

## Top Leaders Programme



### The Organisation

Now part of NHS South of England, the South West Strategic Health Authority (SW SHA) was part of the structure of the NHS responsible for enacting directives and implementing fiscal policy at regional level as directed by the Department of Health.

The SW SHA contained various NHS Trusts which took responsibility for running or commissioning local NHS services. It was responsible for the strategic supervision of these services.

### Organisational Challenges

The NHS in the South West was facing many challenges including:

- Attaining service improvements that were sustainable and measurable
- Improving the quality of healthcare in the region
- Becoming financially healthy
- Understanding how to operate effectively within the changing system of healthcare delivery
- Continuing to reform and change the delivery of healthcare
- Building local confidence and trust in the NHS within the region

### The programme

In order to deliver this complex strategic and business agenda the NHS South West required a high quality of leaders and managers. The SHA recognised that a robust leadership development strategy was therefore critical to the future of the NHS in their region.

The Top Leaders Development Programme, designed and delivered by a partnership between Cranfield and Hay Group, formed part of this strategy and the SHA's succession planning and talent management pipeline.

The programme aimed to help participants understand the core issues that all top NHS leaders face, develop their leadership capability through input and opportunities for individualised personal actions and how the learning could be applied on a day-to-day basis.

The programme offered a blended learning model comprising five core taught modules, access to personal

performance coaching, facilitated action learning sets, and outdoor challenge activities. The taught modules focused on leadership in context, innovation and change, commissioning services in a competitive environment, delivering services for patients and understanding corporate governance.

### **Feedback from evaluation report**

“This has been a highly successful programme which has been greatly valued by participants. The impact has been considerable and there have been many reported benefits not only for individuals and their personal development but also for organisations and for the NHS in the South West. The mixture of different kinds of professions taking part, the range and pace of activities and the standard of the facilitation were all strongly praised. The impact of the programme has resulted in a whole range of different outcomes and effects, including a number of innovations and organisational changes as well as changes to individual behaviours and attitudes. The programme has served to create a cadre of senior leaders in the South West who will be better equipped to take the NHS forward and respond to the challenges ahead. This has been a very worthwhile initiative and it has made a considerable contribution to the NHS in the South West.” (Taken from the external evaluation of the Programme commissioned by the SW SHA and undertaken by Ashridge).