



J GADD
ASSOCIATES



Bracing for change:
co-ownership at Community Dental Services

WORKING TOGETHER





Tooth be told: co-ownership at **Community Dental Services** and commercial director and **Glen Taylor**, senior dental officer

Taking the right next step

“As CDS grew, so did the challenges in communicating a clear and consistent vision across disparate sites. Having been employee owned since the outset in 2011, the board understood the potential for our model to unify and motivate colleagues, we just didn’t know how to unlock this,” says Tracy Balachandran, financial and commercial director at CDS.

“The JGA team played a crucial role in helping us find a way to engage new and existing colleagues with their roles at co-owners, enabling us to combine public service ethos with the dynamism of private business.”

Working together

The creation of CDS’ employee representative group, known as the ‘Reg’, would play a crucial role in engaging employees with the advantages of belonging to an employee owned business. From managing the election of members and the chair to coordinating quarterly meetings, JGA facilitated all aspects of the employee representative group’s creation and early management. “Without the help of JGA, the Reg wouldn’t have achieved the far reaching success it enjoys today,” says Glen Taylor, senior dental officer and employee representative group chair.

“JGA’s experience setting-up and mentoring employee representatives was crucial in helping us create a group of elected representatives that had credibility and impact across our regional footprint. Elections were structured to ensure each of our localities were fairly represented, and thanks to role descriptions, all members knew exactly what was expected of them.”

Foundations for success

“As the Reg’s first chair and having no prior experience in a similar role, I really valued the staggered handover and ongoing support the JGA team provided. From helping to draft my first meeting’s agenda and being in attendance while I chaired, to offering advice on how to overcome challenges, the team provided a solid grounding to ensure I achieved success in my new role,” says Glen.



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Glen Taylor, senior dental officer and employee representative group chair

ices (CDS) - we speak to Tracy Balachandran, financial officer and employee representative group chair

“The Reg as a whole has also come a long way in short space of time as a result of JGA’s support. The group received coaching to improve our communication and feedback skills, enabling us to effectively share local issues with the board in a way that was fair and actionable. Thanks to JGA’s recommendation, we also have a member of the Reg on the board, ensuring our views and priorities are represented.”

“As the Reg evolved and continued to respond to CDS’ needs, JGA were there to offer a guiding hand; facilitating an employee representative election for a newly acquired locality and assisting with the business case to ensure our operational structure remained fit for purpose.”

Driving engagement and innovation

“The creation of the Reg has greatly improved the flow of communication and ideas between employees and senior leaders, resulting in new thinking and ways of working. As a result, people are really beginning to see the value of being an employee owned business,” says Glen.

Tracy has also seen a cultural shift throughout the business:

“People really get what being employee owned means, they see its advantages in everything we do and appreciate their role in ensuring we operate with our values in mind; for the betterment of our employees, patients and communities.”

JGA roles



**Engagement:
employee rep
group creation**



**Support to
employee rep
group ‘The Reg’**



**Employee
survey
delivery**



**Improve
communication
& collaboration**



Summary

J Gadd Associates (JGA) have worked with Community Dental Services (CDS) since 2016, helping the business leverage the benefits of employee ownership by building a programme of activity informed by the results of a perception study.

JGA have also supported the creation and successful on-going management of their first employee representative group. Improving communication and collaboration between the board, employee representative group and employees through mentoring and training.

About Community Dental Services

CDS is an employee owned social enterprise and community interest company delivering special care and paediatric dental and oral health services throughout Bedfordshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Leicestershire, Essex and Lincolnshire. It has a clear social mission; to improve oral health in evermore communities.

The decision to become a social enterprise was made by CDS employees transitioning out of the NHS in 2011. This established employee ownership as a founding principle upon which the organisation was built and is key to how the business continues to grow.

CDS is the only wholly employee owned dental social enterprise and has won multiple awards from both Social Enterprise UK and the Employee Ownership Association.

Contact us to explore how J Gadd Associates can help you:

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