

# 'Culture of Care' Barometer

A guide to using  
the Barometer



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April 2017 – updated for online tool

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## Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this work, particularly the staff who took part in the survey at the pilot sites and those who engaged in the focus groups.

Thanks also goes to staff in the NHS trusts for liaising with researchers over the use of the Culture of Care Barometer, assisting with the setting up of discussion groups, distribution of the survey and providing background data on the structure and staffing numbers.

We also acknowledge the role of the passionate about care today 'PACT' group (Baroness Audrey Emerton, Professor Dame Elizabeth Fradd, Professor Tricia Hart, Sir Stephen Moss, Flo Panel Coates, and Professor Anne Marie Rafferty) in creating the prototype Barometer upon which this work is based and for their time and insights throughout the subsequent development and piloting process.

We are grateful to NHS England for funding the project and to the support and insights provided by the project steering group: Caroline Alexander, Bronagh Scott, Flo Panel Coates, Yvonne Coghill, Sylvia Tang, Virginia Minogue, Paul Taylor and Nigel Charlesworth.

Employment Research undertook all the survey administration and data processing. Thanks to Geoff Pike for all his help with managing the survey and assisting with analyses.

King's College London received funding from NHS England to support the development and validation of the Culture of Care Barometer and reporting.

This is an independent report prepared by the Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, King's College London.

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## Foreword



***Leading Change, Adding Value;*** a framework for nursing, midwifery and care staff was launched in May 2016. The framework positions nursing, midwifery and care staff as leaders both individually and collectively, to design the future and to use their influence to manage the challenges of today. It is aligned to the NHS Next Steps on the Five Year Forward View document and explains how nursing, midwifery and care staff, whatever their role or place of work can align their work to lead in reducing the three gaps: health and well-being, care and quality, and funding and efficiency.

This framework follows on the success of *Compassion in Practice*. One of the great legacies created through *Compassion in Practice* is the 6Cs: care, compassion, competence, communication, courage and commitment. All are interlinked and underpinned by the crucial role that organisational culture plays in determining the experience of patients, users or services and staff. The 6Cs continue to underpin everything that nursing, midwifery and care staff do and strongly remain as the value base identified within *Leading Change, Adding Value*.

In recent years, a number of reports have been published, casting the spotlight on the quality of care patients have experienced. These reports do not make comfortable reading and in the majority of cases, the failings and the negative impact on patients and staff could have been prevented. More often than not these reports highlight failings in our systems, many of which can be attributed to the culture of care.

The lack of a consistent culture of care and compassion can impede the spread of good practice across organisations and result in devastating experiences for patients, their loved ones and the staff caring for them.

The Culture of Care Barometer is a reflective tool that can help teams and organisations assess and understand better, your workplace's culture of care. If used as part of a planned process, it can help to start conversations about the culture of care, identify areas of strength and weakness and inform planning to make improvements.

Having the courage to start conversations about the culture of care is important when taking steps to lead change.

Leadership is a concurrent theme running through *Leading Change, Adding Value;* a framework for nursing, midwifery and care staff and empowers all staff, whatever their role, wherever they work to lead change, to develop the health and care system of the future.

I hope you will take the time to use the Barometer in your organisation and hope that this guide provides adequate guidance on how to establish and use the tool, and crucially, follow-through with action based on the results.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Cummings'.

**Jane Cummings**  
**Chief Nursing Officer for England**

## What is the Culture of Care Barometer?

The Culture of Care Barometer is designed to help organisations measure the culture of care they provide and explore certain areas of culture in greater depth.

It is a self-assessment diagnostic tool that can be used to stimulate reflection and understanding of the culture of care in your organisation and teams.

The purpose of the Culture of Care Barometer is to create the opportunity for staff to engage in conversations about the culture of the organisation, area or team.

It is through these conversations that real cultural change for the benefit of staff and patients will evolve. It is important to recognise that tools alone do not fix workplace problems - people do. What the Culture of Care Barometer can do is identify areas of strength and weakness.

It is a short, easy-to-complete questionnaire that should take very little time for staff to complete. It is one of a number of tools<sup>1</sup> and processes that can be used to measure and assess culture.

## Who is it for?

The tool is intended for health and care organisations that are driven to understand and improve their culture of care. It can help to:

- Understand the importance of culture in providing quality care and positive experiences for both staff and the people they provide care for.
- Value the impact a positive culture can have on quality care.
- Appreciate that culture is something that needs to be invested in, nurtured and cultivated.
- Acknowledge that people are your most important asset.
- Talk about the culture of the care environment.
- Work together to change the way in which teams and organisations work and communicate to improve the experience of care for patients and staff.

