

Effective leadership styles in problem solving



This assignment shall critically analyze the extent to which effective management and leadership styles can be used to address and solve problems in social care and health environments.

Introduction

The service field of social and health care environments has made great progress in recognizing its values for the future periods and things which require changing to achieve considerable and noticeable improvements across a variety of services. Management and Leadership styles need to be used effectively to bring out noticeable changes and for achieving specific actions to make significant improvements a reality in the social and healthcare environment. Effective and efficient implementation of change and improvement is a dynamic and comprehensive process which takes its due time to come into action and specific management and leadership programmes are usually unique to every organization. Every organization depends upon change and programmes for improvement for different reasons.

Leadership plays a very vital role in the success of organisational improvement in social and healthcare service sectors. Effective leaders can enable improvements to take place and they have the capability to foretell the direction in which an organisation must be headed in terms of service delivery such as greater service user involvements and also guide their organisation in this direction. It is very important to have a predetermined purpose or ideology involving employees to bring about improvements in the system. The management must set the scope of these improvements and it

is leadership's responsibility to aide in bringing and implementing changes for betterment of the services.

Overview of Health and Social Care Sector

Healthcare sector refers mainly to all those services which are offered by hospitals, clinics, general practitioners to prevent, diagnose and treating illness. This is a main and primary activity United Kingdom and consumes important parts of Gross Domestic Product and accounts of employing over ten million people across the country. This is a very complex sector comprising of not just healthcare service providers but also private and public funders and patients (consumers). Furthermore, significant economic sectors are associated actively with this sector, particularly pharmaceuticals and suppliers of medical equipments. In this assignment we shall concentrate on service provision of healthcare and how management and leadership styles can bring about improvement and address the problems of this sector.

Social services is a multifaceted concept having different meanings and could include, provision of welfare payments and pensions. This assignment the term social services will be confined to work which is rendered by a person or organisation for furtherance of welfare of citizens. It includes, but is not restricted to, services for:

Children and their families

Disabled individuals of all age groups

Elderly individual particularly those suffering from mental health problems

Individuals misusing drugs and alcohol

Services related to HIV/AIDS

The typical providers of social services are public authorities and voluntary organisations however; private sector also plays an important role, to illustrate, provision of long-term care facilities. Healthcare and Social services were treated differently traditionally, due to their origins but also because of the fact that interest groups maintained their boundaries. This entire situation is undergoing changes throughout the western world due to different factors which include increase in elderly population, increase in awareness of preventing diseases instead of cure and an increased demand from customers (citizens') integrated services to meet needs specific in nature. This resulted in increasing stress on care including healthcare in the community, with higher collaboration between both sectors healthcare and social service providers. United Kingdom offers a National Health Service (NHS) free of cost at the point of delivery; this expenditure is funded primarily through general taxation.

Several issues that affect healthcare also affect social services, especially ageing society. However, the functioning of hospitals and community-based care has transformed differently. UK is now exploring ways of coordinating both sets of services more efficiently, for e. g. shifting towards a home-based and community care grouped with correct use of expensive hospital services. This can be achieved and development in informatics and associated disciplines are anticipated to offer it. (OST, 2001, p. 8)

Current Trends and Driving Forces of Social and Healthcare Sector

Healthcare and Social care service sector is currently undergoing different changes and thus it is essential to evaluate what are the current trends and forces responsible for these changes. This assignment shall look at the most significant trends and drivers affecting health and social services sector, they are:

Changes in Demography and society:

The citizens of UK are currently living in ageing societies. However, the major concern is workforce and elder ageing, i. e. increase in number of persons above 80. This phenomenon is known as “triple ageing”. The resultant effects of triple ageing on health and social services are well known.

Increasing consumerism and expectations.

The term “consumer patient” is reflective on the assumption that more and more number of people are expecting to receive health care services they need at affordable prices.

Latest medical technologies

The need to reduce health costs, extend life expectancy and improve quality of life is often cited as drivers for technological developments in health and social sector. Many people believe that these latest technologies can totally transform and revolutionise the healthcare sector, despite concerns of increasing costs.

