



Spotlight on...

Director of Delivery, North Region,
Cheshire and Merseyside

Andrew Crawshaw

How would you describe your role?

As Director of Assurance Delivery for NHS England in Cheshire and Merseyside I work in a small but dedicated team committed to assuring health services are delivered and sustained at the highest quality. Throughout my NHS career I have been fortunate to have understanding managers and dedicated teams of clinicians and managers who are committed to delivering the best health care possible.

What are the key aspects of your current work?

My team and I are responsible for leading the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) assurance process across Cheshire and Merseyside. This involves reviewing current performance against all NHS Constitutional standards for patients and supporting the 12 CCGs to ensure their development is on track.

We also support and assure CCGs' future strategic and operational plans which must be aligned to the NHS commissioning strategy for England.

Another important task is resilience planning, ensuring that robust measures are in place across our patch to deliver appropriate levels of performance over winter. I also lead on NHS Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response in the event of major incidents. My team and I must ensure an effective emergency planning and resilience system is in place that can respond to any threat to operations.

As lead Director for engagement with the Wirral and Warrington health economies I represent the Director of Commissioning Operations team at all strategic level discussions and decisions including all Health and Wellbeing Boards and Overview and Scrutiny meetings.





How did you make the change into leadership?

I qualified in Wales as a Podiatrist and progressed through various senior grades until I was identified by my Chief Executive as a potential management trainee. I was fortunate to be selected for the Welsh General Management Training Scheme 'Widening Horizons' which enabled me to work in different parts of the Welsh NHS and the Welsh Office. I also undertook an MBA and was accepted onto the Kings Fund Chief Executive development programme.

Which skills were transferrable from your professional roles to your current post?

The ability to assess the clinical value of proposals in the broadest terms and to ask the relevant clinical questions from a patient's perspective. As AHPs we may not know the specific clinical details of a procedure but as clinicians in our own right we are able to assess the impact of procedures on a patient's wellbeing. The ability to engage with patients and understand more subtle messages that may or may not be expressed are extremely useful skills in management.

What development have you undertaken to support your leadership journey?

Development is a personal issue and part of getting it right is to understand how you learn best and absorb information. For me this has been a combination of learning with others, having a trusted mentor and learning on the job which sometimes means making mistakes. Often the greatest learning and development can come through experience not of what has gone well but what has proved challenging and difficult. I am still learning to this day and applying my current knowledge to new situations.

What lessons have you drawn from moving into a wider leadership role?

As an AHP I was able to make a difference and help one patient at a time over a 20 minute treatment slot. I moved to a role where I feel I am able to make a difference to more patients over a wider geographical area and over a sustained period. My drive and commitment to supporting the delivery of high quality services to patients has not diminished. In management the process of data collection may be similar but is on a system wide scale and although the outcome may not be a specific course of action, it is a best fit given the resources, time and abilities of the system within which you are working.

Do you have any tips for AHPs seeking to develop their own leadership skills?

- **Get a good mentor.** It is not always easy managing in the NHS and the pressures can be unrelenting. The ability to talk to someone confidentially is vital.
- **Don't be afraid to ask.** People generally are quite pleased to help.
- **Take the first step.** What's the worst that can happen? A discussion with your manager to ask for a secondment is only a decision, one that is not necessarily a decision for life (especially if you keep up your registration and Performance and Development Review)... but it could be.

