Background to the development of SHaWL

Dec 2014: The commission and identifying the need

The Commission into Hospice Care was published in October 2013. It raised concerns about where we are and how we build the workforce needed to deliver hospice care in the future. This stimulated conversation and debate. A number of people from the sector contacted Hospice UK regarding their interest in exploring these concerns further.

Hospice UK held a meeting to explore with those people to look at what could be done on a national and strategic level. The meeting comprised a number of HR leads from Hospices including Emma Hodges, Lisa Nos, Matt Corbishley, Jaci Curtis Donnelly as well as the ECLiHP Chair Judith Park; the independent workforce expert Keith Hurst and Hospice UK staff Heather Richardson, Jean Hindmarch and Marie Cooper.

The meeting was intended to

- understand local concerns and aspirations around workforce development on the part of hospices
- identify national action that is required to help hospices establish the workforce to deal with current issues and that is fit for the future
- link work being undertaken currently within Hospice UK promote good practice related to the workforce required for future demands
- identify and build links relating to meet the educational and training requirements of hospice personnel
- Consider the contribution of volunteers.

What became apparent was the need to provide resources to the hospice sector around

- Sound methodology and tools for work force planning to support new services or service re-design was critical to address.
- The need to build ongoing national support and intelligence for many in leadership taking work force development forward.

Hospice UK were also hearing from hospice HR leads of the varying access to peer support and networking opportunities across the country and the wish for a national network.

The HR leads who attended the December exploratory meeting offered their support to Marie Cooper at Hospice UK to devise a survey to test the proposal of establishing support & commit national level.

Hospice UK has over the years developed partnerships for the delivery of a number of surveys, benchmarking and recruitment tools and wanted to find ways to better coordinate, promote and develop their use to hospices.
May 2015: HR survey and gathering data

The survey was undertaken and

- 33% of hospice HR leads responded
- 75% stated they had access to a regional group.
- There was, however, overwhelming support for more regional groups which would form part of a national HR network.
- There was a call for a programme of annual events and master-classes which would address emerging and topical HR related issues.

In response to this request, discussion ensued with the Executive Clinical Leads In Hospice & Palliative Care (ECLiHP) network Exec who recognised the benefit in inviting the HR leads to the annual ECLiHP conference. As the conference theme was workforce development this offered an ideal opportunity to co design the event so both clinical and HR leads could meet and consider this critically important area in a collaborative way.

June 2016: workforce focus at the ECLiHP conference and a call to action

Approximately 60 HR leads attended the conference and participated in plenary and bespoke HR sessions facilitated by Emma, Matt and Jaci. Again, the need and wish to develop a nation wide HR network was voiced.

August 2016: ehospice article and formulating plans

After the conference Matt wrote an article in e-hospice about the success of the event, thinking to date and the confirmation of the plan to establish a network with the support of Hospice UK. He invited contact to share the thinking.

November 2016

A meeting was hosted by Hospice UK inviting a small number of HR lead attendees based on regional representation and on previous engagement and interest shown, and the SHaWL Network was created.