

## Preparing the commissioning leaders of the future

### The challenge

In an effort to determine the cause of the financial problems facing one home counties-based CCG, its clinical chair consulted with its GP practices. It became apparent from the lack of awareness around the issues, that the CCG needed support to harness skills from different leaders within the patch in order to develop a more active and effective clinical voice.

### The solution

Recognising a lack of appreciation for leadership development among GPs, the programme was given a tangible, practical focus. FMLM's programme was facilitated by a senior medical professional and a leadership development expert. Together they created a collaborative programme, featuring group work around current problems, set challenges and small group presentations, all focused on helping participants integrate change into everyday practice.

To demystify the system, the programme outlined NHS structures and CCG operating models, while breaking down the terminology and language of management. The programme also provided opportunities to network with individuals in the CCG, creating a space to share concerns and learn from experiences.

By sharing personal success stories, participants were able to see that it was possible to achieve the desired outcomes, through positive, respectful interaction. It also inspired innovative thinking by encouraging individuals to consider questions, such as "what's the one thing you could do for the CCG and the one thing the CCG could do for you?"

Participants were also invited to role play and engage constructively in difficult conversations, all in support of an overriding objective to improve clinical patient outcomes.

### The results

An independent evaluation of the programme found:

- Greater participation in decision-making processes over 'rubber-stamping'
- Increased confidence and courage to generate innovative ideas
- Increased involvement in the CCG and willingness to lead and network on issues such as mental health and IT
- Increased proactivity to establish new services and business case proposals, using the negotiation and good practice skills acquired during the programme
- Increased opportunities, particularly for female GPs, to design the system in which they work
- Greater use of "information, inspiration and tools" to facilitate better working processes.

*"I think as a cohort the collaborative working challenged our ideas, encouraged us to work collaboratively, enthused us that clinical leadership can make a difference and helped us develop a clear vision of how to deliver high quality care and promote good outcomes."*