## How to use it

There are four stages to using the Culture of Care Barometer.

- 1. Getting ready**
- 2. Implementation**
- 3. Analysis**
- 4. Feedback and actions**



<sup>1</sup> Building and Strengthening Leadership report and Field Guide (November 2014)

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## 1. Getting ready

It is important to think about how ready and willing your organisation is to start this process of examining and talking about culture.

Improving the culture of care is not an overnight process, nor a 'quick fix' to all your culture-related issues. It requires sustained commitment and action across a number of parts of your organisation.

Getting support and 'buy-in' from the board to the ward is important. It ensures that the process is endorsed and that any actions that arise have senior leadership support. The first step is starting a conversation to define what the culture should be like and to define and plan the journey towards this vision. This conversation should be open, transparent and shared with staff in the organisation.

You will need to consider how your organisation is structured, which department or directorate is best placed to lead this work and who will ultimately take responsibility for acting on the outcomes.

For example, in larger organisations, this might be human resources (HR) or the organisational development (OD) or the transformation team. In a smaller organisation, or in a defined area, it may be a ward manager or team leader.

Readiness depends on:

- How open you are to making changes.
- Your capacity to resource actions (i.e. time, people and money).
- Your willingness to have difficult/courageous conversations.
- Your commitment to taking responsibility for what is happening.

Communicating with your team(s) is essential to manage expectations and gain the confidence of staff in reflecting upon your culture of care. It is critical that your team(s) know what is happening and why, what they need to do, and how the process will unfold over time.

Make sure you consider the following:

- Timing, and whether any other planned activities will impact on the success or co-operation with the Culture of Care Barometer (such as a planned staff opinion survey).
- How you will keep people informed and involved (e.g. through newsletters, the organisation's social media, intranet, team meetings and messages from the board).
- Who the messages will come from (e.g. team leader, immediate manager and executive board members). Senior leadership commitment is important to establish and to communicate about the Barometer and its purpose.
- When things need to happen (e.g. timings, expectations and processes, what's happening and when).
- How you will implement the Barometer, analyse the questionnaires and then use the results.

## 2. Implementation

### Things to think about

- Who will complete the survey?
- What explanatory information will you provide?
- Will it conflict with any other research activities?
- Will it be available online or in paper format?
- If using the paper format, who will ensure it is distributed and collected?
- How will you give people time to complete the Barometer (e.g. a protected extra 20 minutes at work)?
- Are any permissions needed in your organisation?
- How will you collect paper versions of the Culture of Care Barometer (from collection boxes placed around the organisation/or internal mail)?
- Can any immediate concerns identified by the Barometer be resolved or do they need to be escalated and if so, who to?

### Web based tool

The tool is available online: [www.ccb.england.nhs.uk/survey](http://www.ccb.england.nhs.uk/survey). A person in your organisation needs to take on the role of moderator. They set up the survey. The link to start the survey and the results once the survey is closed will be sent to the email address they use.

There are a number of optional questions that can be included in the survey such as age, gender, ethnic background. The moderator can also choose the length of the survey and the date and time that the survey starts and ends.

Once the moderator confirms they are happy with their selection a link to the survey will be automatically sent to their email address. The email from the online Culture of Care Barometer includes suggested text to send in an email to staff to encourage them to take part.

Results will be sent to the moderator within 24 hours of the survey closing. This includes a summary report and the anonymised data in an Excel spreadsheet.

**Remember: talk to staff about the Culture of Care Barometer – encourage a conversation.**

### Reminders and follow-up

People will need regular reminders. Practical ideas for improving response rates include:

- Ensuring your team(s) know it is coming, why they are being asked to complete it and what the next steps are.
- Having a clear timeframe for completion.
- Making someone responsible for following up.
- Sending a reminder by e-mail, putting it on the agenda of meetings, reminders in newsletters and through other communication channels used by your organisation.
- Making sure that people know that senior leadership are committed to its success and to taking action.



**“We launched the survey through our CEO’s blog on our intranet, explaining the reason to use the tool and encouraging colleagues to take part.”**

(Pilot Trust)





### 3. Analysis

Once the survey has closed, the critical next step is to analyse the results.

If you are using the online tool you will receive a summary report and the raw data once the survey has closed.

If you are using the paper based tool you will need to tally up the results for each question. You might find that using an Excel spreadsheet will help in collating, analysing and sharing the results.

