

Autumn 2014



VERITA



NEWS Issue 23

IMPROVEMENT THROUGH INVESTIGATION

Ed's Welcome

As we move into the last quarter of 2014 I am delighted by the level of interest we've received in our organisational resilience tool (ORA). ORA provides a standardised method for assessing clinical services and encourages conversation amongst executives, clinicians and front-line staff.

We will be having meetings with senior figures from the CQC and Monitor as well as regional leads of NHS England and representatives from a number of trusts across the country. It is pleasing to see that, already, ORA's value is being recognised.

This November we will be attending two high-profile conferences. I will be speaking at the Datix International Patient Safety Conference in London and we will be sending delegates to the Foundation Trust Network Annual Conference and Exhibition in Liverpool. Members of our team will be on hand and available to discuss the full range of our work.

We are also sponsoring the patient safety category at the HSJ Awards 2014. Good luck to all those shortlisted for the award.

With best wishes

Ed Marsden
Managing partner

Resilience tool ready for roll out

Verita's new, proactive patient safety initiative – Organisational Resilience Assessment (ORA) - has been successfully piloted and is ready to be deployed in trusts.

Verita partner Peter Killwick explains: "ORA is based on 'real-world' knowledge and insight gained from our unrivalled database of completed investigations coupled with peer-reviewed science around resilience synthesised by Imperial College academics. This has resulted in the development of an easy-to-use assessment tool that uses a team-based approach to identify factors that strengthen or diminish resilience."

The results provide a resilience profile, identifying both areas of strength and for improvement. It also enables clinical services to examine differences in views between staff groups or teams, enabling efforts towards building consensus, understanding and, ultimately, a safer environment for patients.

ORA is particularly helpful for organisations that have undergone recent reconfigurations, leadership changes or are applying for foundation trust status. It is also useful for organisations that have experienced a severe incident, fear that safety is not as good as it should be, or that something just does not 'feel right' but are not sure why.

If you would like to know more about ORA, please contact Peter Killwick for a more detailed discussion or to arrange a demonstration. Email peterkillwick@verita.net or telephone 020 7494 5670.

CCG commissions clinical review

A Verita team led by Professor Mike Pringle has concluded that there were no significant failings in the care provided by GPs to three children who died. Professor Pringle was joined by Sandra Burns, a nurse expert in asthma and primary care services, as well as Verita director Tariq Hussain.

The independent clinical review of GP services was commissioned by a CCG to assess whether the deaths – two related to asthma and one to intestinal obstruction – were avoidable.

The team reviewed a range of documentation and conducted interviews at the GP surgeries involved and with senior CCG staff.

They made a number of recommendations, particularly in relation to stressing the importance of regular and thorough reviews for chronic diseases.

Being open with families

Speaking at the Listening, sharing and learning from mental health care conference, Verita's Chris Brougham spoke about the importance of being open with families affected by mental health homicide.

"Many trusts are unsure about what to say to families of the victims and perpetrators of mental health homicides. Rather than say the wrong thing they say very little or worse nothing at all," explains Chris.

Chris emphasised the importance of ensuring that those affected by a homicide are listened to, involved and supported and gave practical advice on the best way to do so based on Verita's experience of conducting hundreds of mental health investigations.

Chris also advised the delegates on adjusting to the introduction of statutory duty of candour, and on guidance issued by the NHS Litigation Authority about saying sorry to patients, their families and carers.

Karen Conway, the patient safety lead mental health for NHS England North, advised Verita that the delegates appreciated Chris's candour and practical approach.

The conference was hosted by NHS England North and took place in September.

New associates

Verita is pleased to welcome three new associates to its team: Professor Alexis Jay, Mike Gammage and Des Hudson.

Alexis authored the recently published report on the Rotherham sexual exploitation scandal. She has worked at senior level in local and central government for over 20 years. She has been a director of social services and a chief inspector of social work in Scotland.

Mike brings more than 25 years of experience in business transformation and performance improvement consulting. He has founded his own process and operational excellence consultancy.

Finally Des has held positions as the chief executive of The Law Society as well as the chair of the Taxation Disciplinary Board. He brings a lawyer's forensic skills to the analysis of management problems and understands the problems faced by

organisations with complex governance structures.

Verita sponsorship

Verita is sponsoring a new exhibition at The Foundling Museum on the life and times of Dr Mead (1673–1754), the greatest physician of his time whose patients included George II, Sir Isaac Newton and Antoine Watteau.

The exhibition charts the life of Dr Mead who dedicated considerable time and energy to the Foundling Hospital and was an important patron of the arts, amassing a renowned collection of books, paintings and antiquities. The exhibition, *The Generous Georgian: Dr Richard Mead*, runs until 4 January 2015. More details on the museum and the exhibition can be found on www.foundlingmuseum.org.uk.

Verita is also proud to sponsor the patient safety category at this year's HSJ Awards. The winner will be announced on 19 November. See www.hsjawards.co.uk

New Verita projects

Verita has won major new assignments across England for both health sector and non-health clients in the last few months.

The most high-profile work is the second phase of the investigation into the death of 18 year-old Connor Sparrowhawk while under the care of Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust. While the initial work concentrated on establishing the facts around events immediately before Connor's drowning in a bath, we will now take a more system-wide view of the care provided to people with learning difficulties in Oxfordshire. Ultimately, the project will use Oxfordshire as a microcosm from which to identify weaknesses in the learning disability care pathway at a regional and national level.

Our growing list of clients in the north of England, served from our Leeds office, will be bolstered by two projects in Liverpool. The first of these is an investigation into commissioning of services and care pathways for patients with brain acquired injuries for a local CCG. The second is another trust that has asked us to complete our rapid, insightful diagnostic into complaint handling and performance.

Finally, after successfully re-tendering for the contract, we have started work on complaints arising from the last round of application for Arts Council England's national portfolio programme.

Verita team update

Verita is pleased to welcome Kieran Seale, Susan Adetiloye and Laura Conlon.

Legally-qualified Kieran joined us as a senior consultant in August 2014. Previously he worked for a collaboration of five CCGs in north west London. He was involved in the establishment of the CCGs and advised on areas including governance, risk management and conflict of interest. He has also held positions as a governance and risk manager for Hammersmith and Fulham PCT and the head of corporate affairs for a cluster of PCTs.

Susan Adetiloye joined Verita's intern programme in August having achieved a first-class honours degree in mathematics from the University of Essex.

Experienced administrator Laura Conlon joined in September and will work with Chloe Taylor and Scott Robertson to ensure all projects run smoothly and are delivered on time.

Two existing members of the team have been promoted. Former senior consultant Amber Sargent is now assistant director and joins the Verita management team. Commenting on her achievement, Verita's managing partner Ed Marsden says: "Amber's promotion is well deserved after five years of dedication and commitment to developing our business and providing high-quality work to our clients."

Charlie de Montfort, who joined nine months ago as an intern, has secured a permanent position as an analyst. Charlie says: "I'm looking forward to become involved in a wide range of projects." Charlie will be running the Luton Half Marathon at the end of October in aid of the Meningitis Research Foundation.

Sabbaticals

Two long-standing members of the Verita team have been granted sabbaticals. Consultant Jess Martin is heading to south and central America in November. When she returns in six months, senior consultant Kathryn Hyde-Bales sets off to north America.

Although they will be missed, Verita is pleased to be able to offer Jess and Kathryn the chance to explore exciting opportunities outside of work.

Contacting us For more information about Verita and any of the services we provide please contact Scott Robertson on 020 7494 5670 or email scottrobertson@verita.net
www.verita.net