

**Shropshire and Staffordshire NHS Community of Practice
Leading with Compassion**



Introducing communities of practice (CoP)

Some definitions to help our learning together;

“Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly”

Etienne Wenger, author of cultivating Communities of Practice

“I have been able to solve problems by networking with other members and I’ve been able to look at best practice”

Councillor Vincent Crosby,
Sedgefield Borough Council

“As a chief executive I tend to think of it as a way of expanding my organisation”

Andrea Hill, Chief Executive
Suffolk County Council

What is a community of practice?

The Community of Practice (CoP) concept is nothing new; people have always found others whose experiences and interests are like their own. This collective knowledge sharing is a valuable resource ,particularly when growing new concepts and ideas .

A CoP brings these people together. They can share a common area of interest and a variety of expertise and skills, or have issues or problems to air, share and solve. Good practice and ideas are also shared to enhance the knowledge and expertise of the community.

What's in it for me?

Our Shropshire and Staffordshire Leading with Compassion, community of practice aims to :

- ✓ connect a cohort of leaders across the region to share best practice in leading with compassion
- ✓ solve problems faster
- ✓ stretch knowledge acquisition through collective wisdom
- ✓ avoid duplication of effort
- ✓ help share ideas
- ✓ develop new strategies
- ✓ develop peer and stakeholder relationships
- ✓ manage the effective flow of knowledge
- ✓ help people innovate together promote your work and that of your organisation

How do they work? Ingredients for a successful CoP

While each CoP is unique with a specific focus there are some essential ingredients required to make a CoP work:

Purpose

A CoP needs a clear purpose that is relevant to its members. It should specify exactly what the community is for and what will be gained from being part of it.

Terms of reference will be developed by the group at the first meeting

Facilitators

Every CoP should be led by experienced facilitators. They will work together to ensure that both the communities purpose and the members' needs are being met through a variety of activities and discussions. They will welcome new members and keep the community vibrant and focused.

Activities

Within each CoP there are a variety of activities, tools and techniques employed to aid and enhance conversations and the transfer of knowledge.