The aim is to help highlight some areas to look at in more detail. It is important to clarify up front your reason(s) for using the tool, highlighting any particular areas of interest that you'd like to explore further. It is useful to identify:

- The strongest rated culture of care themes i.e. those that have been most consistently rated 'agree' and 'strongly agree'
- The weakest rated culture of care themes i.e. those that have been most consistently rated 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'
- The themes with a wide range of responses where there is no clear agreement or disagreement.

The high scoring themes highlight where your organisation is probably getting things right. Think about what you are doing in that category that is making a positive difference and make sure you build and consolidate that strength.

The low scoring themes are 'red flag' areas to explore and improve. If there is agreement that a particular theme is not strong, then you need to drill into this area more. Equally, it is worth exploring the themes where the scores across your team(s) are wide ranging. Think about what's happening in your workplace that could be impacting on these scores.

Remember, rich feedback may be contained in free text comments that people might have made. These can give you a vivid and insightful sense of where there might be room for improvement and consolidation.

Also, think about other sources of organisational information that can help you better understand the results (e.g. staff survey responses, Staff Friends and Family Test, patient feedback, complaints, adverse events and errors).

**Remember: talk to staff about the analysis and the themes that are emerging – encourage a conversation and assure people that the survey is completely anonymous.**



**“It is important to recognise and explore differences between groups when interpreting the results and engaging staff to consider underlying factors that may lead to variables between groups/ parts of the organisation.”**

(Pilot Trust)



## 4. Feedback and actions

Your team(s) will have heard about the survey, probably talked about it with their colleagues and spent time completing it. That's why it is really important to maintain integrity in the process and respect the contribution of your team(s) by providing timely feedback and sharing the results, ideally in a group environment. If this does not happen, your team(s) could quickly lose any confidence in the process.

As soon as you can, let your team(s) see the results and any themes or ideas that have emerged from the findings. Invite their ideas for making improvements and share best practice with them. Newsletters, team meetings and workplace visits from senior leaders in the organisation that can influence change are all effective means of getting your team(s) involved in identifying some solutions.

Consider stakeholders, other than from within the organisation, which have an influence or interest in how the culture affects quality of care.

**Remember:** talk to staff about the results and the learning about what is good and what could be better – encourage a conversation.

### Taking action for change

Taking action is the most important stage of the tool's process.

The way to sustain positive culture change is to deliver a sustained action plan. A good action plan maps out those steps in a logical and clear way. There are five key steps to think about when you are developing an action plan:

1. Understand the problem
2. Identify the goals
3. Clarify who should be involved, who is the responsible lead and what the timeline is for change
4. Make the plan
5. Implement the plan and monitor its progress.

**Remember:** talk to staff about what needs to happen and what they can do to make that happen. Agree the action points and encourage dialogue.

## Further information

The Culture of Care Barometer, report and guide can be downloaded from the NHS England website. [www.ccb.england.nhs.uk](http://www.ccb.england.nhs.uk)



# Appendix 1

## Culture of Care Barometer v2 (revised, as tested in phase 2) Side 1

<i>Culture of Care Barometer</i>	KING'S College LONDON		NHS						
Please indicate the extent you agree with each of the following statements by ticking one box on each row. This tool is intended to encourage self reflection, so take your time to consider each statement. When you have finished thinking about the statements, please consider if you need to take any action or talk to anyone.									
	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>				
1) I have the resources I need to do a good job	1	2	3	4	5				
2) I feel respected by my co-workers	1	2	3	4	5				
3) I have sufficient time to do my job well	1	2	3	4	5				
4) I am proud to work in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5				
5) My line manager treats me with respect	1	2	3	4	5				
6) The organisation values the service we provide	1	2	3	4	5				
7) I would recommend this organisation as a good place to work	1	2	3	4	5				
8) I feel well supported by my line manager	1	2	3	4	5				
9) I am able to influence the way things are done in my team	1	2	3	4	5				
10) I feel part of a well-managed team	1	2	3	4	5				
11) I know who my line manager is	1	2	3	4	5				
12) Unacceptable behaviour is consistently tackled	1	2	3	4	5				
13) There is strong leadership at the highest level in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5				
14) When things get difficult, I can rely on my colleagues	1	2	3	4	5				
15) Managers know how things really are	1	2	3	4	5				
16) I feel able to ask for help when I need it	1	2	3	4	5				
17) I know exactly what is expected of me in my job	1	2	3	4	5				
18) I feel supported to develop my potential	1	2	3	4	5				
19) A positive culture is visible where I work	1	2	3	4	5				
20) The people I work with are friendly	1	2	3	4	5				
21) My line manager gives me constructive feedback	1	2	3	4	5				
22) Staff successes are celebrated by the organisation	1	2	3	4	5				
23) The organisation listens to staff views	1	2	3	4	5				
24) I get the training and development I need	1	2	3	4	5				
25) I am able to influence how things are done in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5				
26) The organisation has a positive culture	1	2	3	4	5				
27) I am kept well informed about what is going on in our team	1	2	3	4	5				
28) I have positive role models where I work	1	2	3	4	5				
29) I feel well informed about what is happening in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5				
30) My concerns are taken seriously by my line manager	1	2	3	4	5				
<b>What, if any, action need to be taken to improve the culture of the care environment where you work?</b>									

