



Royal College of
General Practitioners

In partnership with
NHS
Greater Manchester
Primary Care Provider Board

GP

Excellence

REPORT

2021



GP EXCELLENCE THE START OF A JOURNEY

The Greater Manchester Health and Social Care (GMHSC) Partnership, representing the devolved GMHSC system, and the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) came together to develop a support programme for practices struggling to meet the requirements of Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection. From this initial dialogue, in June 2017, the ambitious GP Excellence programme was born.

The aim was to bring about a cultural change in primary care. A culture of continuous improvement where, working together, well performing practices are enabled to support those performing less well and where other experts are invited to share their experiences. This required strategic leadership as well as the flexibility to encourage innovation to flourish and best practice to result.

This project – the first of its kind – created a strategic alliance between the RCGP, GMHSC and its 434 practices. It also aligned with the RCGP’s wish to evolve its support for practices in special measures and build a more proactive and sustainable approach to Quality Improvement (QI).

The initial inspiration for GP Excellence was presented to the RCGP by Dr Tracey Vell, a practising GP and the Greater Manchester Primary Care Lead, who is still involved in guiding the programme today. The partnership agreement was signed on 30 June 2017, by Professor Martin Marshall on behalf of the RCGP and Lord Peter Smith on behalf of Greater Manchester.

The GP Excellence Programme has become a key delivery function for Greater Manchester’s commitment to more sustainable and resilient primary care, and the relationship with the RCGP has flourished to become a strong collaborative partnership.

“Strategic leadership as well as the flexibility to encourage innovation to flourish and best practice to result.”



GP EXCELLENCE THE ROADMAP TO QI

GP Excellence is based on a foundation of QI methodologies to sustain change while developing capabilities within primary care practices.

The GMHSC and RCGP developed a roadmap specifically based on the needs of practices and the population of Greater Manchester which focuses on four progressing areas: Rescue, Resilience, Improvement and Excellence. This framework proactively responds to the needs identified in a primary care locality and hopes to address any potential problems before they become severe.



RESCUE

A way for practices in “crisis” to receive automatic support in the form of direct consultation with a team of RCGP advisers.

This applies to all practices who are placed into “Special Measures”, those which are in serious need of help or are at risk of closure. Practices who require this level of support are usually referred to the programme through their CCG or as a result of their CQC inspection.



RESILIENCE

A self-referral pathway for practices to identify areas they need to reinforce and to access appropriate support ranging from future sustainability more transformational change.

This stage of the roadmap involves direct contact with the GP Excellence Programme staff who carry out a needs assessment for the practice or individuals in question and discusses their options in terms of available development or coaching support.



IMPROVEMENT

A path to improvement for practice staff, beyond just building resilience and focuses on deeper learning and skills development.

A programme of training and development was established including annual Practice Manager Conferences, Workshops, and Leadership and Management Programmes. Practice team-building sessions and targeted individual and group training programmes also form part of this step.



EXCELLENCE

Recognising practices which are going the extra mile to become an example of best practice in primary care.

The programme supported a podcast series hosted on the GP Excellence website facilitated by two GM GPs and assisted by GM specialist clinicians. There were also bursaries provided for clinical and non-clinical staff participating in an MSc in Integrated Community Healthcare & Leadership.

The roadmap has continued to evolve since it was first developed.

For example, the introduction of Primary Care Networks has brought a fundamental change to how practices work together, and GP Excellence has adapted to that change by providing support to Clinical Directors as well as PCN managers. Greater Manchester are also using the programme as a template to develop support programmes for community pharmacy, ophthalmology and dental.



BRINGING KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE TOGETHER

From the outset, GP Excellence has been a collaborative programme drawing on GMHSC's knowledge of the local primary care landscape and the RCGP's expertise in quality improvement and innovation. This partnership means that the right interventions have been designed for the right audience and delivered at the right time.

Clinical and managerial leaders supported by experienced programme management form the Delivery team. To date they have amassed a great deal of experience in working with practices, developing networks and honing key stakeholder relationships including with the CQC, Health Education England, North West Leadership Academy and the GM Training Hub.

From August 2020, the leadership and day-to-day management of the Programme sits with the Greater Manchester GP Board which is within the governance of the Greater Manchester Primary Care Provider Board.

In addition to supporting primary care practices, the GP Excellence team has driven the strategic vision and practical output of the programme, including building a digital infrastructure of a bespoke website, Programme branding and social media presence.

