Productive General Practice
Top Tips for Practice Managers
You and others are no doubt already trying to improve various aspects of how your practice works and provides care for patients. Productive General Practice gives you a structure to bring together all the different streams of work you undertake into a unified improvement programme that will include everyone in your practice.

What the programme is trying to achieve for you is:

- clarity on what the practice wants to achieve
- a sense of urgency for improvement
- an insight into how things are going at the moment
- help in deciding on what to focus on first
- a clear step by step approach and supporting tools to make the changes you want to see happen.

Based on feedback we have received from Practice Managers implementing Productive General Practice, we have produced some top tips to help you on your way. You will play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of Productive General Practice. We hope these insights will help you in the early stages to ensure you get the most out of the programme for you and your practice.
Understand the programme

Start Productive General Practice by making sure you have a good overall understanding of the programme, how it is implemented and what it can help your practice achieve. The following steps will help you do this.

- Read the *Getting Started and Making It Stick* module in full. Also have a look at the other modules to familiarise yourself with what areas of the practice the programme will focus on.

- Look through the programme web pages at [www.institute.nhs.uk/productivegeneralpractice](http://www.institute.nhs.uk/productivegeneralpractice) where you can find case studies, films, plus all the resources linked to each module to download. In particular, ensure you watch the following films:
  - Overview
  - Making the Link.

- Create a high level plan for 12 months and a detailed plan for progress over the first four to five months (see page 39 of the *Getting Started and Making It Stick* module).

Communicating and engage widely

How effectively you communicate and engage your colleagues in your practice will be key to successful implementation.

- Create a sense of awareness and ownership with your GP partners - it is really important to get your partners engaged at the start. The programme relies on a shared sense of direction in your practice which is communicated effectively. Although lots of people in the practice look to you as the Practice Manager to get things done, you do need to ensure there is one or two lead GPs who really understand the programme. If you do not get that sense of engagement, keep talking to them.

- Your key challenge will be to reinforce the message that the practice is implementing Productive General Practice in order to achieve your practice’s goals so this is not an optional extra. If you ever feel that the partners are not behind you or that momentum is dropping, then go back to the start point. Ask them to re-state the aims and goals of the practice. Are these really important to them? This is why the practice aims and measures of success are so important to establish at the outset.

- Create a sense of urgency and a need for change throughout your practice that will lead to improvements for your practice – this will be important for generating momentum.
Get everyone involved in the *Improving Today’s Practice* module.

*Do not* carry the workload yourself – the only way you can implement the programme successfully is if your whole practice works together. Get others to become the lead for specific modules and/or to be members of module teams.

**Engage patients**

Do not avoid the *Involving Patients in Improvement* module. There may be a culture in the practice that patient involvement is a tick box exercise – in Productive General Practice this is not the case. This is the opportunity to really involve and benefit from patient engagement.

**What help do I need?**

Think about any help you might need such as project management, facilitation skills or using excel tools and how you will get this.

**Get dates in your diary early**

- Get dates in your diary for the Strategic Direction meeting, plan your *Knowing How We Are Doing* data collection week and have *Improving Today’s Practice* workshop dates set in advance e.g.
  - Week 1 - Start promoting Productive General Practice in your practice
  - Week 4 - Strategic Setting Meeting (*Getting Started and Making It Stick*)
  - Week 6 or 7 - *Knowing How We Are Doing* data collection week
  - Week 8 to 10 - Patient Involvement insights
  - Week 11 - *Improving Today’s Practice* workshop 1
  - Week 14 - Get started on first process module

- Set up regular Productive General Practice working group meetings every two to four weeks and schedule in for the next year. This is a long term programme.
What do you need to do?

- Remember all the detail is in the modules. Small teams will lead each module. Information will be gathered. There will be small group or whole team sessions. Changes will be made.

- The Productive General Practice modules provide you with a process and tools, but not ‘the answer’. The practice decides on ‘the answer’ depending upon your practice goals and what you find in the diagnostic phase of each module.

Important things to do in the first module - Getting Started and Making It Stick

- Make sure you write up your practice goals after the Strategic Direction meeting in Getting Started and Making It Stick. These need to be communicated throughout your practice as this is what you are trying to achieve (see section 4 of the Getting Started and Making It Stick module).

- Complete the Projects Owner Measures Goals chart to help paint a picture of the range of initiatives in the practice and how they link (see page 80 in Getting Started and Making It Stick).

Manage expectations - do not expect too much too soon

Remember the first few modules are about setting direction, finding out about what’s happening in your practice and then getting everyone together to agree how you will implement the six process modules (and possibly Shaping Our Future Practice). Assure your team that improvements will come but not to expect big changes during this diagnostic phase.
This is a big change programme

- This is a significant and wide ranging change programme that will require time and effort. Experience suggests it will take up to 24 months to complete all modules. You may be able to go quicker but you have to balance the immediate practice pressures with the time to work through Productive General Practice and implement your changes.

- Shaping Our Future Practice is a long term look at fundamentally redesigning the practice approach to care delivery. The resulting work will take time to put in place, perhaps 12 – 24 months depending on how much you want to change.

- Try to build some of the programme activities into regular meetings and sessions (see pages 38 and 41 of *Getting Started and Making It Stick*)

Keep track – do not take short cuts

- There are module checklists in some modules. These are often located towards the end of a module or section and helps you ensure you have completed all the activities. You could do your own check list at the end of each section within each module if you prefer. Just ask whether each of the bullet points on the section divider pages have been completed.

- You may have to make certain adaptations to suit your local situation. But make sure these are well considered and not just short cuts.

Capture the impact of changes

Log into the Productive Module Impact Framework at [www.institute.nhs.uk/pmif](http://www.institute.nhs.uk/pmif). Here you can record the impact of each module and generate reports and graphs for your practice. This will allow you over time to demonstrate impact to your partners and practice as a whole.

For more information about Productive General Practice visit [www.institute.nhs.uk/productivegeneralpractice](http://www.institute.nhs.uk/productivegeneralpractice)