Caring Together, Eastern Cheshire

Lead partner: Hannah Farrar

The context

Eastern Cheshire is an area just outside of Manchester, with a population of c.200,000. It faced a combination of clinical and financial pressure. An aging population produced challenges in demand, and there were questions over the financial viability of the hospitals. Whilst commissioners and providers in Eastern Cheshire had started to make progress in developing more integrated health and social care for residents, hospitals were still largely at the centre of healthcare provision. In order to address the challenges of a fast-growing, aging population, as well as future fiscal constraints on its £220m healthcare spend, the way care was delivered needed to be radically re-shaped.

Methodology

Carnall Farrar mobilised a team led by Hannah Farrar, which had an appropriate breadth of knowledge and experience to address these complex issues, working seamlessly with the other consulting firms involved. Our team supported the creation of a credible, evidence-based strategic plan, which would deliver an integrated care system.

The programme of strategic changes focussed on four pillars – the empowered person, community provided care, local specialist care, and regional specialised care. The aspirations of the overall programme of work was that people in Eastern Cheshire: have access to more information; be supported by new, better community services; and have access to improved specialist services. The programme of work was most focussed on the high risk to moderate segments of the populations, as those are the groups which consume the majority of resources and provide the greatest opportunity.

The work included:

- Modelling the baseline financial case
- Identifying clinical sustainability issues
- Producing a case for change
- Outlining future service delivery options
- Setting out the plans for successful transition
- Using our insight into the culture and operation of the NHS to ensure there was effective commissioner and provider stakeholder buy-in
- Outlining a plan for key enablers (estates, workforce, information management and technology etc), including the investment required to support these plans

The results

- The scale of the financial challenge was identified and system leaders had a shared understanding of the key drivers of the deficit and clinically unsustainable services
A plan for strategic transformation was produced: ‘Caring Together’. This plan redesigned services to move from reactive, acute care to proactive care closer to home.

The assumptions contained in the final strategic plan were aligned with Eastern Cheshire’s existing strategy following the work, including high level quantification of the enablers including IT, workforce and estates to support the overall transformation programme.