Improving the onboarding experience for doctors in training at Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust

Following a detailed review of onboarding documentation for doctors in training, Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust implemented a number of changes that have resulted in a reduction of pre-employment paperwork and an improved doctors in training experience.

The case for change

During 2017/18 the trust participated in a pilot for the national streamlining doctors in training programme, which aims to improve the rotational experience of doctors in training. The trust joined the pilot so it could share its experiences of the process but also contribute to the development of a new national approach, with a view to improving its doctors in training experience locally.

During one of the streamlining pilot workshops it came to light that the trust had significantly more pre-employment documentation to process compared to other organisations.

Doctors in training had aired their frustrations on having to repeatedly complete forms at every rotation, often having to write the same details such as name and post title on every form.

The trust was keen to reduce the number of onboarding documents during the pre-employment period and align themselves to at least the national average. They also wanted to reduce administration time, with the ultimate objective of improving the doctors in training onboarding experience.

The solution

In 2018 the trust made the decision to conduct a review of all pre-employment documentation across the organisation. By attending the streamlining pilot meetings, the trust was able to adopt some of the learning and contacted all owners of pre-employment documentation to confirm if:

- the documents were still required
- an alternative process could be used
- they could be merged with other documents.
Some document owners were protective of their documents, it was important to be able to explain why the review was taking place, the benefits of streamlining and discuss alternative ways to gather the information needed as part of the onboarding process.

The main resource required was time, it took around ten days to complete the review which involved HR, IT, payroll, occupational health, learning and developing and pharmacy teams.

The new streamlined process and documentation was introduced in April 2018, ready for the doctors in training rotation.

**Outcomes**

- Since conducting the review the trust has reduced the number of documents processed by 43% - from 14 documents to six per doctor in training.

- The process reduced the number of pre-employment check meetings between doctors in training and medical staffing teams, resulting in a 33% saving in time, on average saving of 32.5 hours per rotation (reducing the time from 45 mins to 15 mins per doctor).

- The onboarding review and subsequent outcomes have helped demonstrate the benefits of streamlining across teams and the organisation.

- The trust is currently looking into mandating the DBS update service for doctors in training. It also plans to engage with host trusts to ensure the process is streamlined and there is no unnecessary repetition.

**Top Tips**

- Build in regular reviews, the trust discovered some forms had been redundant for a longtime and were actually no longer required. Constantly reviewing processes is key.

- The trust carried out the review individually with different teams, it would have been beneficial to conduct the review as a group, this would have sped up the process, reduced the need to repeat information several times and also provided the opportunity to discuss merging documents with multiple document owners.

- Ensuring the doctors in training experience should be at the heart of the review.

**Contact**

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