The dedicated GP Excellence website provides:

- Information and regular updates for Greater Manchester primary care providers
- A hub for information about the Programme
- Links to quality improvement and research resources
- Information GPs and staff can use to implement change in their practices
- A calendar of upcoming events run by the Programme

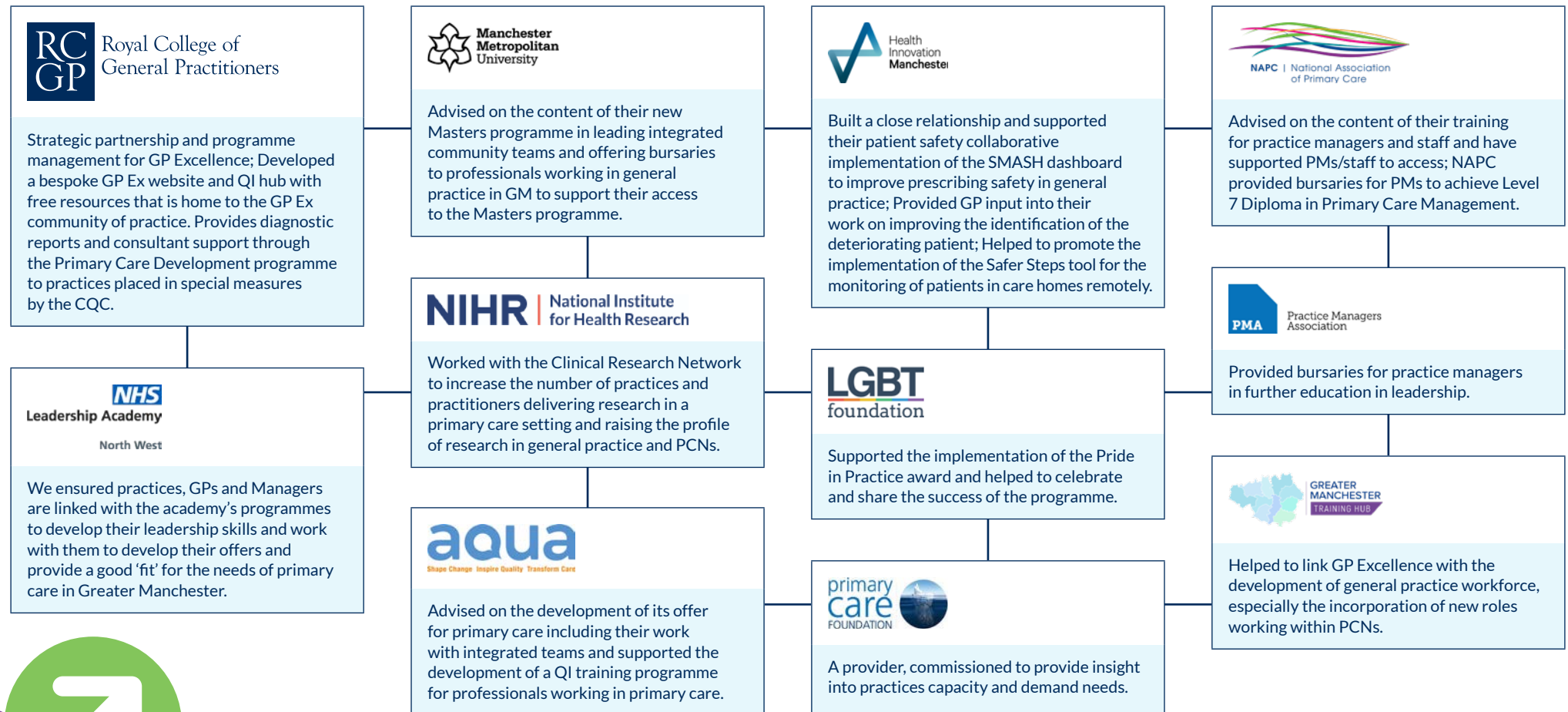
<https://gpexcellencegm.org.uk/>



BUILDING CAPACITY WITHIN GP EXCELLENCE AND WITH PARTNERS

Making best use of the expertise and skills of the team to support practices and build the relationships with primary care providers that are at the heart of the Programme has underpinned GP Excellence activity.

These relationships with local and national support providers for primary care have been key to the success of the Programme in delivering real and sustainable change across Greater Manchester.



GP EXCELLENCE COLLABORATION HIGHLIGHTS

Beyond working relationships, the GP Excellence Programme has been about building ties within the primary care community in Greater Manchester.

Working with CCGs, practices, LMCs and PCNs over the past three years has meant that GP Excellence has become a hub for those working in primary care to turn to whenever they need to know where they can get the support they, or one of their colleagues need, or simply to chat about a question they might have.

These lasting ties are evidence of the success of GP Excellence.



1. RCGP support for special measures practices

To date, the RCGP has supported 24 practices which were placed in to special measures after receiving a rating of 'Inadequate by the CQC. CCGs have used this service to help practices in the greatest need and it has been a great success, with all the practices supported by the RCGP's advisors improving their rating upon re-inspection.

