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LPCs in the Spotlight: Four LPCs experiences of using LPC self-evaluation

The LPC self-evaluation is an invaluable framework for LPC management providing a framework for LPCs to monitor the committee's performance against a range of criteria in areas such as governance, strategic planning, management, contract development and relationships. The latest version of the self-evaluation is hosted on PharmOutcomes where for each criterion there is a rating level depending on the LPCs performance- Amber: Potential Concerns; Green Level: Good; Purple Level: Exemplary.

The evaluation result enables the LPCs to see what good looks like and identify any areas for improvement; and we encourage LPCs to publish their assessment on the LPC website for their contractors to see too.

Here are the experiences of four LPCs using the self-evaluation tool:

Ashton, Leigh and Wigan LPC

Some of the criteria, particularly for the exemplary level, can be challenging but Ashton, Leigh and Wigan LPC has achieved all criteria at good or exemplary demonstrating that they are an LPC in good order and performing well for their contractors. This is an LPC that has been using the current self-evaluation and earlier versions for some time. At the start the LPC used the assessment to identify areas for improvement and has since been carefully and methodically making changes, reviewing progress every couple of months. Chief Officer Bruce Prentice commented that the assessment is easy to do and the PSNC website is a good source of information and resources for LPCs to remedy any shortcomings.

The LPCs approach to completing the self-evaluation was to survey all members asking them to score each criterion. All members were required to respond and the mean score determined the rating. Bruce pointed out that it was important to recognise that where the rating is not a good as it should be this is not seen as a criticism but an opportunity to be better.

The self-assessment gave the LPC confidence said Bruce, a good feeling that we are doing things right and that we are an organisation that is well run and well managed. Another benefit was that completing and monitoring the assessment gave LPC members a better understanding of their role and develops team working.

Avon LPC

Avon LPC completed the initial evaluation at an LPC meeting using the blank form that is available on the PSNC website. Several small groups of members each looked at different part of the framework, considering the evidence to support the rating for a particular criteria and the action needed to reach the next level. Chief Officer Richard Brown did not take part in the decisions on the assessment but was on hand to provide

information if needed. Once the LPC agreed the first assessment was a true reflection of the committee's performance the results were inputted onto PharmOutcomes.

LPC members review the assessment on a quarterly basis – it keeps everyone on their toes, said Richard and makes sure we are doing our best for contractors.

Benefits: for Avon LPC they like the framework because it is very specific so for nebulous areas such as governance it points out the detail of what they need to do; chunking down the work of the LPC in the framework makes it easy to manage and review; it has comment boxes for action to be taken or why a particular element has not progressed; it gives the LPC a good feeling that it is in good shape and members are in control; it provides transparency to contractors and demonstrates good governance and enables the LPC to compare its performance against other (anonymised) LPCs.

Doing the first evaluation is just a case of biting the bullet says Richard – after that it is maintenance on a quarterly basis, but the LPC feels that they have a responsibility to our contractors to do the assessment and to let them see the results on our website. We are accountable to contractors and the LPC self-evaluation is a great way to demonstrate that accountability Richard concludes.

Halton, St Helens and Knowsley LPC

The assessment was so easy to do and is really useful said CO Bertha Brown adding that different groups of LPC members looked at the evaluation initially and there was a reassuring consistency in the way all the groups completed the assessment.

Halton St. Helens & Knowsley LPC feel the assessment is a valuable management tool and they make it a regular item on the LPC agenda to prompt their monitoring. Working with the evaluation, Bertha said, helps us make small steps to continually improve and it's also a way of making sure that things don't slip backwards too. In future it may be necessary to add in more criteria to cover more aspects of the LPC role in an ever increasing and demanding healthcare landscape, which will make it even more challenging!

Along with other LPCs, Halton St. Helens & Knowsley LPC has found that completing and managing the self-evaluation provides reassurance and satisfaction that the LPC is well run, and a good way to demonstrate their good order to contractors.

Cumbria LPC

At an LPC meeting all Cumbria LPC members collectively went through the self-assessment line by line and agreed the status of each and the LPC was delighted to find, like Ashton Leigh and Wigan LPC and Halton St. Helens & Knowsley LPC, they were at the good or exemplary level on all the criteria. The LPC also scrutinised the evidence for each criteria to make sure the status was an accurate reflection.

LPC members find the assessment a helpful way to focus minds on what they ought to do, said LPC Chief Officer Jeff Forster adding that previously there was not enough critical examination of LPC operations and the self-evaluation remedied that.

As for tips for other LPCs who have not yet started, Jeff said it can look daunting but once the LPC gets started it is very straight forward and not as difficult as it may look. It gives a great framework for the LPC to operate and keeps the LPC in good order; it

encourages discussion amongst LPC members and gets their involvement on how the LPC can improve; and last but not least, the LPC self-evaluation generates a strong desire to be the best and pride in achieving it.

For information about the LPCs in the Spotlight series contact:

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