**Staying connected across Scotland: The CPD Connect Story -**

**The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Connect Team**

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Connect team was formed just over 5 years ago when NHS Education for Scotland restructured bringing four Deaneries together into a single Scotland Deanery. When our new CPD Manager took up post in 2015 we were still working separately and some of the team had only met once as we all worked in different cities across Scotland.  The new CPD Manager spent time getting to know us and the work we were involved in, and over time helped to guide the team into working more cohesively.  Our iMatter results have been increasingly positive over the years with 2018 being our strongest report yet, therefore, we are delighted to be able to celebrate our success.

We strongly believe we get a high iMatter score because we have a manager who fully supports us, is approachable and values our individual contributions. Our current team comprises 10 administrative staff located in 4 sites - Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness. We are a diverse team with different responsibilities, various working patterns, widely differing backgrounds, experience and personalities. Our manager has taken the time to get to know us and understand our priorities - from a work perspective, but also knowing the goals and challenges we face in our personal lives.

Effective communication is the key to our team’s success. We ‘meet’ every two weeks by video conference keeping us all connected. This gives us the opportunity to hear what everyone has been working on, and to raise any issues we might have or seek advice.  This is a brilliant way for us to keep in touch with one another. The meetings are light hearted and fun but very productive which makes them enjoyable and more like a catch up with friends!  Despite our disparate geographical locations, we can collaborate on work where appropriate and offer assistance to each other where needed. Our catch ups are one of the main reasons we work so well as a team and we look forward to them.

Other communication methods include holding a face-to-face gatherings, usually twice a year, which helps with reviewing our progress and discussing plans for the future. ‘Go-To Meeting’ and ‘Microsoft Teams’ are other tools which help us collaborate on individual projects without the need to travel.

The diverse mix of our team members is also very helpful – we have a range of experiences, backgrounds and ambitions, and everyone is happy to share and learn from each other. Under our manager’s leadership, new ideas are encouraged and our personal-development is stimulated and supported. There is always someone in the team who can offer guidance or assistance – it’s not all down to our manager. We help each other out when required, ensuring a fair distribution of work so that no one is left overloaded or unsupported.

It has been proven that 'Better Staff Experience Supports Better Patient Experience'. While the CPD Connect Team is not frontline, we are acutely aware that our customers are in the frontline every day and we work with this in mind. The iMatter framework has helped us acknowledge and appreciate our team culture and we hope that our experience can be replicated across other teams so that more people can benefit from feeling valued and respected at work.

And as a final note – we have great banter (and perhaps a sprinkling of Unicorn Dust…!)