

Transforming the use of ICS in Croydon Children's Services

The story

This is a story of how the use of an electronic recording system for Children's Social Care Services – ICS- in Croydon increased by a remarkable **500%** in 6 months. Not only was the quality of data enhanced, but many current and new users also recognised the value and efficiencies their system generated for everyone: e.g. themselves, managers, and external auditors. A computer system that a majority of people had formerly avoided, became one which generated its own energy and efficiencies.

The Impact

In April 10 the council wide staff magazine published a compelling article, illustrated with cheerful photographs of a staff event, describing the creative work that was taking place. This reached people in all services across the whole of the council organisation.

In May 2010 the Technical Architect & Security Officer ICT for Service Transformation and Support Services wrote an email which said:

"Dear All, I thought you would like to know that I get to see the level of activity on ICS when I reset the load balancer at the start of each day. The trend in usage has been upward from an average of 500 hits per server at the end of 2009 rising through to a peak yesterday of over 3000 hits per server. What this suggests is that your efforts are paying dividends and staff are making more use of ICS."

The way we enabled this to happen

We began by thinking about the great outcomes that we wanted to see happen. Using this focused understanding we arranged a series of events for staff. We asked those that attended to think beforehand about the following questions:

- ✚ *What are your highest hopes for the staff event on ICS?*
- ✚ *When we have been nominated for an award for achieving sustained improvement through our implementation of ICS, what will your contributions and pay off's have been?*

At the events we asked people to tell their own stories about:

'A time when using ICS has really paid off for you/others/this council. This may have been a time when you had a real 'AHA!' moment of understanding about the benefits, or an occasion when ICS saved you time, money or eased the process of allocation, or performance monitoring.'

And then we asked:

- ◆ What other forms of 'e' technology do you enjoy using the most?
- ◆ Of all your managements skills, which one do you value the most?
- ◆ From your experience of skilled management generally, what do you admire the most?
- ◆ In the immediate future, what do you want ICS to be able to do for you most?

And afterwards, to inform the content and focus for ongoing staff training, we used the answers to these and other questions like:

- What are the 3 things that you now understand differently and better about managers' roles in using and implementing ICS?
- What are the 3 things that you **know** you **will** now do alone?
- What are the things you **know** you **will** now do with others?
- What else do you require from others to assist on your journey towards being a committed manager acting to change?

Everyone was also invited to become more directly involved in ongoing ICS system design and updating.

"People are the strength of the organization. Their levels of energy and interest determine capacity and capability. People design and hold strengths available to enhance the future through strategic conversations." Jane Galloway-Seiling & Jackie Stavros

Les & Nick Moore May 2010