North London Strategic Alliance Learning Disabilities Market Intervention Case Study

Introduction to NLSA

The North London Strategic Alliance Efficiencies Project is a group of 6 north London Boroughs (Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest). Barnet also works with NLSA for Children's Services only.

The Efficiencies project started in 2010 with a bid to Capital Ambition and a project manager was brought into post in October 2010. From April 2012 boroughs have funded the project from their own budgets with commitment to March 2014. A Children's Category Manager was recruited in February 2012 to help achieve a savings target of £1.7m in Looked After Children and Special Educational Needs.

The main purpose of the project is to promote collaborative working to achieve efficiencies mainly across the three core areas of Adults, Children's and Procurement.

Project Scope

In November 2010 The Directors of Adults Services agreed that the cost of residential Learning Disabilities Placement was a priority area and that collaborative working could help them to achieve savings.
The boroughs that took part in this exercise were Barnet, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Waltham Forest & Redbridge.
A data collection exercise was carried out and top common providers were identified. These providers were then invited to meet with a group of Directors from the boroughs to discuss how they could work together to reduce costs.

Achieved Savings

As a direct result of the intervention £415k savings was achieved through direct negotiations with providers. This was less than the 15% requested but still a significant amount based on the level of spend.

Long Term Achievements

While this was a one off project within a specific timescale the lasting effect of this is that boroughs now communicate with each other when they are having difficulties negotiating with providers and share information.
There are now plans to look at some of the expensive Mental Health residential providers and share intelligence around pricing.
Boroughs are also achieving savings by using the Care Funding Calculator tool and sharing information when providers refuse to engage with this approach.