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NHS ENGLAND – PRIVATE BOARD PAPER

Title:

NHS England progress on staff engagement

Purpose of Paper:

- This paper provides an overview of the progress made in NHS England on staff engagement during the last three years.
- It describes the results of the latest Pulse Staff survey which ran from 19 April to 10 May 2017, in which our employee engagement score improved further to 75%, and it charts the progress we have made over the last three years, during which time we have seen our staff engagement scores rise by 12%.

The Board is invited to:

- Note the progress made on staff engagement; and
- Consider the continued approach to improving staff engagement.

NHS England progress on staff engagement

Purpose

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Background

3. The recent NHS England Pulse Staff Survey was the third survey run by ORC International for NHS England. However this is the seventh time we have surveyed employees since NHS England was established in April 2013.
4. We now run two surveys a year a Pulse survey intended to be brief (18 to 20 questions) and a Census survey a detailed and more comprehensive survey (42 to 45 questions).

Overview of the latest results May 2017

5. Our latest survey results for NHS England as a whole reveal the following:
 - Overall response rate: **64%**. This is a 2% increase since the Pulse Staff Survey of May 2016¹.
 - NHS England Employee Engagement (EEI) Score: **75%**. This is a further **increase of 2%** on the previous October 2016 census survey.
 - Variance in percentage of people experiencing bullying and harassment since the October 2016 census survey: **- 4%**
 - Percentage of people experiencing discrimination from a line manager or colleagues: **8%**. This is a **decrease of 3%** since the Census Staff Survey October 2016.
6. The most positive results relate to: relationships with colleagues in an immediate team; willingness to go the extra mile; being treated with dignity and respect by a line manager; and; believing in the purpose of NHS England.
7. 47% of employees agreed with the statement “I am involved in deciding on decisions and changes introduced that affect my team, region or directorate”. This was identified as an area for improvement after the October 2016 survey, in which 37% of employees agreed with this statement. This represents a significant improvement, although it still remains one of the lowest scoring questions and warrants further attention.

¹ An additional 8% of colleagues began the survey but failed to complete it within the survey window

Tracking Progress

8. We have been tracking overall staff engagement scores and a number of key indicators reasonably robustly over the last three years (from 2015) and we are able to spot a number of clear trends in the data.

Time Line	July 2015	May 2016	October 2016	May 2017
Staff Engagement score	63%	69%	73%	75%
Participation rates	66%	61%	71%	64%

12. During this time we have seen a **12% rise in employee engagement scores**. We have also seen a **16% increase in the number of staff who would recommend NHS England as an employer** (up to 61%).
13. Over the last year we have also seen significant increases in the number of staff proud to work for NHS England 70% up 9% and believing in our purpose 81% up 6%.
14. Tracking a number of key indicators within the surveys is also enabling us to focus attention and action on areas for improvement. Early survey data, written comments and staff focus group discussions after the last survey highlighted the need for action to:
- Tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination
 - Promote fairness and inclusion
 - Improve line management capability and practice

Time Line	May 2016	October 2016	May 2017
Staff indicating they have experienced bullying and harassment	23%	24%	20%
Staff indicating they have experienced discrimination	11%	12%	8%
NHS England acts fairly in respect of career progression / promotion decisions, regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age?	51%	52%	66%
My immediate line manager treats me with dignity and respect	85%	87%	89%

15. These results suggest that our Respect at Work Initiative has encouraged more openness about bullying, harassment and discrimination and that action to tackle these issues is beginning to have some traction. Latest figures however suggest still more needs to be done.
16. Work with our BME, LGBT+, DAWN, Women and Careers Staff Networks, the establishment of and work of the NHS England Diversity and Inclusion Group, and

the focus EGM has placed on diversity is also helping to reinforce that we are serious about building a diverse and inclusive work place.

17. Whilst Line Management capability and practice remains a concern, illustrated by a number of the written comments in the survey, the introduction of Line Management standards and the continued roll out of our full Line Management development programme which c200 managers have participated in, and our bite sized Line Management development workshops, seem to be making an impact in this area.