Leadership in Healthcare and Social Services

Leadership and management are two important factors which will help bring about the needed changes in the Healthcare and Social Services sector.

Clarity and effective communication is very important for leaders depending on improvement initiatives. In the same line, frontline employees require to be provided with opportunities to embrace the latest ideology and purpose and customize it so that they can alter services accordingly. Leadership in healthcare and social services will be successful when the management decides the purpose of the organization and underlies requirements for improvement, analyzes what changes required to be made to achieve these objectives and examine how the necessary improvements can be achieved. To make a success of the implementing changes in service, leaders must make sure there is effective communication amongst the staff which is two-way and useful.

Management in social and healthcare sector

Management of the organization should entrust employees to carry forward improvements and enhancements in their daily service delivery. It is always possible for employees to be involved in “ what” of the change, however there is a wide scope for involving “ how”. Management must try to involve employees in the stages of planning, this will encourage staff to acknowledge and support the improvement process while feeling sense of ownership over the improvements. The main management style here is democratic in nature which means employees are heard to and their opinions and ideas are considered, including those employees who might not easily welcome changes. Employees must be given the tasks of carrying

forward improvements in their daily routine work. Encourage them to participate in making decisions independently. Workers must be allowed to participate in discussions, questions and design activities of improvement. Another important aspect of democratic management style is feedback from employees which is a result of consulting on exercises and decisions taken based on inputs. Encouraging teamwork, both inter and intra-departmental, comprising of diverse members. Employees must be exposed to development of activities which they had been a part of while designing. Provide the staff with ample time for involvement, developmental activities and participation. If staff is finding it difficult to balance present commitments with time for improving services, then work along with the management and find answers.

Management and Leadership Styles

Management is a universal concept and is very popularly used terminology in the business world. Every type of organization be it business, political, cultural or social involves management since it is management which assists and directs the different efforts of people towards a predetermined goal or objective.

According to Harold Koontz, “ Management is an art of getting things done through and with the people in formally organized groups. It is an art of creating an environment in which people can perform and individuals and can co-operate towards attainment of group goals”

On the other hand, Leadership is a process through which an executive could direct, guide and influence behaviour and work of other individuals in the

direction of achieving particular goals in an existing situation. Leadership refers to the potential of influencing the behaviour of others in the organization. It can in specific terms be referred to as the capacity to influence a group towards goals realization. It is the capability of a manager to motivate his subordinates to work together with confidence and enthusiasm.

There are three main categories of management and leadership styles which are as given below:

Autocratic managers are decision makers and closely control and supervise employees. Managers generally have less levels of trust and just give orders which are expected to be obeyed.

Paternalistic managers tend to give more attention to the social needs and views of their employees. Managers are keen on making the employees feel happy and generally act as a father figure. They tend to consult employees about different issues and listen to their feedbacks and opinions. However, managers are actual decision makers but do take interests of workers into consideration since they believe staff actually needs direction.

Democratic Managers are those who entrust their employees and encourage them to make important decisions. They would delegate work to them along with authority to do and also listen to their advice. There is a clear bi-directional communication which often includes democratic groups, offering useful tips and ideas. Managers should be willing to encourage skills of leadership among subordinates.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Health and Social Care services are in the midst of transformation at national, local and international level. The core of these changes lies in the desire to offer customers with increased levels of involvement in their caring, promotion greater choices and interdependence amongst users and more efficiently support from the entire community, everything while staying within the parameters of standards of quality and budgets. Some programmes are usually unique to particular organisations, beyond general regions targeted for improvements. Sometimes, organisations might undergo changes due to increasing pressures from their funding institutions or government, while others may be responding to changes due to poor standards and lastly organisations that are aligning their management to cope up with the new changes in the sector. Main recommendations for adopting management and leadership styles in health and social care services are:

Effective leadership in the organisation which motivates employees in the organisation to willing participate in changes and also respond to it.

Involving employees and their participation in decision making to cope up with the changes in the sector.

Identify skills and help in development of those skills of employees.

Employees must be constantly given chances to improve their existing skills and develop new skills according to the changing environment.

Management of organisations in social and healthcare sectors must have a more democratic approach which will encourage employees to participate and also motivate them to work to their full potential.