



Organisation-wide approach to continuous, sustainable quality improvement

Case study on collaboration with Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust and The Point of Care Foundation (POCF)



Population of
~330,000 children

Over **450**
staff trained
across **37** teams


18 month journey

Over
30%
Improvement in
patient satisfaction

Over
£450,000
saved

40 day
reduction in time
to hire process

70% reduction
ED breaches



Highlights from an 18 month journey over 3 phases

- Over 12% of the workforce (37 teams) were trained on CQI methodology during the engagement
- ED patient satisfaction has increased from 59% to 92%, while there was a 70% reduction in the volume of breaches (1,333 to 406/month)
- Over 50% reduction in Time to hire (TTH) from 68 days to 28 and total saving upward of £468,000

The issue

Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust required help to deliver the scale and pace of change to match their ambition and due to the exceptional circumstances they were facing, they sought external support to implement a sustainable and holistic approach to Continuous Quality Improvement; rooted in the principles of Lean, which was adapted to their specific needs to ensure sustainability into the future.



When the covid-19 pandemic hit, they knew that something needed to change to keep delivering the best possible care. In parallel, the national shortage in nurses and medical professionals was already underway and only set to become worse. Therefore, their efforts needed to become more focused, aligned, and effective.

About Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust

Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust cares for over 330,000 children, young people, and their families every year, and are one of only four stand-alone paediatric trusts in the country, providing specialist treatment to children across the UK.

The approach

With this vision as the basis, together with a clearly articulated case for improvement, we worked with the organisation to put the structure in place to make it a reality, bringing 'Brilliant Basics' to life. At the heart of this CQI model, the main objective was to improve patient experience. It was based on getting the basics right and making change normal for all at Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust.

By bringing together the vision, all the 'Brilliant g over 60 staff to understand their lived experience, we co-designed an improvement programme addressing department, trust, and system improvements. The starting point was all about their staff – whom were equipped and empowered to deliver improvements, as well as leadership coaching.

From the get-go, this was set up to be a bottom-up improvement effort, with the frontline teams (and every other level of the organisation) being empowered to make the appropriate changes and improvements in their own units/teams, and the Executive Team setting the strategy and the vision.

Change was managed through 5 different workstreams that touched on every level of the organisation:

- Divisional coaching and training, ensuring everyone had the tools necessary to improve
- Frontline coaching and training, ensuring everyone had the tools necessary to improve
- Leadership Behaviours, to lead by example
- Strategy into Action, with a clear vision for the future
- Centre of Excellence, to sustain the quality improvement work beyond the partnership

It is worth noting that the improvements were delivered through small daily changes in how a unit is run, as well as more traditional, project-style approaches.

These daily improvements are what enabled Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust to revolutionise their culture and free themselves up to ultimately deliver front line changes that will genuinely impact care for the organisation's patients.

Value-added benefits beyond patient experience

While work has revolved around improving patient experience, significant success with staff experience was also achieved. Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust now have a shared, consistent way of working that transcends professional groups allowing for a 'shared mental model'.

This approach started to break the silos within their organisation where teams that were previously detached now regularly share concerns and ideas, and collaborate to find shared solutions to their, and their patients' problems. That in turn, also means a smoother and better patient experience, as evidenced by the jump in patient satisfaction.

Several benefits were achieved during the initial phase of the programme, but the measure of success is that Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust have continued to develop and improve after our partnership ended, through the cumulative action of every single one of their staff.

The sustainability of the programme was embedded from the get-go in the roll-out co-designed by KPMG and the trust, bringing our vast experience in organisation-wide continuous improvement culture.



Multi-disciplinary support and expertise

To supplement our efforts, we collaborated with specialists from The Point of Care Foundation (POCF), who ensured the children and young people remained at the epicentre.

We brought expertise and knowledge of improvement methodologies and organisational strategy, while POCF ensured the needs of Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust patients were at the centre of everything. Without one of these elements, CQI wouldn't have been as brilliant.

Outcomes

The results have been rapid and impressive, with weekly progress, collaboration and update meetings that drove the implementation faster than any other quality improvement programme seen within Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust before.

The strength of the progress can be seen on multiple levels – for example, one of the impressive results is that patient experience in the ED department has jumped from a baseline of 59% to a 92% level of satisfaction, while breach performance has improved by 70%.^(a)

While finances were not the focus, reducing time-to-hire (TTH) and medication errors had significant financial benefits. For example, TTH went from 68 days to 28. The total saved costs in being able to hire and onboard new staff is upward of £468,000 for the hospital's vacancies.^(a)

In terms of medication errors, estimating each takes 12 hours to investigate and resolve, the year-on-year improvement from 38 to 30 results in over 96 hours of staff time saved – with a saving potential of more than £73,000 per year.^(a)

Note: (a)Figures as of August 2022.

By applying this holistic approach, Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust have seen the benefits of focusing on what matters, for their staff, patients, and leadership teams.

This collaboration also begun to shine externally – such as being Highly Commended 'Best Consultancy Partnership with the NHS' as part of HSJ Partnership Awards 2023.



The partnership with KPMG really helped us design our improvement system. With experience from other organisations we were able to shape our brilliant basics programme and localise this to Alder Hey. The KPMG team were enthusiastic and adaptable which helped drive us forward at pace

Nathan Askew,

Executive Director of Nursing,
Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust



"Brilliant basics has reminded me about why I started nursing in the first place. If everyone brings forward their ideas for improvement, using the tools we have put in place, we can make the patients' and families experience the best it can be"

HDU Nurse

Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust

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