

CHKS ACCREDITATION CASE STUDY

The Children's Trust

Why the accreditation journey never stops delivering benefits for service users, families and staff



CHKS
Insight for better healthcare

Summary

The Children's Trust supports children and young people up to 18 years old from across the UK with acquired brain injury (ABI), neurodisability and complex health needs. When The Children's Trust first received CHKS accreditation in 2018, the charity's chief executive, Dalton Leong, said the process was a significant factor in helping it move from being rated as 'Requires improvement' to being rated as 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (see previous [case study](#)). Dalton believes children and their families are benefitting from the charity's drive to constantly monitor its services and create the best environment possible. This allows staff, along with those who use the services, to thrive. Accreditation has also been instrumental in helping the charity maintain its high-quality services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The accreditation journey may have started in 2018, but it is now embedded in the charity's improvement processes and continues to deliver new benefits each year.



Accreditation paves the way for culture change



Dalton says that external moderation through accreditation was the starting point for the culture change that he sees around him every day. Changing the way people think in their work has been a major part of the accreditation process.

The charity is a large and complex organisation with many different areas from retail to clinical. In order to be successful the process has required buy-in from all levels and a focus on culture change across the whole organisation. A clear

commitment from everyone involved has paid off, not only with the charity being rated as 'Outstanding', but with an obvious understanding and willingness of staff to be part of such improvement.

This positive approach is reflected in staff attitudes. A recent staff survey had a significant uptake of 93%, with 96% of those who took part saying they were proud to work for the organisation. "There is an immense sense of pride amongst our staff," says Dalton.

"We've made an investment in ensuring that quality is at the heart of everything we do."

Dalton Leong

A focus on the detail provides assurance for the management team

Dalton and the management team regularly see the benefits of knowing that standards and processes are being reviewed by CHKS in detail. He says: “The CHKS surveyors have a much deeper focus than you might get with other quality improvement initiatives. For example, regulators may look at a child’s care plan, but CHKS surveyors go deeper and look at other factors such as the equipment that is being provided.

That deeper focus helps us to make sure we’re outstanding in all areas not just in our clinical services.”

“We’ve made an investment in ensuring that quality is at the heart of everything we do. It’s reassuring for myself, the leadership team and the board that we are working to a gold standard.”

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Dalton Leong



Re-accreditation is an opportunity for in-depth assessment

As with all accredited organisations, CHKS surveys must re-accredit an organisation every three years. The recent re-accreditation process has prompted the charity to fully audit and evaluate standards and processes. This will provide a baseline from which the charity can assess its quality management.

With 1,200 criteria to confirm and evidence, it is a time-consuming project but the benefits for the children are clear. Such is the organisation’s commitment to the accreditation that one person has now been dedicated to the job of overseeing the accreditation process to ensure that all criteria are successfully covered and evaluated.

Innovation is now a built-in characteristic of the charity

Dalton believes there is a link between accreditation and the charity becoming more innovative. There are a finite number of services available at the national specialist centre, but by changing the way staff think, innovation can be a tool to improve services and offer something new. For example, a new business case has been signed

off to offer robotic assisted gait therapy, to aid physiotherapists when helping children to walk. Far from replacing the physiotherapists it complements what they do, helping them to provide a better service for the children.

Dalton says: “This is an example of children seeing direct service improvements because we are

trying to think differently, adapting our services in an agile way, and acknowledging changes in technology. CHKS and accreditation is driving that need to innovate. It has provided us with the motivation and momentum to continually improve, monitor and evaluate. However, we are only going to make a change if it actually improves our services.”

Building excellence and a sustainable future

The charity's latest strategy, Hope and Ambition revolves around three core themes.

These are:



Build on specialist knowledge to grow services in Tadworth and help more children and young people;



Improve outcomes for children and young people through integration of specialist skills and approaches;



Support every child in the UK with an acquired brain injury.

However, building excellence is the common theme and this is where accreditation comes in. For Dalton there is no doubt that the CHKS accreditation framework and criteria has been carried forward into this new programme of work. For example, staff from all areas have come forward to volunteer to be part of the first wave of focus groups looking at both leadership development and culture and values. Dalton says: "The speed with which staff volunteered tells me something already about the culture of our charity. It takes time, but I really think we're getting there now."

Accreditation has been a long and sometimes challenging journey, but it has enabled the charity to become an organisation that is focused on the future and how it can continue to innovate to provide the best possible services for children and their families.

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Dalton Leong

The first steps on the accreditation journey and the benefits



When The Children's Trust was first accredited in 2018, chief executive Dalton Leong credited the process with the following significant benefits:

- Providing assurance to commissioners on the quality of its services
- Providing assurance to children and their families of a commitment to quality improvement
- Engaging the charity's staff in the quality improvement journey
- Ensuring standards and process are common across a complex organisation
- Helping the charity benchmark its services against internationally recognised standards



About CHKS

CHKS, part of Capita Healthcare Decisions, is a leading provider of healthcare intelligence and quality improvement products and services. Over the last 27 years our team of NHS data experts, clinicians and quality managers has worked with more than 400 healthcare organisations around the world to improve population health. We enable providers and commissioners to make better decisions at patient, service, organisation and population level and deliver sustainable improvements in care quality, patient outcomes and service efficiency along the entire patient pathway.

For more information contact chksinfo@capita.com
or visit www.chks.co.uk