

## iMatter as part of the Programmes Team

### Our Team

We are part of the Modernisation Directorate in NHS Grampian. As the Programmes Team, our purpose is to identify and deliver planned and responsive support to NHS G and partners to improve quality and performance. We provide a consistent alignment to the shared goals of the organisation and partners; identifying links, making connections and securing opportunities for improvement.

We are a team of 9 and deliver programme and project management, service improvement, planning, change management and facilitation.

*Using iMatter resulted in improvements in respect of the team. It was a very good vehicle to explore a number of areas such as our roles and remits, how we fit in the organisation as well as where our challenges are and where our synergies maybe. iMatter was a good foundation for the discussion to then expand.*

*Our team does already have an open, honest and professional approach to discussions and very much respect each other's views and contributions to team meetings. We are always listened to by our line management and always made to feel valued in our roles within the team. It was good to discuss the action plan as a team to take forward improvements identified.*

**Is there anything that you or your team changed about how you used iMatter between the first year you used it and now?**

*iMatter was used in the same manner in both my past post (1<sup>st</sup> year) and current team (2<sup>nd</sup> year). Both teams are within the Modernisation Directorate and managed similarly.*

*Can't think that we've change anything so far but I think we all agreed that it would be useful to have a record of our personal scores for the discussion. This would help to remind us why we personally responded the way we did. Because we work on so many projects and with so many teams we can easily be influenced by our most recent experience which may in turn affect how we respond when completing the questionnaire.*

*We have used Matter three times and you do have to be grown up about it, you have to consider your responses in the context of where you sit within the organisation. It is easy to respond in the here and now, in the heat of the moment. Need to step back and consider responses, it shouldn't be reactive based on your most recent experiences. Interactions with different groups may be different and you need to reflect on overall experiences.*

*One of the key points raised was taken forward by Christina was in relation to Senior Leadership. Christina feedback on our behalf and changes have been made. iMatter facilitated that change but a pro-active manager followed up the action and made it happen.*

**Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences about using iMatter in your team?**

*It has been a positive one and felt views were listened to. Good leadership from the Modernisation Team which has meant it has felt like an inclusive process.*

*I think we get a lot out of it because of the jobs we do and the type of people we are. By that I mean we are working across the system and we have to actively engage with teams so we see a lot of behaviours and challenges when we are out and about. However, we are a small team so the overall results can be impacted upon by one person but we recognise that and factor that into our discussions.*

*iMatter provides the platform and vehicle to move on but does require someone to see it through. I bought into the process and the fact as an organisation we are doing the best with*

### **iMatter as part of the Programmes Team**

**What were your initial thoughts when you heard your team would be using iMatter?**

*This is my 1<sup>st</sup> year within this team and having previously used iMatter, I was happy to learn it was being used here. Due to beginning in this role at the end of May 2018, my responses were in line with my past role experiences.*

*Good to be involved and taking part.*

*I am a positive person so I approached it positively. Using any form of tool to help us understand communication, organisational response and a sense of feeling valued is beneficial.*

*I have used the iMatter tool in my previous role and found it to be a positive framework for aiding communication within teams and promoting an open and honest approach to discussions which in turn will facilitate improvement.*

**What did your team do when you received your team results?**

*We discussed the results in a group and we were encouraged to air our opinion (either in that group or in a 1:1 with Christina Cameron).*

*We took time in a team meeting to discuss thoroughly.*

*We had an open discussion at our Modernisation Team meeting and we were given heads up at a previous meeting and via email that we would be having the discussion which was helpful.*

*We were encouraged to put forward our opinions on the iMatter team results at our weekly team meeting led by Christina Cameron. The report was shared and discussed as a team in an open setting ensuring everyone's views were listened to and valued.*

**What difference has using iMatter to help your team to discuss your experiences and create an action plan made to your experiences at work?**

*We're a fairly well balanced team with good leadership so we don't have any problems with raising or discussing issues. However, iMatter has been useful for giving a focus on various topics and we have spent time understanding the root cause of results.*

*Due to being a new member of the team, I can't reflect on experience. But following discussion of the action plan at our team meeting I have experienced certain points from the plan being discussed/acknowledged.*

*Actions being identified and an action plan being created has meant points were picked up, felt you were listened.*





what we have to understand and make things better for people is positive.

There is more about iMatter that I like than don't like. Any change I could suggest about iMatter as a tool would not improve it significantly. One of the benefits is that it is easy to complete. The processes are fairly flexible, it can be done in different ways; how you speak to your team, how you come up with your action plan.

The positive use of the iMatter tool is influenced by a professional leader in our team who we have confidence in to take forward any issues identified. The open discussions following the report being shared was very positive.

#### Do you think your team would have had similar discussions without iMatter?

My personal opinion of iMatter is that it's an extremely useful tool to open up conversations that others may find it difficult to initiate or engage in if it was not there.