(continued)

Culture of Care Barometer v2 (revised, as tested in phase 2) Side 2

**Background: about you and where you work...**

**B1 Which site do you work at?**  
Site 1  Site 2  Site 3

**B2 Which setting do you spend most time in?**  
Community..... 1 Ward/Inpatient units..... 3 Office.....   
Clinics/outpatients services ... 2 Residential..... 4 Other (please specify).....   
Other setting:

**B3 Which directorate or service line do you work in?**  
Service 1  1 Service 3  3 Service 5   
Service 2  2 Service 4  4 Other (please specify) .....   
Other service (please specify):

**B4 Which of the following best describes your staff group?**  
Registered nursing and health visiting staff..... 1 Medical including dental .....  5  
Healthcare assistant/Support worker..... 2 Administrative and clerical.....  6  
Allied health professionals ..... 3 Central functions and corporate services.....  7  
Estates and facilities ..... 4 Other (please specify).....  8  
Other staff group:

**B5 What is your pay band?**  
Band 1..... 1 Band 4..... 4 Band 7.....  7  
Band 2..... 2 Band 5..... 5 Band 8.....  8  
Band 3..... 3 Band 6..... 6 Band 9.....  9

**B6 What are your working hours?** Full-time .....  1 Part-time .....  2

**B7 How do you identify your gender?**  1 Prefer not to disclose .....  2

**B8 What is your age group?**  
16-20..... 1 40-49..... 4 65 plus .....  7  
21-29..... 2 50-59..... 5  
30-39..... 3 60-64..... 6

**B9 Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?**

<b>White:</b>	<b>Asian/Asian British:</b>
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British..... <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Indian..... <input type="checkbox"/> 9
Irish..... <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Pakistani..... <input type="checkbox"/> 10
Gypsy or Irish Traveler..... <input type="checkbox"/> 3	Bangladeshi..... <input type="checkbox"/> 11
Any other White background, please describe..... <input type="checkbox"/> 4	Chinese..... <input type="checkbox"/> 12
	Any other Asian background..... <input type="checkbox"/> 13
<b>Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups:</b>	(please describe) <input type="text"/>
White and Black Caribbean..... <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British:</b>
White and Black African..... <input type="checkbox"/>	African..... <input type="checkbox"/> 14
White and Asian..... <input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean..... <input type="checkbox"/> 15
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background..... <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Black/African/Caribbean background.. <input type="checkbox"/> 16
(please describe) <input type="text"/>	(please describe) <input type="text"/>
	<b>Other ethnic group:</b>
	Arab..... <input type="checkbox"/> 17
	Any other ethnic group..... <input type="checkbox"/> 18
	(please describe) <input type="text"/>

**B10 Would you consider English to be your first or main language?**  
Yes .....  1 No .....  2

Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences and views.

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## Appendix 2

### Sample email to colleagues

Dear colleague,

I hope you have seen on our intranet [add link] and via [the staff magazine] that we are seeking views from staff about the culture of our organisation via an anonymous survey.

The survey is for all staff within the organisation regardless of profession or role.

I understand some staff may find it difficult to access a computer, so I enclose paper versions of the questionnaires which I hope you will be able to distribute to your teams.

I would appreciate you encouraging staff to participate as we will only understand staff views if we hear what they have to say.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Kind regards

[CEO]

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## Appendix 3

### Sample notice to staff

#### ***Have you completed the Culture of Care Barometer survey?***

We are seeking the views of all staff in every department across the organisation.

#### **Q. What is the Barometer for?**

A. To help us better understand the culture within our organisation and identify where we need to make changes.

#### **Q. Will my views remain anonymous?**

A. Yes. The questions do not identify individuals.

#### **Q. How can I take part?**

A. You can make your views via the link: [Add link to survey] or by completing a paper questionnaire available from your line manager.

Further information available is available on the intranet:

[Add link to intranet or survey].

