



How do we live and breathe our culture?

Within SMSKP we endeavour to treat our colleagues as we do our patients. If we believe that patient's should be at the heart of decisions about their own care, then it also follows that we should encourage leadership in our colleagues too. If we are able to do this then people will have conversations about what matters most to them, talk about vulnerability and difficult learning and be supported to achieve their own personal goals.

One of the ways we accomplish this is through the culture club. The culture club is a staff lead group, who have self-selected to help us connect as a service with an annual conference. Each year all 200 employees of the partnership gather together to attend workshops which are led by staff that focus on sharing learning, best practice and reflection. This year, unfortunately we have been unable to gather as a service, however the culture club is still meeting to discuss how to best support staff, and to plan for an event to take place once the COVID-19 response measures enable public gatherings.

In 2014 we held a series of workshops with all the staff groups around what are our values, what really matters to us as a new partnership, what really matters in terms of the care we deliver, what really matters in terms of how we work together. And from that we established our values and then we thought it would be really good to have as a group, who are the guardians of those values, a non-hierarchical space where we could come together and monitor how are things going, what needs our attention.

Then over time, that became the place where we organized our whole service away day, our whole service kind of celebratory day.

One of the challenges the culture club has faced was that the process of coming up with the values was really important in terms of getting people working together who hadn't normally been so connected. And having those conversations about what really matters.

Today the culture club is driven by what we're hearing from the staff. Underpinning what we do is that we are led by what it is that staff wants to pay attention to. We trust people who step forward to make good decisions. So if someone wants to do something then we trust and support them to do it and believe that the best way to learn about something is to offer it.

The Culture Club gives us a vehicle for supporting leadership at all levels. It allows people who may not use to being in a position of decision making, to make decisions and to go through that process of working out how to go from idea to actually doing it, implementation, doing it.