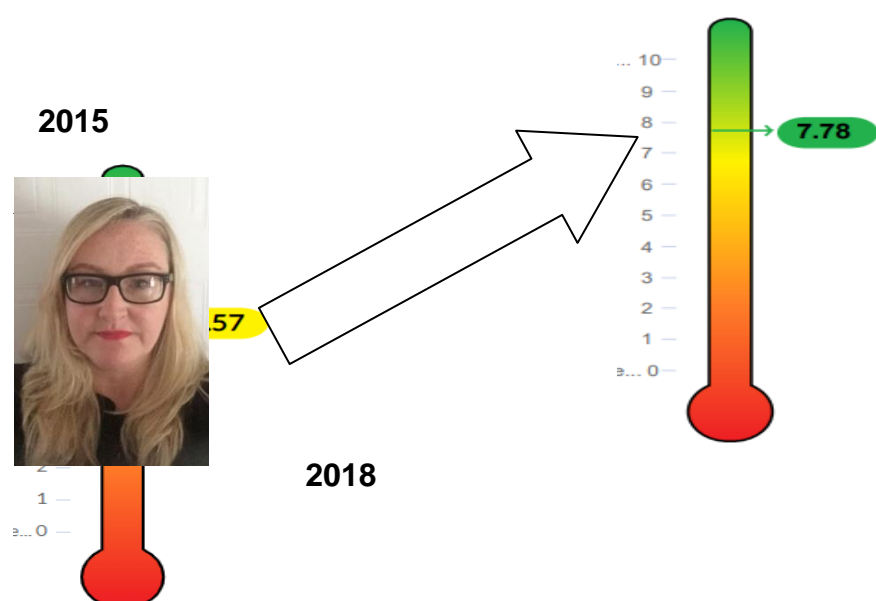
We would certainly have had discussions that were as intense, open and honest but iMatter means our discussion can be more focussed and makes it easy for us to share our perspectives equally. We've also been able to reflect on why we scored the way we did.

Yes, although the structure and questions used in iMatter might be discussed in a different format.

We would have had these discussions, we are an open team but they probably would not have been as structured. Christina is really good at facilitating the discussion and asking the right questions.

I feel the iMatter tool is a good framework for focused discussion but I don't think it would make any difference to our team dynamics or the culture within our team as we already have excellent leadership and feel valued in our roles and if we had any issues to discuss we would discuss either on a one to one basis or openly as a whole team. We also do meet regularly as a team which I feel does contribute to our team dynamics.

#### Overall working in my organisation is.....?



#### iMatter as a Manager

I was a wee bit cynical about iMatter to begin with. It seemed to have cross over with the pre-existing staff survey and staff couldn't connect that to action or change. And here we were asking staff to do two surveys.

My take on it now is that it is a much better replacement, with iMatter you are in charge at a team level - you can do something about it.

For iMatter I take the same approach as I do with individual appraisal, whatever structure works for the team is fine. The big value of iMatter is that it makes us create space for team level discussion that because of day to day pressure might not happen or we would struggle to find the space to talk about.

Because there is a deadline it pushes you to have the conversation.

I was a little apprehensive about the team conversation to begin with as we are not a big team. Despite being quite a small team it is still possible to bring things to the surface with iMatter. I asked my team to reflect on low scores. But as a manager you need to think about how to phrase that question. You need to make sure you phrase the question to the whole team - 'what do we think is leading to a lower score' and give space for the team to answer. People need to have trust that they can say what they need to say, and know if they are going to raise anything that here and now is the time to do so confidently and positively and without repercussion. If you don't phrase it that way no one wants to speak up. People need a sense of safety.

The first year I made it clear there was no bad news it was a safe space. What we discovered that year was that individuals think differently about experience as an individual or organisation. The luxury of having team meetings is that when iMatter comes round again I mention it, I ask the team to remember to think clearly; individual - personal to your whole experience coming to work; Team - team and direct line manager; Organisation - NHS Grampian as a whole big organisation. There is real value in reminding the team what questions are being asked. It ensures nobody says 'I wasn't thinking about that' when looking at the report and the answers are meaningful.

It is important that we don't get too hung up on process and that we value discussion as a team. It is important it is a sensible discussion.

At the organisation section it is easy to say cannot fix the issue as a team but if we can articulate what the problem is then we can articulate what can change.

I identify the meeting when we will discuss iMatter in advance; I have hard copies for the first time just to review. I lead the team through the report highlighting the main points and compare it with last year. I don't expect an in-depth discussion we are just reading it through; 'seeing lots of this or lots of that' it is not an in-depth discussion at that stage. We come back to discussing the report in more detail at another meeting; otherwise we end up trying to understand the score and not what people want to do differently. You need to focus on meaningful, specific and relevant actions/things that the team genuinely want to do. And resist an action where you say 'we would just do better'. It is about genuinely changing how you do things - hardwire them in and that way it is just how we do things from now, it is not extra effort.

If we hadn't done iMatter we wouldn't have a such a strong team identity. When I took over as manager we were not a team in that sense, we were a collection of people who worked on connected projects. If you don't have structure to support team identity it falls away. Part of our team development was having a team name, knowing who we are, what our team objectives are, what types of work we each do.

It can be easy to think that one team, especially a small team, can't influence those big organisational issues that seem bigger than us. A recurring area in our reports was the issue of visible senior leadership in the organisation. We chose to share this and suggested informal invitations to Directors to join our larger team meetings. They now attend for 20 minutes or so and it's a chance to chat and ask questions of senior managers that we might not interact with otherwise and it's been really positive. We made that happen as a result of iMatter.

I also see evidence as a manager that as a stronger, confident team we can share concerns, workload and just communicate better with each other and the rest of the organisation. In practical terms we can draw on support from colleagues to work in areas and with clinical teams that they would not otherwise be exposed to - with benefits to team individuals and to the whole organisation.