**1st July Michael West – Leading Beyond the Crisis – Looking to the Future – Compassionate Leadership**

***Key Themes***

**Breakout room discussions**

*What stops us leading compassionately?*

* Self-care
  + Lack of self-compassion – due to time, feeling overwhelmed, helpless, self-doubt
  + The challenges of looking after ourselves in the initial shock of Covid, the anxiety, fear and sleep disturbance that was generated and the effort it has taken to really focus on self-care and particularly the guilt is generated when knowing how much people are bearing and managing
* Empathy
  + Lack of empathy from some senior members of staff, particularly towards BAME staff
* Pace of work
  + Pressure for performance and targets getting in the way of psychological safety and our own self compassion and a lack of stillness
  + The pace of work has meant compassionate leadership has not been easy
  + We spoke about Timescales stopping us leading compassionately. Timescales are often enforced upon us without consultation. Often processes and a a lack of resources available can make it difficult (including IT). Being too task orientated too and create frustration.
* Anxiety
  + Anxiety means we cannot lead compassionately sometimes. When people are anxious their behaviours change, they stop taking information in and thinking for themselves, this means leaders have to keep reiterating key messages a lot to reassure and instruct.
  + Treating people as individuals and maintaining connection. Looking at the systemic and organizational factors that perpetuate people feeling that 'it’s not ok, to not be ok', whilst balancing this with boundaries and compassion to meet the needs of the services
* Recognition
  + Not remembering to celebrate successes
  + There are some excellent examples of compassion in our staff and staff teams. In R and R recently we did a kindness post box, staff and service users put messages in valuing each other. It was hugely rewarding to contribute and receive messages
  + Lead by example. It’s the little acts of kindness that make all the difference that make people feel valued when they come into work, like making sure people have treats, favourite tea and coffee. making each other a drink etc. being appreciative in a descriptive way for the things that people do, showing that people matter
* Space for Reflection
  + Leaders often feel like everything is coming at them from so many different angles and then trying to find the time to be compassionate to the team while all this is going on can be really difficult. There is no time or space to think
  + Lack of opportunity to lead collaboratively, taking time to check in with colleagues and reflect.
  + Directive leadership and effective decision making is needed in a crisis, but now is the time for reflection, and pausing

***Reflecting on what had helped during the crisis, what can we do as leaders to create a better culture for the future?***

**Key Themes – positives**

* Innovation
  + New ways of working has allowed flexibility and rapid decision making
  + Innovative experiences of working beyond our usual brief, working into new teams, linking in with new colleagues has offered opportunities to contribute in effective and creative ways.
  + Staff have been and able to make decisions much faster and effectively. Need to cut through the complexity of different levels of purposes from the Board, senior management, service lines and individual teams to get to a one clarity of purpose as we see when we had this in the pandemic.
  + Building on the speed and pace of decision-making
  + The opportunities of working in different ways has been amazing and helpful in such challenging times whilst remaining connected and shaping a new future.
* Collaborative working
  + Sharing ideas with other Trusts and within the Trust
  + There are been wonderful experiences of connecting, getting to know colleagues in new ways, the skills and amazing qualities people have - a real experience of core values coming to the fore.
  + Connectivity and inclusion between teams and communities, also not just LYPFT across the city. How can we keep that going?
  + Throughout my experience of redeployment during this pandemic the team have been incredibly supportive and have used various means to keep in touch with those working from home to ensure the team members have felt included and supported, I hope the changes are sustained.
* Compassion
  + The importance of human connection is so important and that we need to make sure that we do not lose the compassionate ways that we have developed over the past few months
* Technology
  + Quickly adapting to use of Zoom/Teams allowed more communication across the organization despite the adversity

**Key Themes – areas to improve**

* Listening and supporting
  + There's more recognition of health inequalities, but how can we do better and sustain the movement. Understanding BAME colleagues have anxieties around Covid and supporting those in the community and recognise action needs to be taken to help these communities. BLM movement is helping this but what about LGBTQ+ and other protected communities. Recognised leaders should take time for themselves to be able to be good role models for their staff
* Leadership styles
  + Pace of work has impacted leadership style from coaching to directing, spoon feeding and reiterating key messages repeatedly
  + Not stifling innovation from the front line
* Challenges of working virtually
  + Absence of informal networks (kitchen and corridor conversations) when people let their guard down and we can get underneath how they are really feeling – how do we replicate this?
  + Need to really think about how we support people who are working from home and keeping those connections going due to feelings of isolation, fear etc, not feeling as connected to the rest of the team who may be able to come to a base
  + Can we review the benefits of remote working on environmental factors - i.e less driving, less printing etc.
  + If the rebellion is negative and not focused on changing the status quo to improve team working/patient care, but rebellion within teams doesn't have to be negative.
* Caring for each other
  + Take more time to stop and look after each other in our working day because if we do not stop and take time to replenish in our working day, then we are less productive and also it stops us being as compassionate as we can be towards each other.
* Reconnecting teams
  + Differing perceptions of how people have worked during this crisis has caused splitting between teams and unhelpful narratives
  + Aligning people and drawing people together, reconnecting temporary teams, welcoming new starters.

**Questions from the group discussions**

* Can a leadership team be rebellious and if so what qualities do we need?
* What strategies for managing the scary?
* Thoughts on how to sustain collaborative working / relationships when immediate pressure is off?
* What are Michael's thoughts on challenges of remote working / working digitally. What is the best way to check in with people?
* How to develop a culture of staff that leads with compassion?

**Further resources**

If anyone wants to watch Michael's last workshop with the Trust entitled "Developing Compassionate Cultures and Collective Leadership" you can find it on our You Tube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLlT1hSoitj5RQRaHlwLZKo9xJkqlBVr0y>