Learning from Excellence in the Dental Services Division

By Symone Lawrence, Governance Support and Improvement Manager

What We Do

- Anyone in the Trust can nominate someone for a Learning from Excellence (LfE)
- Nominations for Dental for the month are reviewed by the Governance Support & Improvement Manager
- Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach template is utilised, and nominations are assessed as roots/ branches/ apples
- The Appreciative Inquiry template is discussed with the Governance Manager and Divisional Director of Nursing & Therapies (DDNT) to agree categories/learning and next steps

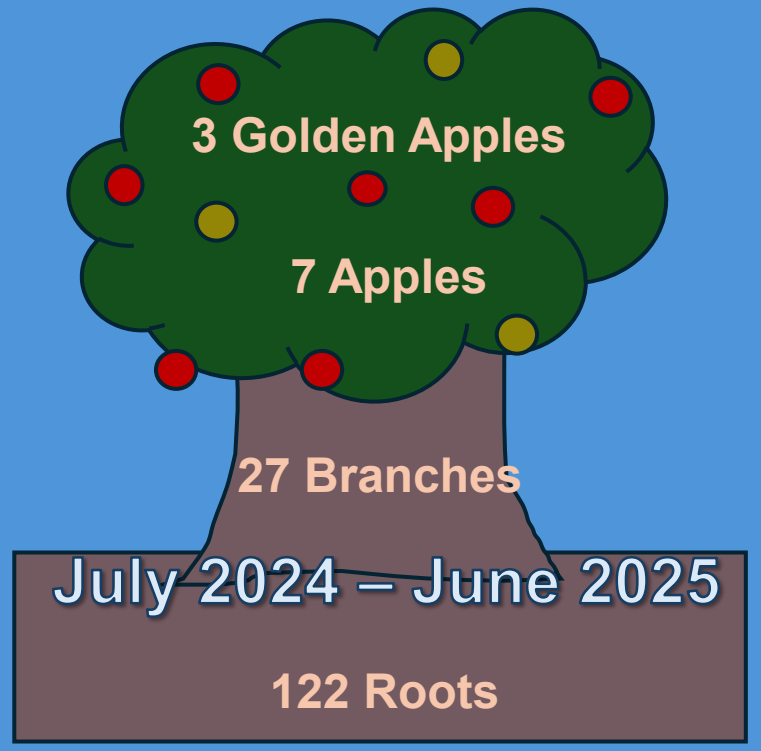
Why and How We Do It

Inspiration – LfE aims to boost staff morale, celebrate staff and apply appreciative inquiry to excellence in work practices. It is applicable due to general concerns about health care of professionals nationally and work-related wellbeing and burnout.

- Using Safety II to look for practices that go right
- Looking to engage people in building kinds of organisations and the world they want to live in
- Working from strengths and positive experiences
- Engaging with the nominees to determine what the nomination means to them, what went well, what enabled them to continue with the improvement, how it could be replicated and what challenges they faced that they overcame

How We Celebrate

- Share all names of all nominees in our divisional newsletter, Dental Bites
- Share learning at Quality Improvement group and Learning from Excellence Steering Group
- Consider Value In Practice (VIP) awards and other nominations
- Present at Improving 2Gether Forum
- Report into Quarterly Governance report
- Presentation of a Golden LfE badge to Golden Apple recipients
- Golden Apple nominations presented at the weekly Trust brief to organisation leaders



Golden Apples

Compliments and Concerns – June 2024

- Emma - The monthly summary report provides feedback for teams to discuss as well as seeing the wider picture within Dental Services in terms of hearing good practice or learning from others. The report evolves as reporting needs change to further support learning to continue with the improvement.
- Recognising that the report is not static, that it needs to evolve as services needs and reporting necessitate. This has meant the format has changed several times to reflect a more current, proactive approach with compliments, concerns and complaints.
- This process could be repeated across the Trust in divisions.

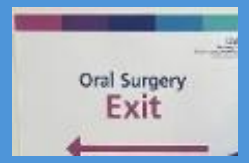
Amazing Amelia – February 2025

- The Oral Health Improvement team are a newly established team delivering evidence-based programmes throughout Birmingham & the Black Country to address oral health inequalities for our services users that have the greatest need.
- A notable achievement which has been greatly accepted and welcomed by colleagues and service users is the production of Amazing Amelia story booklet. This has been presented as a quality improvement project to various committees in the Division and wider in the Trust including Improving Together forum highlighting how children and their families learn about how to look after their teeth.

Amazing Amelia and her top tips for happy teeth!

Oral Surgery Directions – July 2025

- Cherelle felt that there could be improvements made within the area due to *'patients getting lost on their way out (of clinic) and to x-ray'.* She set out to find a solution via the team Quality Improvement Huddle Board and sought the opinions and thoughts of the nursing team. As part of these discussions, it was suggested that floor sticker and a sign at the end of the department corridor may be a small but effective way of solving this problem.
- After working closely with Clinical Illustration to bring her idea to life and liaising with Senior Management to seek approval for her Quality Improvement idea, Cherelle has now successfully introduced her floor stickers and sign into the Oral Surgery Department.



What's next?

On reviewing LfE poster submissions from LfE conference in 2023 and on reflection of the year's LfE nominations, future work will involve implementing a thematic analysis when performing appreciative inquiry. A quality improvement project will also be initiated:

Can we see an improvement in self-reported morale by increasing awareness of Learning from Excellence and the number of nominations? A Quality Improvement Project