Commissioning Now – East Midlands Programme Overview

"I've started to believe in myself as a commissioner - started to act as a commissioner" (Commissioning Now participant)

Rationale for the Programme

The Commissioning Now programme is a comprehensive and flexible development programme designed to help Commissioners of care understand what excellent commissioning looks like in practice, and to provide practical assistance on how it can be achieved.

The programme focuses on the fast-changing context in which Commissioners of health and social care in the East Midlands operate, including the commissioning challenges raised by local demographic and service organisation issues. It is a development programme that will equip Commissioners with the skills and confidence they need to navigate the complex care system and to operate as successful leaders for change.

Commissioners are working in a landscape that is more volatile and uncertain than ever before. As budgets reduce and people have greater control over their own resources, the role of commissioners is undergoing a fundamental shift. Increasingly, the old financial and contractual levers are weakening. This means that commissioners need to rely on sophisticated influencing and interpersonal skills to achieve strategic and service change.

Today’s commissioner may be working to develop a market of flexible local options. They may be designing new services that bring together health and social care to deliver integrated care. Or they may be working alongside communities to help them provide a supportive and healthy environment for people who need help to live their lives. At times, working with colleagues internally, as well as those in partner organisations, can also present challenges. These are all tasks that demand an inclusive, persuasive leadership style.

Commissioners have a central role to play in driving excellence in care through leadership. This programme is as much about behavioural change as it is about looking at the processes required to commission efficiently and effectively across the health and social care system.

What the Programme covers

The programme is structured around the phases of the commissioning cycle:
At each stage, it enables participants to learn about the latest thinking and notable practice, but then, most importantly, to apply this to their own situation. The Commissioning Now model is based upon four cross-cutting principles for quality commissioning. During the programme, you will consider how these four principles are put into practice:

**Commissioning integrated care and building partnerships:** With so many organisations in care, effective commissioning requires skilful navigation and collaboration to deliver an integrated response that places the person at its heart.

**Leading and influencing:** Effective commissioning should set the agenda for care and have a strong focus on the sector’s future.

**Personalisation and co-production:** Commissioning should encourage active input from people who use services to ensure that the care provided to them is tailored to their needs.

**Understanding and developing the care market:** Commissioners need to understand what is in place, local drivers, the potential for innovation and change, and how to work with providers to achieve better outcomes for people.

While Commissioning Now has its roots in the experience of adult social care commissioning, this programme will have a strong emphasis on commissioning integrated care, including understanding the evidence base, and reviewing notable practice to identify what works. It will also explore the implications of key policy drivers, notably the Five Year Forward View and the Care Act, for the commissioning of care services.
**Programme structure and approach**

Commissioning Now comprises a series of *four expertly facilitated participative workshops* which will take place between April and September 2015; online tools and resources; and a 100 page supporting handbook, packed with onward reading and case study examples.

The focus is very much on action and on taking responsibility for gaining and maintaining momentum for change within your organisation. Participants are given the opportunity to complete tasks and online reading in between sessions, taking real life challenges from your working life and with support from peers, creating plans to tackle them. Commissioning Now uses a participative approach, based on challenge and peer learning, which builds the skills and confidence of all participants as leaders in the transformation of care services.

**The programme is for:**

Commissioners at all levels, for example: senior managers, strategic commissioners, commissioning managers. You may work in a local authority, clinical commissioning group or with individuals purchasing their own care.