Team Health Check Guide

How to use it

This team development tool is a 6 stage tool-kit for assessing current team performance

The stages are:

- **Team Health Check**
  - A short questionnaire that allows you to pin point areas where the teams performance can be improved against set team criteria
  - Try to involve as many of the team as possible in helping you answer the questionnaire and the analysis that follows
  - This will help give them involvement and ownership of any issues arising.
  - An overview of these criteria is provided to put the questionnaire into context.

- **The Findings**
  - Transfer your findings onto the team canvas to help you make decisions about what is important to address in your team
  - A Team canvas is provided to help you
  - This is a useful discussion stage with the team before you commit to any actions
  - Ensure you are clear about **what** will change or how things will look/ operate after you have implemented the changes – this needs to be articulated in a way that makes sense/ inspires the team to make the changes a reality

- **Action Plan**
  - This is your statement of intent to turn your analysis into realistic, concrete actions
  - The actions generated should follow the SMART format
    - Specific
    - Measurable
    - Achievable
    - Relevant/ realistic
    - Time based
  - An action plan template is provided

- **Carry Out The Plan**
  - Put it into operation as detailed in your action plan
  - Consider if there is a logical sequence of events that needs to be adhered to, or can you carry them out in any order?
  - Allow team members to follow through on any delegated tasks as a result of the action plan.

- **Monitor/ Review Progress**
  - Plan in formal reviews to look at progress and where obstacles that are preventing progress are identified
  - Involve as many of the team as possible, this encourages ownership of the plan and keeps it 'top of mind'
  - Ensure that where progress is difficult or the will to make the changes is dissipating, revisit your reasons for wanting to change and ensure that this is still a compelling reason – it may be that you have to revise some parts of your plans

- **Celebrate Success/ Lessons Learnt**
  - As in any change, it is important to recognise when any implemented changes are beginning to have a positive effect.
  - Encourage the team to share examples of where the changes are having an impact and how this is benefiting the team as a whole
  - It is also useful to examine how the lessons that have been learnt in one area, can be transferred to other areas of the action plan or team working

o   Try to focus equally on the things that are working as well, as the areas where you may have difficulties in implementation.

The 5 key Development areas.

Team Purpose

For teams to be effective, they need to have a clear understanding of what they are here to do. Very often teams forget to check that what was once their purpose, still holds true today. In this ever changing world, is your purpose as clear as it once was? More importantly, is everyone in the team clear about what the purpose is and what part they play in that?

Team Leadership

The team leader is the person responsible for ensuring the cohesiveness and effectiveness of the teams' outcomes. Leadership of the team is the way we demonstrate our understanding of the situation and what is required to move things forward and to effect change. Leaders also need to respond to the needs of their team to help them grow and develop in line with the changing face of the NHS, ensuring the skills that each team possesses is up to date and able to meet the expectation of the Trust and the needs of the patient.

Team membership

Recognising the unwritten rules of how the team operates, gives an understanding of the way the team is managed and/ or behaves between its members. Individuals need a sense of belonging to the team or the organisation, to feel that what they do is valued and worthwhile. How would the team describe itself to others and what is the reputation of the team externally to others? These are key factors that make the team one that people want to join, or actively want to avoid. Each person needs clearly defined roles that enable them to work in unambiguous ways

Team communication

A team that doesn't communicate well with itself is usually doomed to fail. Members need to be able to track the teams' progress, share its successes and give their ideas on how things can be improved. The methods that are used to keep the team informed must be appropriate to the message. Meetings which are well run, two-way, have a clear purpose and structured, will have a beneficial effect on the well-being of the team. An uninformed team cannot be expected to maintain consistently high standards if vital pieces of information are missing.   Meetings also serve to address the 'human' needs of the team as well as the more readily understood operational issues.

Team Review

As the NHS is ever more focused on the needs of its users, so each speciality must be able to demonstrate the excellence of the service they provide to their users. Changing patient awareness now means that people will no longer tolerate second best, the era of competition is upon the NHS generally and where there is choice, the service that offers the best perceived value and/ or service will be the one that survives and thrives. Resting on the laurels of past success is no longer an indication of future viability.

Team canvas

Action plan

So you have your findings. What do you need to focus on:

Area of Focus or improvement	Consider/ do this	Tip
Team purpose – Vision & Values	• Write down your definition of the teams' purpose • Ask other team members for their thoughts on what they consider the purpose to be • Ask people to consider where they think you are headed as a team • Compare their thoughts with yours – is there a difference? • Consider the 'gap' – is the team 'think' aligned with yours or the Trusts? • What motivators are there for people to want to move towards a common or shared purpose?	• At a team meeting – hold a discussion with the team to focus on the factors that may have changed your purpose or kept you on track • Develop a plan of action to realign the team with the vision of where you are headed and discuss what will motivate them to play their part • Give responsibilities for actions to various team members.
Team purpose – Strategy & Objectives	• Have you revisited your departmental strategy/ objectives? • How far away or on track are you to achieving these? • Team involvement is vital to your success, are the team aware of what the strategy/ objectives are? • Do individual objectives feed into the departmental ones? • Are there missing skills within the team that are needed? • Map your objectives onto a training needs analysis • Do you need extra resources that are vital to the teams' success? • If these resources are missing, can you re-negotiate the objectives? • For key personnel that are missing, through things like maternity leave, do you have their tasks covered by another team member?	• Ensure your objectives are written in a SMART format and made visible, along with current progress, to the team. • Ensure that these objectives are regularly discussed at team meetings
Team Leadership – Style & Responsiveness	• Do you regularly gain feedback from the team on your leadership style? • Act on this feedback to demonstrate your ability to consult and listen • Is your leadership one that makes sense for others, do they understand what is going on around them? • Do you regularly update your team as to the latest service	• Be a role model – make what you say match what you do in a consistent way.

