSF and ESR team resulting in improved reporting and feedback for managers on appraisal activity

Next Steps

NHS North Yorkshire & York is currently undergoing a further restructure, and it is unclear the role of the KSF team in supporting CMHS or Commissioning staff, however, the next stage of the implementation plan is to support those staff who wish to use e-KSF from either part of the organisation

Local example illustrating the success of this approach

The Site Coordinator for Community Hospitals manages an Administration, Domestic and Portering Team of approximately 15 people at two small community hospitals. The manager approached the KSF Coordinator and requested to use the e-KSF tool.

The KSF Coordinator spent approximately half a day on site with the manager to set up the manager staff relationships within e-KSF, create and assign the post outlines and train the manager on the use of the system.

A second half day on site was organised to train all the staff who had reviewer responsibilities. These staff were encouraged to bring along copies of their last appraisal information, current Objectives and Personal Development Plans including Mandatory & Statutory training records.

The KSF Coordinator supported the staff to access e-KSF and enter the information directly onto the site. The staff that had good IT skills were able to complete the task quickly and left the training which then allowed the KSF Coordinator to give extra support to the staff who required it.

Following the initial training and support, the reviewers have supported their staff in completing all appraisals using e-KSF, with most of the staff regularly accessing e-KSF directly to update their own information. They support each other to use the tool effectively and all new starters to the service are trained by the manager and other members of the team.

Feedback from Stakeholders

Position	Quote
Workforce Development Manager	As part of an e-solution to meet the needs of a very complex organisation over a large geographical area, e-KSF has an important role to play in supporting managers and increasing appraisal activity. It also enables accurate reporting and reduces bureaucracy. However, it must be noted that resources (staff) do need to be in place to support staff using the system and to manage the information.
Senior Project Officer - KSF Lead	To have staff engage in KSF is great but to have them actively engage in the use of e-KSF is even better! There is no better advert for something than word of mouth and I would hope that other teams will be encouraged, follow their example and have a go themselves.
KSF Co-ordinator	<p>The implementation of e-KSF within these teams was reasonably simple as the teams were enthusiastic & keen to learn. Access to good IT facilities also enabled training to take place as a group, on-site and within one day. Good relationships between me and the reviewers also made any problem solving/queries easy to address.</p> <p>They keep me updated on changes within their teams so I can make any amendments on e-KSF regarding reviewer & post outline assigning. I'm extremely pleased and proud of what the admin, domestic & porter teams have achieved and continue to do so.</p>
Site Co-ordinator	<p>I have tried to encourage staff to use the system as I think that seeing the appraisal on the system in front of you is useful at the appraisal, and I like the functions where you can upload evidence rather than having lots of paper evidence.</p> <p>It's good for staff to be able to view their appraisal and objectives whenever they need to, and the information is always close at hand for them to do this. We have shared difficulties and have usually managed to find a way round problems by playing with the system and getting to know how it works.</p>
Reviewer for Domestic Team	I like e-KSF but sometimes I find it time consuming. Staff access their accounts through me; we have staff meetings and, as a group, we will go through the core dimensions & fill in some evidence forms which I then input this onto e-KSF for them. The staff are keen to learn/ use computers more & we aim to get more staff using the system for themselves soon.
Reviewer for Admin Team	<p>I find using e-KSF easy; it gets better the more I use and understand it. The main benefit of the system is that it is always accessible on any computer, from anywhere, allowing all users to input appraisal evidence as they go along, saving on paper; it can be updated on a regular basis & discussed in regular 1 to 1 meetings which keeps individuals focused on work & personal objectives.</p> <p>I have encouraged my staff to use e-KSF as it will save them time when it comes to the annual appraisals and gives them more ownership around their JDR. I have had no difficulties with the system, I think the more we use it the easier it becomes to navigate around. I have sat with each team member & demonstrated the features of the system and also given them a copy of the e-KSF staff guide to refer to.</p>
Staff Member of Admin Team	I haven't used e-KSF very much as yet, but it looks well thought out and the instructions have made what I have done easy to do.