

Case study

Developing highly effective teams.

North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Assessment of employees to develop more effective teams within the organisation, based on each individual's personality traits and skillsets.

The North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS) operates across Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham, Darlington and Teesside. It provides an unscheduled care service in response to emergency calls, alongside a scheduled care service which provides pre-planned, non-emergency transport for patients across the region.

Since 2013, it has delivered the NHS' 111 service for the region to provide urgent medical help and advice, demonstrating how this service can run alongside the 999 service to provide a seamless access point for patients.

The Trust forms an integral part of the health service across the North East and works closely with many NHS partners to ensure services for patients are delivered seamlessly.

Its local partners include eight acute hospital trusts, two mental health trusts, 12 local unitary authorities, police and fire services and voluntary agencies. Its mission is to provide safe, effective and responsive care for all, and its vision is to deliver an unmatched quality.

Even in the most challenging situations, NEAS strives to perform to the highest professional standards in a spirit of collaboration and teamwork. Caring for and treating more patients closer to home is at the heart of its plans, and it's committed, compassionate and caring staff are critical to its success.

NEAS approached Zeal Solutions to help with team development, specifically, developing more effective teams within the organisation, based on each individual's personality traits and skill sets.

How Zeal approached team development.

Zeal conducted a series of psychometric tests to assess important metrics such as competency, personality and cognitive ability to gain a better understanding of each individual.

This information enabled them to build an important overall picture of each person, before producing a detailed psychological profile based on their personality, motives, interests and skills. Once each member of staff had been profiled, Zeal worked with NEAS to allocate a team leader to each team, then built the right team around them.

This was done to ensure the optimum mix of interpersonal dynamics within each team, which would enable it to become as effective as possible.

Once the teams had been established and had worked together for a while, Zeal ran a feedback session with each one to explain why the teams were

structured the way they were, to provide information about how their team was performing, and to give guidance on how their individual personality reports could be used to improve their team's overall performance.

The feedback from NEAS was extremely positive, with both empirical and anecdotal evidence showing that teams were functioning more cohesively.

Simon Swallow, Head of Resilience and Special Operations at NEAS comments:

"The work Zeal did for us was important for two reasons. Firstly, it enabled us to form and structure our teams with the right blend of personality types and skills.

Secondly, it gave assurance to the individual team members that there was a science-based approach to the way we put these teams together, rather than just picking them based on our own knowledge and personal preference. It has helped to bring a consistent level of performance and effectiveness across all teams.

Many of our team members are exposed to critical, traumatic situations in their roles and having an insight into their unique personalities and traits helps us to manage their welfare better on a day to day basis."

"The work that Zeal did to profile each individual member of staff helped us to gain a more holistic understanding of our workforce, which better helps us to identify and address potential issues and fulfil our duty of care more effectively, by providing occupational health support and ensuring their well-being at work when needed."