This is a peer-to-peer service which sends a team of advisers drawn from both clinical and practice management backgrounds to provide hands-on support directly to the practice. The approach is methodical and targeted, focusing on the areas of greatest need first and providing a plan for maintaining and continuing improvements.

"We have used the GP Excellence Programme in several different ways. [Treatment Room 2](#)

The support provided to practices placed in special measures by CQC has been excellent and with its practical, experience-based advice and support to practices, it has provided an invaluable additional resource to moving out of special measures.

We also encouraged practices to self-refer, which has produced tailored support to practices and a CCG wide customer service session for frontline practice staff. Well attended by practice staff and well received, it was designed to provide them with additional tools of resilience and highlight their importance within primary care as the first point of contact for patients wanting to speak with a GP. Well designed and well-tailored it fit the brief exactly."

- CCG FEEDBACK

"Our Away Day with the Resilience Team, funded by GPEx, was brilliant. We always think we know what the problems are and although we have been aware, I think seeing our "road map" and problems highlighted has been very beneficial, we are already looking at how to solve the issues and I am really positive".

- CCG FEEDBACK





2. Practice Manager Conferences

The GP Excellence Team have facilitated two Greater Manchester wide conferences aimed at Practice Managers and those staff aspiring to further their careers in general practice.

Focussed on Resilience and Wellbeing from both a personal and team perspective, the conferences featured keynote presentations from specialist motivational speakers including 'SUMO' and Charlotte Edwards (England Women's Cricket Captain).

Each conference attracted almost 200 participants and offered Practice Managers working across the ten CCG localities an opportunity to network with colleagues outside of their own area and share problems/good practice.



3. NAPC Post Graduate Diploma

In collaboration with NAPC the GP Excellence Programme has been able to offer the opportunity to attain a Level 7 Diploma in Primary Care Development.

This is a masters level programme that enables learners to develop their skills, knowledge and ability to manage primary care at scale. A total of 50 places have been made available to Practice Managers and PCN Business Managers with new cohort of candidates starting in October 2020 and February 2021.

The course modules, all focussed on Primary Care, cover:

- Healthcare business and finance
- NHS policy, law and governance
- Personal effectiveness and leadership



"Focus on primary care leaders/managers indicates a growing understanding of practice management."

- PM CONFERENCE ATTENDEE



"Superb event, best PM event I have been to in 10 years as a PM".

- PM CONFERENCE ATTENDEE



"Inspirational - not the normal run of the mill PM's conference."

- PM CONFERENCE ATTENDEE





4. Podcasts

Developed by two Greater Manchester GPs who interview specialists from different subject areas the podcasts aim to improve the confidence and knowledge of local primary care clinicians.

In order to support GPs with easily translatable information during the pandemic a series of COVID19 specific podcasts were recorded covering topics such as PPE and shielded patients.

By October 2020 the podcast reached 100,000 downloads.