Benchmarking against other organisations

National NHS Staff Survey

18. Overall, direct comparison to the National NHS Staff Survey is not possible due to the different format of questions and methodology used for score calculation. However, there are some comparisons possible, which show:
- 78% of employees within NHS England feel their line manager takes an interest in their health and wellbeing, compared to 67% of employee in the wider NHS
 - 20% of employee within NHS England reported being bullied or harassed in the past 12 months, compared to 24% of employee in the wider NHS
 - 66% of employees within NHS England feel the organisation acts fairly in respect of career progression/promotion, compared to 60% of employee in the wider NHS
 - 61% of employees within NHS England would recommend the organisation as a place to work, compared to 60% of employees in the wider NHS

Health and other public sector organisations

19. ORC International produced a benchmark report comparing NHS England's Pulse Survey results to other health and public sector organisations. NHS England scores either higher than or in line with other organisations for all comparable questions.

UK wide non public sector

20. ORC International also produced a benchmark report comparing NHS England's Pulse survey results to all other UK organisations that they survey. Of the 14 questions compared, NHS England scored higher than or in line with the benchmark group in 11 and poorer than the benchmark group in 3.
21. Areas of good performance compared to other organisations included: employee being motivated to do the best work they can; willing to go the extra mile and not experiencing discrimination.
22. Compared to other organisations, areas which NHS England performed less well were: employee having clear objectives and the proportion of employees intending to work for NHS England in 12 months' time.

Comparison across NHS England

23. Working with ORC has enabled more robust comparisons across NHS England of the Employee Engagement Index. This has highlighted variation, helped strengthen accountability for improvement and target support.

24. Latest results reveal that engagement has improved in the majority of regions/directorates, and the areas which have decreased have only done so by 1%, which is not statistically significant.

	May Pulse 2016	October Census 2016	May Pulse 2017	Difference Pulse 2017 from Census 2016
Finance	83%	83%	86%	3%
Specialised Commissioning	74%	75%	78%	+3%*
Medical	72%	79%	78%	-1%
Nursing	75%	76%	77%	+1%
Operations and Information	75%	75%	76%	+1%
London Region	66%	72%	76%	+5%*
North Region	75%	74%	76%	+1%*
Commissioning Strategy	72%	76%	75%	-1%
NHS England overall	69%	73%	75%	+2%
Transformation and Corporate Operations	71%	72%	73%	0%*
Midlands and East Region	67%	70%	73%	+2%*
South Region	64%	68%	69%	+1%

Variance highlighted in green signifies an increase which is statistically significant.

*Due to rounding to whole numbers the variance may appear greater/smaller than the difference between survey scores.

Experience of different groups

25. More detailed analysis of our survey reveals that the engagement scores of BME, LGBT, disabled, and female employees are often the same as or in some case higher than the NHS England average, but that while gradual improvements have been seen in the last three years these groups report experiencing higher levels of bullying, harassment and discrimination (by c6 to 8%) than other groups.

Conclusions

26. The results of our latest survey show improvements in many areas, importantly, the trend of increasing staff engagement at each survey continues and significant progress has been made to secure a 12% improvement in engagement scores in the last three years.
27. The majority of our key indicators on staff engagement are pointing in the right direction, even in the areas requiring most improvement we are making steady gains.
28. These results suggest our strategy pursued over the last three years is successful and we should continue to
 - use data at local level to inform and target action, and hold Directors to account for improvements through local Organisation development plans
 - Implement a limited number of corporate initiatives to tackle specific areas, maintaining our respect at work initiative and improvement targets to reduce bullying and harassment, rolling out line management development, sustaining a focus on diversity and inclusion and networking staff engagement groups to connect local and national activity.
29. Work to date has provided a solid foundation for the organisation as we enter a further period of organisational change. It will be important that focus is maintained on staff engagement and motivation.