



My Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Programme Story

By Louise Goswami – Head of Library and Knowledge Services Development, Health Education England working across Kent, Surrey and Sussex

My organisational context

During my Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (EGA) leadership journey I was one of a network of strategic library and knowledge services (LKS) leads working for Health Education England (HEE). HEE supports the delivery of excellent healthcare and health improvement to the patients and public by ensuring that the workforce of today and tomorrow has the right numbers, skills, values and behaviours. HEE is also the steward of LKS across the NHS in England and in 2014 published Knowledge for Healthcare: a development framework for NHS LKS. The framework sets out an ambitious vision and was produced to ensure the resulting outputs and expertise of LKS staff would underpin improvements in patient care and safety through informed decision making.

Evidence of impact (self, team, organisation)

I began the EGA programme to further develop my leadership skills and to enable me to begin to explore alternative career options within the NHS. I have been an information professional for my entire working life and I have worked for the NHS for over 12 years. However, whilst undertaking the EGA programme in addition to my LKS lead responsibilities I was appointed as the programme manager tasked with overseeing the implementation of Knowledge for Healthcare. The EGA programme has given me access to a wide array of tools that have enabled me to be more self-aware and reflective of my behaviours, leadership and influencing styles. It has also been of significant benefit to draw on the resources available from the course material and apply them to enhance the delivery of Knowledge for Healthcare. To enable Knowledge for Healthcare to become a reality it is vital that there is engagement with key influential staff who understand and are passionate about the importance of high quality knowledge services for education, clinical practice, patient care and health information. The EGA programme has allowed me to explore how I can identify and influence clinical and executive stakeholders to become champions for LKS.

Learning for the system and for myself

The NHS is undergoing a significant period of change and LKS are no exception to this. As part of the EGA programme I have learned that strong transformational leadership skills and influencing skills are essential during times of change and champions can be effective agents of change. The programme has also helped me to consider how to bring together diverse individuals with the relevant skills to deliver different elements of Knowledge for Healthcare and inspire shared purpose. This includes champions for LKS who ideally need to be at an executive level across all areas of the system or those are expert users of services. I am now aware that to successfully influence stakeholders to become champions I need to select the most appropriate influencing strategy. I also need to embody transformational leadership skills to articulate the direction of travel to potential champions.

What I now know about leadership and my behaviour and practices

The EGA programme has given me an awareness of the transformational skills I need to effect change, including those that I need to develop further. These include providing a sound vision. The programme has given me the confidence to begin to experiment with approaches to inspire shared purpose, which will strengthen my skills in influencing and engaging teams. The tools available to me have also highlighted strengths I wasn't necessarily aware of, particularly creating formal and informal communication channels and shared agendas with stakeholders. I have also had validation of my key strengths such as presenting a logical case through friendly persuasion. All of which are vital in the delivery of Knowledge for Healthcare. The action learning set model has been very useful as a diverse sounding board for particular issues associated with my work. The programme has challenged me, but I have come away with many positives and an extended network of colleagues and friends.