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Q&A Case Study

How we supported
NHS South East London
Integrated Care Board
with their workforce
development programme



The NHS South East London Integrated Care Board is an NHS statutory organisation that was established on 1 July 2022.

It brings together seventeen separate local partners, including six local authorities as well as acute, community and mental health providers.

The purpose of the Board is to work together to meet the current and future health and care needs of the 1.9 million residents within South East London.

To fulfill this purpose, and to meet the diverse needs of communities across South East London, the Integrated Care Board is required to develop strategies and approaches for integrating the workforce across the Integrated Care System. In turn this requires the implementation of robust workforce planning measures to ensure that staffing numbers keep pace with long-term service needs.

The NHS South East London Integrated Care Board enlisted support from workforce planning experts Skills for Health to help them meet these challenges.

Sam Hepplewhite, Director of Prevention & Partnerships at NHS South East London Integrated Care Board, describes her experiences of working with the not-for-profit's Research & Consultancy division.



Objectives

What benefit were you hoping to receive from working with Skills for Health?

“We were looking to build workforce planning capacity and capability across primary care networks (PCNs) and to develop a sustainable model of workforce planning to meet long-term demand.

As part of this, a key objective was to develop the first iterations of PCN level workforce plans and help those working across primary care to better collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders across the six boroughs and Integrated Care System as a whole.”



Why choose Skills for Health?

What were the main factors behind the decision to partner with Skills for Health for this project?

“Planning is not about what we're going to do next week, it's also thinking about what we're going to do two to three years' time.”

Skills for Health has a 20-year track record of empowering healthcare providers to plan their workforce requirements effectively.

What's more they have a reputation for delivering real value and leaving a lasting legacy for their clients by teaching them how to adapt their workforce plans and make them future proof.”

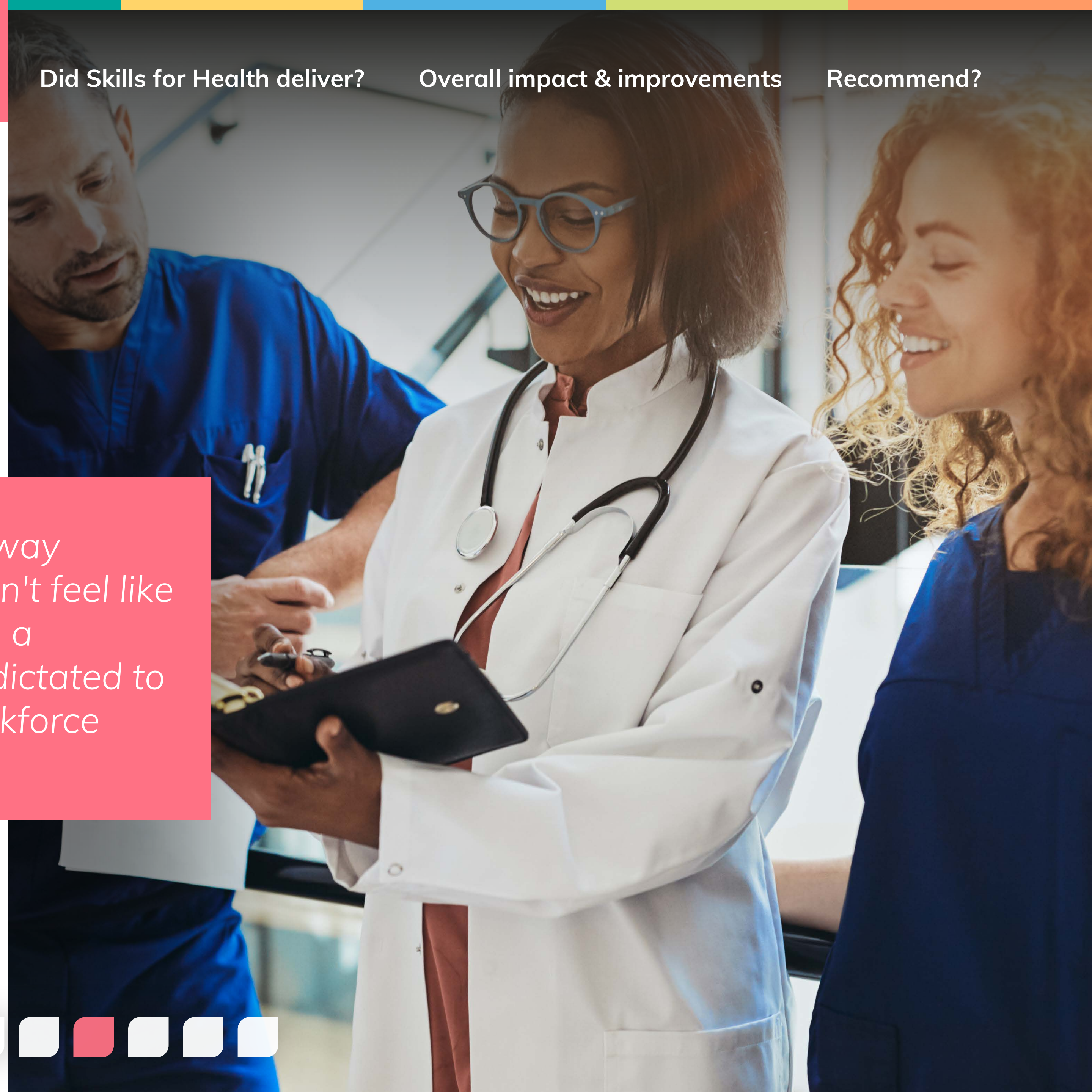
Features & benefits

What stood out about the service you received from Skills for Health?

“Up until this point there hadn't been any real investment in workforce planning in primary care; it hadn't even been talked about or recognised that there was a need.

And so, when we started this programme of work I very quickly realised that the support, knowledge and experience of the consultants was fantastic.”

“It felt like a two-way relationship; it didn't feel like we were sitting in a classroom being dictated to on how to do workforce planning.”



Did Skills for Health deliver?

What did you gain from working with Skills for Health? And how was your experience of working with the team?

“Our confidence and trust were built quite quickly in Skills for Health’s methods and approach.

The level of expertise within the Skills for Health team and their understanding and experience of working with other general practice clients really shined through.

It felt like a true knowledge exchange. Skills for Health enabled PCNs to think, discuss and build relationships to develop a long-term approach to workforce planning. That was a huge gift that we gave to the PCNs.”



Overall impact & improvements

How will Skills for Health's work benefit your organisation moving forward?

“What you've left us with is a group of PCNs, who are in a better place to start thinking about what an integrated workforce plan might look like.

“We've now given those PCNs a real basis for thinking about the next stage, which is what could that integrated team look like?”

They're now thinking much wider than just general practice. They're thinking integrated neighbourhood, mental health, acute and community services in the round. I think that's probably the lasting legacy of this programme, is that you left us with the ability to adapt our workforce plans iteratively and your approach ensures we can adapt our workforce assumptions to make it future proof. And I think quite often, that's not the case.”

Recommend?

Would you recommend the work of Skills for Health to other health and care providers?

“100%. Skills for Health has taught us to see workforce planning as an enabler and to take the opportunity that we have now to get ready for the next five to ten years.”

As experts in strategic workforce change, Skills for Health is supporting Integrated Case Systems to identify and implement the most productive and efficient ways to deliver high quality patient experiences.

To find out more visit: <https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/integrated-solutions/>



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Charity number: 1132476