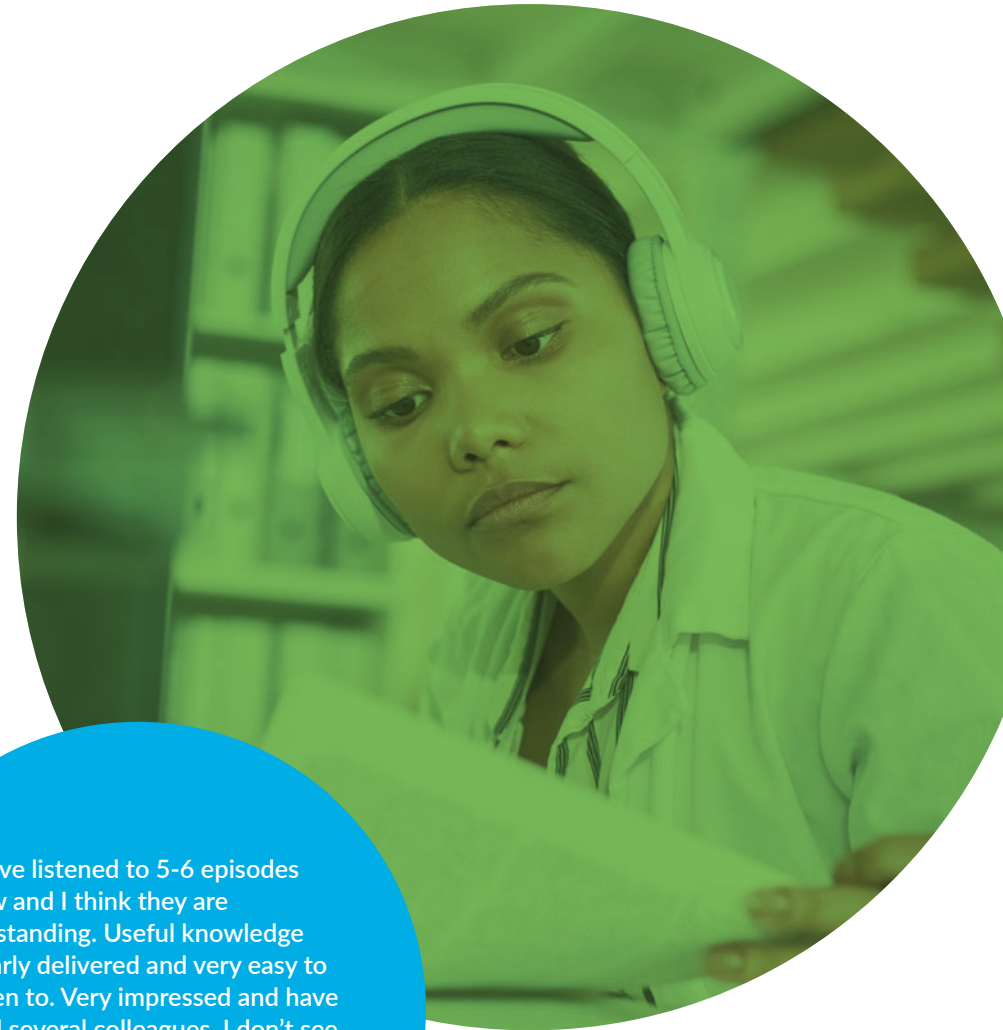


5. Practice Managers Association (PMA)

The lack of opportunities for non-clinical practice staff to attend training that offered any formal qualification became apparent quite early into the Programme.

Acknowledging the capacity issues for some general practices when releasing staff for training, the team commissioned a series of e-learning packages from PMA which could be done at timescales to suit both the individual and the practice.

To attract candidates working at all levels the courses ranged from ILM 2 through to ILM 5, all are recognised as formal Diplomas through The Institute of Leadership and Management. To date across Greater Manchester there are 116 practice staff that have already attained or are studying for the diplomas.



“I have listened to 5-6 episodes now and I think they are outstanding. Useful knowledge clearly delivered and very easy to listen to. Very impressed and have told several colleagues. I don't see any room for improvement – just keep up the good work.”

– PODCAST LISTENER





THE GP EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME – WHERE NEXT?

GP Excellence is a ground-breaking initiative applying a Quality Improvement approach to primary care on a large scale. The Programme has been very well received and has achieved great results, not only in developing resilience in the primary care services in Greater Manchester, but in catalysing the growth of resilience throughout the culture of general practice.

GP Excellence has driven this cultural change by providing support and resources, creating a community of practice that general practice and PCNs can turn to when they need help or just ask a question. It provides a source of inspiration and practices have reported that it helps them to feel part of a wider peer support network, something that is especially important during difficult times.

As GP Excellence moves into its next phase, the focus continues to be on offering consistent, high-quality and multi-faceted support across the Greater Manchester area.

PCNs particularly will have significant challenges as they emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic and establish what will be business as usual. GP Excellence can help:

- Deliver day-to-day resilience for general practice and PCNs
- Ensure readiness to work within the changing environment, be that digital delivery of healthcare or leading wider teams through change
- Support the wider primary care team to integrate successfully into the evolving system of the NHS and social care as set out in the Long-Term Plan and the next phase of ICS development
- Be a key delivery arm of the PCN Development Programme supporting clinical directors, PCN managers and nurses.
- Develop the website as the central hub for the PCN Development Programme in Greater Manchester.

There is also the potential to work beyond general practice and PCNs alongside pharmacy, dental and optometry to develop an overarching excellence model for the whole of primary care. This will be a key offer in the Provider Collaboration model in GM and has already started in recent work with pharmacy colleagues.

The ambition for the GP Excellence Programme is to make the most of the successes and learning gathered by the partnership of GMHSC and RCGP to provide a template for improvement for ICSs across England.

We are collectively committed to sharing and expanding this model of 'Excellence' which has worked so well in Greater Manchester to other areas of the country, and seek to:

- Continue to build the culture of resilience
- Further develop the community of practice
- Support teams through the changing environment of primary care following the pandemic and the introduction of the new roles
- Support PCNs to maturity
- Integrate learning beyond primary care in the Provider Collaboration Model
- Spread the good work in GM to other ICSs under the banner of GP Excellence
- Consider how to spread good practice and engagement with the emerging ICS network across England

FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about GP Excellence please contact:

Naren Duffy
gpexcellence@rcgp.org.uk
07918 991 930

Janet Castrogiovanni
Janet.Castrogiovanni@nhs.net
07956 497 221

