

One theme of this year's Leaders in Healthcare conference, which stood out to me, was embedding a culture of Quality Improvement at all levels in healthcare organisations. This theme was introduced in the opening keynote, by Mark Britnell, Chairman of KPMG's Health Practice globally. Drawn from his breadth of experience, having worked for KPMG improving healthcare systems in over 60 countries, Mark gave six rules for healthcare management and leadership development, among them

- Reach every rung on the ladder: quality improvement and leadership in the health service is too important to be left solely to people with Quality Improvement in their job title. It needs to be a part of every job description.
- For low cost, look inwards: the most valuable solutions can often be found in the staff who have experience of the problem.
- Ground design in reality: large scale solutions to the problems facing our health service need to be adaptable to work across the range of settings found in our hospitals and primary care.

A culture of quality improvement needs to be developed in every part of the HSE, from frontline clinical and non-clinical staff to executive level. One small step toward this would be to include a session on quality improvement in each new staff member's induction- not just doctors, but all clinical and non-clinical staff.

The introduction of Lead NCHDs and the Lead NCHD Awards across the health service are positive steps in empowering another group within the health service to become change leaders. This should be furthered by providing funding for quality improvement initiatives on condition that information on their design, implementation and results is collected so that successful projects can be replicated or adapted by others.

Thirdly, connecting people with an interest, experience or expertise in quality improvement, as the Q Initiative is doing in the UK, would help to facilitate collaboration across hospitals and between different groups of workers.

Empowering more of the HSE's workforce to implement quality improvement in their part of the organisation will encourage us to be invested in building a better health service.