



## Sleep in a room with a mosquito

**That's what our 20 aspiring nurse leaders heard at the first Nightingale Challenge session. It's sound advice when you understand the context.**

- The Nightingale Challenge is an international initiative to develop nurse leaders of the future
- 2020 is the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife
- 20 of our aspiring nurse leaders have signed up to our Nightingale Challenge

We held the first session of our Nightingale Challenge programme on 30 January 2020. All 20 of our aspiring nurse leaders taking part in the programme turned up with bags of enthusiasm to hear from Dr Vivienne McVey, our CEO, and Michelle Lee, MD in Lancashire.

The programme aims to help the nurses taking part to develop their leadership skills, handle the more challenging aspects of their role confidently and expand their professional networks. The participants are, and will continue to be, instrumental in driving quality improvement across our organisation so colleagues and people who use our services will benefit from this training too.

### **Encouraging words from our CEO**

Dr Vivienne McVey, CEO, launched the programme at the Battleship Building in London, headquarters of Virgin Management.

Vivienne inspired participants with her own leadership development journey over 34 years in healthcare. She told of practising as a GP before moving on to co-founding the organisation we now know as Virgin Care in 2006 then leading it after being appointed as Chief Executive last year.

Her well-received keynote speech also covered Vivienne's own family experience of healthcare which ignited her passion to do more to make a difference to people using our services, their families and the wider health care system.

Commenting on the day, Vivienne said: "It was a real privilege to speak at the launch of our Nightingale Challenge programme. The nurses attending have all proved they have the potential to lead us into the future. They know what people who use our services want and need from us and have the experience, dedication and passion to make it happen. By supporting the

development of their leadership skills, we are truly investing in our people and our services right across the country.”

### **What does a mosquito have to do with it?**

Michelle Lee is the Managing Director for our Lancashire services and the sponsor of our Nightingale Challenge programme. She started her nursing training 40 years ago, so is perfectly positioned to share her personal experience from student nurse to senior leader. (Read Michelle’s memories.)

She shared her own leadership journey, encouraging our nurse leaders of the future to embrace this learning opportunity. As part of her passionate, heartfelt and enjoyable talk, she said: “Be the change you want to see, and when you think you are too small to make a difference, sleep in a room with a mosquito!” Great advice for us all.

Michelle is currently planning other ways in which we’ll be celebrating the Year of the Nurse, so keep an eye open for more information.

### **What future nurse leaders had to say**

Feedback on the day from participants was positive. Victoria Boardman, an Immunisation Nurse in Devon said: “I had a fantastic day. It was great listening to everyone’s stories, I came away feeling very inspired!”

Comments from the evaluation forms included:

- “Really good to feel challenged and to have the chance for self-reflection.
- “A great opportunity to meet colleagues from other areas.”
- “Good networking opportunity.”
- “Very motivational so I am now reconsidering how far I could go as a leader”

### **About the Nightingale Challenge**

The Nightingale Challenge is a year-long leadership development programme aimed at nurses at the beginning of their leadership journey. It supports Nursing Now’s global challenge to equip 20,000 nurses and midwives across the world to be influential leaders in their profession.

Back in the summer, TLE started developing our own Nightingale Challenge programme. Tracy Harman, Head of Clinical Education, and Faye Beddow, Leadership Learning Delivery Consultant, collaborated with Michelle Lee, MD in Lancashire, and the then Chief Nurse, Matthew Hodson, to develop and deliver a top quality programme that would run throughout the year.

Tracy said: “I’m very excited about this programme. We designed it to address the future needs of the nursing profession and healthcare in general and our own ethos of making a difference to people who use our services.

“We’ve taken a very practical approach to meeting the needs of our own organisation as the course requires each participant to identify, plan and deliver a small service or quality improvement project.

“We are providing our future nurse leaders with invaluable resources to guide them. Each one will be assigned a mentor, a member of our Senior Leadership team and will have a clinical leadership buddy to support them through their project.

On successful completion of the programme, participants will be offered a place on our Leadership Apprenticeship Programme in 2021 if they wish to continue their development journey.