	demands, as it affects them?	
	• Keep aligning your leadership with the latest changes as they emerge?	
	• Explain and put change into context for the team, in ways that each member can readily understand	
	• Plan training and development in line with appraisals & departmental objectives?	
	• Keep yourself updated on the latest developments at both a National and local level?	
Team Leadership – Coaching & Direction	• Read a coaching book to ensure an understanding of the topic • Be clear about difference between coaching, teaching and instruction • Attend the in-house Coaching for Performance workshop • Ensure that each team member receives regular constructive feedback on their performance • Do you encourage that professional updating is undertaken as a matter of course? • Can you demonstrate the benefits of such updating to the department/ team? If not – is it valid • Practice the skill of 'Catching people doing things right', rather than the easier 'Catching people out'	• Encourage the learning from study days to be passed back into the team. Each person to be responsible for a brief update to other team members of the key learning points from their study day. A useful addition to team meetings.
Team Membership – Identity & Culture	• Check that each team member has a clearly understood KSF outline • Does each role have an up to date job description – has it changed from its original purpose so needs to reflect the change? • Develop a training and development plan for the team as a whole, to identify current or upcoming skills shortages. • Do you have clear lines of succession in the event or members leaving the team? Consider a succession plan for the department. • What is the reputation of the team? Is it a team to be proud of and one that others want to join? • What do the unwritten, 'taken for granted' assumptions say about	• Ask the team to describe what they feel about working for the team • Develop a clear set of values about the way you operate as a team

	the team? • When did you last actively promote the successes of the team externally?	
Team Membership – individual Contributions	• Do you have a ready spirit of collaboration, people prepared to help and support their colleagues or… • Do you have cliques and tensions that abound, where there is an atmosphere of unease and distrust? • How well do you know the motivations and aspirations of those individuals who make up the team? • Set up a series of short one to one interviews to review the individual objectives of each team member. • Review the objectives you set at their last appraisal to ensure these are still being met/ on track. • Provide regular feedback on individual performance, or do you subscribe to the view of no news is good news? • Encourage ideas from individuals on how the department can be more effective and listen to their comments.	• Take time to catch people doing things right, emphasise the positives and build up a positive culture within the team, but make it sincere and genuine.
Team Communication – Process & Methods	• Do you have well run and well attended team meetings? • Are the purposes of meetings clearly defined? • Ensure 'chairs' of meetings are sufficiently skilled to run them • Ensure agendas are prepared and sent out beforehand • Look carefully at your room layout • Take feedback on the effectiveness of meetings – interesting and stimulating or boring and dreary? • Are all your team able to use email? • What methods do you have for ensuring vital communications are received by all – particularly night shifts?	• Clear notice boards of outdated material. Ensure that relevant legislative information is clearly on view and in good repair. • Regularly rotate information on notice boards to keep them fresh. • Don't let notice boards be your primary source of communication
Team Communication – Problem solving	• Pin point the common causes of disagreement within the team • How many of these are internally driven or outside the control of the team? • For those internally driven disagreements – what have you done to resolve the root cause of the problem?	• More than likely the problem won't go away – if you need impartial 3rd party intervention, contact Leadership & Organisational Development

	• Prioritise the problems on a sliding scale from minor irritant to major concern
	• Engage the team in problem solving the issue – ask the question – what will be the outcome if we ignore and/ or do nothing to resolve this?
	• Go back to first principles – i.e. is there;
	    ○ Clear purpose for the team and the individuals in it?
	    ○ Clear role clarity
	    ○ The right mix of skills
	    ○ Clear leadership and management of the team?
	• Consider holding an event where the team can address these issues together
	• Take advice where you feel unsure about your own skill levels to do this	

Team Review – Fit for Purpose	• Are your processes and procedures able to stand up to close scrutiny? • Are your team members up to date with the latest professional standards and practices? • Follow the paperwork trail within your department and to internal / external partners, what does it tell you? • Review your latest departmental audits – what actions were identified and what have you done? • Is your technical equipment and expertise fit for purpose? • Have you recently measured your clinical quality? • Have you benchmarked your department against like services elsewhere in the NHS? • Review the latest legislative requirements as it affects your department.	• Set up a professional network with like–minded professionals in your field.
Team review – Service Improvement	• Take feedback from your users as to their perceptions of your service. • Walk the department or map the process that users go through to use your services.	• Visit these website for tips and information regarding service improvement **Successful improvement** **Quality improvement team**

- What bottlenecks, constraints or delays do your users encounter?
- What information do you provide to your users to enable them to understand the service you provide?
- If you were a user of your service how would you describe it?
- If you were a 'customer' and had choices available – would you use your service?
- Have you considered your service stakeholders and their needs?
- Are you up to date with the latest thinking regarding service improvement?
- In these times of change what plans do you have to keep you and your team up to date with changes as and when they occur?
- Do you have 'change' plans in place to help you keep pace and cope with the speed of change?