STP design and implementation – fastest first principles

Introduction

As we move from planning to implementation in the STP, there is a need to clarify the right level at which we want to both design and implement service transformation.

Under the principle of subsidiarity, many implementation decisions should be taken at local CCG/borough level. However, for some STP developments we want to ensure we have a consistency of approach across the whole of North Central London (NCL).

To make this a reality without slowing down progress, within some workstreams the approach adopted for implementation has loosely been categorised as 'fastest first'. This effectively means rather than wait for all partners to be ready until work can begin, those who have the capacity and capability to begin the work, should take this forward.

 Whilst there is a basic agreement that this is a sensible approach to take, in order to avoid delays in implementation, there is a risk of a duplication of effort and loss of coherence within workstreams as different localities (e.g. CCGs) move forward with implementation as different timescales and interpret agreed plans based on local priorities.

Adopting the Fastest First approach cannot result in further fragmentation to the system: this paper sets out an outline to ensuring principles for the 'Fastest First' approach to implementation are agreed and adhered to.

Background

Provider Trusts, who will be working within the newly designed systems and pathways that will be implemented for Primary Care, Urgent and Emergency Care, Planned Care and Mental Health, are conscious of the need for consistency to enable them to support the triple aims of the Five Year Forward View. This is particularly true in terms of development such as simplified discharge and admissions avoidance whereby a single process is needed for all patients, no matter where they live in North London.

An initial discussion took place at the North London provider Strategy Directors' meeting on 07 April 2017 and it was agreed to attempt formulate and make explicit the underlying the principles and associated duties that support 'Fastest First' and for these to be endorsed and agreed across the STP.

Principles for adoption/agreement/discussion

These principles have been developed with the aim of ensuring that workstreams within the STP maintain cohesion, avoid duplication, drive forward efficient implementation of plans to support the realisation of a truly joined-up and effective system in health and care for North London.

Where delivery plans within an STP workstream are not rolled-out across all organisations within the footprints, the following principles are to be adhered to:

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1. *Maintained workstream cohesion.* A great deal of time and effort has been dedicated to the workstream planning phase. Where we have all agreed that we need to do something we cannot risk that it is carried out by only some or we will create further inequality for our population.
2. *Duplication of effort is avoided.* This does not mean that local tailoring of plans cannot take place. Where it is sensible and practical, local tailoring of agreed direction can and should take place but the inefficiencies of time and effort that result from doing the same thing twice do not support the spirit and vision of the STP.
3. *Efficient implementation of plans.* Where work can begin in one part of the system, it should. Sustainability and transformation cannot wait until all parts of the system are in alignment.

The responsibilities associated with the above principles differ depending on what stage implementation takes place. Nevertheless, both sets of responsibilities are complementary and support the above principles.

'Early adopters' or those who are ready first to implement STP delivery plans have a responsibility to:

a) Agree what can be planned/designed/implemented together and to take forward this agreed work. This will support both workstream cohesion and avoid duplication of effort.
b) Keep their partnership colleagues informed about service design and ensure opportunities to participate (to ensure the adopted approach to be rolled out at a later date will work for all). This will support workstream cohesion.
c) Share relevant learning about what works and what doesn't. This will help to avoid duplication of effort and support efficient implementation by later adopters.
d) Ensure there is wide engagement with relevant stakeholders, particularly in terms of co-design. This will avoid duplication of effort and ensure consistent messaging.

Those who are not yet ready to begin implementation in the first phase have a responsibility to:

a) Agree what can be planned/designed/implemented together and agree to accept and implement the agreed work as soon as possible. This will support both workstream cohesion and avoid duplication of effort.
b) Maintain active engagement with relevant workstream's Board and Steering group and to actively contribute to important design decisions that are being carried out on a 'once only' basis. This will avoid duplication of effort and support efficient implementation by later adopters.
c) Feed information (i.e. shared learning) and decisions back to their 'home' organisations to ensure that STP-wide work also joins up with local work. This will support workstream cohesion.
d) Participate in relevant stakeholder engagement activities such as co-design. This will help to avoid duplication of effort and ensure consistent messaging.

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