



Why is culture important?

Phase 1: Discover

Culture and leadership programme

TheKingsFund

collaboration trust respect innovation courage compassion

We support providers to give patients safe, high quality, compassionate care within local health systems that are financially sustainable.

Culture matters

The culture of an organisation or a system shapes the behaviour of everyone in it, the quality of care it provides and its overall performance. As the NHS reorganises itself to meet the challenges it faces both now and in the future, focus on its culture is as important as ever.

Leadership, particularly compassionate and inclusive leadership, is the key to enabling culture changes that allow NHS organisations to:

- deliver high quality care and value for money
- ensure that staff are free to show compassion, speak up and continuously improve in an environment free from bullying, where there is learning, quality and effective system leadership
- help boards to assure their governance on the culture and capability domain of the well-led framework

“The most important single change in the NHS in response to this report would be for it to become, more than ever before, a system devoted to continual learning and improvement of patient care, top to bottom and end to end”

Berwick Review into patient safety, 2013

The case for change

Condition 2 of 'Developing people – Improving Care' the national strategic framework for improvement and leadership, calls for all NHS organisations to develop strategies for leadership and talent management.

“Culture is the way we do things around here. It is the norms, rituals, expected behaviours and unwritten rules within a work organisation. Culture is vital because it shapes our behaviour and values at work.

Values can reflect compassion, eagerness to improve care, striving for perfect care, valuing and supporting colleagues or they can reflect a commitment to hiding poor performance and errors, minimising time and communication with patients, caring only about our department rather than patient care overall, and being cynical about the organisation as a whole.

When we join an organisation we want to fit in and do so by conforming to the values and norms that we see others enacting.

So in order to create cultures of high quality, continually improving and compassionate care we must understand the existing culture and put in place measures to achieve a culture that truly represents and reinforces those values of high quality (safe, clinically effective, patient centred) care, continual improvement and compassion.”

*Professor Michael West
Head of Thought Leadership, The King's Fund*

What can organisations do?

NHS Improvement, The Kings Fund, and The Center for Creative Leadership are developing some practical resources. You can view these [online](#) or email nhsi.culture@nhs.net for more information.

Following this programme will help you create a strategy to develop the culture and leadership of your organisation.

Even if you are already working on culture our resources can be adapted for your existing programme.

Our pilot trusts have told us that a culture and leadership programme works best if there is 'buy-in' at board and executive level. Our toolkit has lots of helpful tips to help you achieve this.

Testimonials from trusts

Below are some comments from providers that have undertaken work to improve their culture:

“At Derby Teaching Hospitals we have been supported and encouraged by our board, to organically explore ways of creating and developing a culture, through the collective leadership model, which is robust enough to meet the challenging demands of a 21st century NHS organisation.

We have focused on the ‘Why’ of the Simon Senik ‘What, How, Why’ model to developing our leadership strategy, which includes leadership development at all levels, to build on the organisation’s successes, creating a culture of staff engagement and empowerment in order to make the necessary changes together”

*Amanda Parker
Derby Teaching Hospitals, NHS Foundation Trust*

“Culture is right at the heart of everything that matters to patients, families and staff within the NHS. In practical terms this means putting great value on developing outstanding connections and relationships between individuals, teams and across organisations. It means a focus on values and behaviours, an emphasis on kindness, listening and empathy, and a constant quest to gain new perspectives.

It means flattening hierarchies and it comes from partnerships between patients, families and professionals that drive improvements to care that really matter to patients. And more than anything, it is something that we can all influence.”

Dr Bob Klaber
Imperial College, NHS Trust

“Understanding culture is like looking under every stone within your organisation, and trying to find the ‘truth’, at all levels. It is about really understanding the reality of what staff and patients see and how they feel by creating an environment and approach that gives people permission to share what matters to them. This is when you really start to understand the pulse of the organisation.

It is like giving an Antibiotic without checking that it actually works; you have taken an action that it is the right thing to do, but without checking the impact or ‘reality’, it could ultimately be ineffective, costly or cause harm’.

Ceri Charles
Nottingham University Hospitals Foundation Trust

What resources are available?

The resources are based on national and international evidence that identifies **elements and behaviours** needed for high quality care cultures. They rest on the principle of 'compassionate and inclusive leadership', which empowers staff at all levels, as individuals and in teams, to take action to improve care within and across trusts – 'leadership of all, by all and for all'.

Using the resources, you can run culture and leadership programmes in three phases to:

Phase 1

Discover any cultural issues you need to address
resources available now

Phase 2

Design strategies for developing
compassionate and inclusive leadership

Phase 3

Deliver the strategies

Community of practice and work so far

We have worked with three NHS providers to design and test every aspect of our programme to make sure it has lasting value for you. So far we have produced a toolkit to support trusts in the discover phase, and we will also provide more materials to support trusts going through the design and deliver stage. This work involves staff at all levels.

Community of practice

We facilitate a growing and self sustaining community of practice, that's bringing together people from providers across the NHS to share best practice and learn from each others experience. We also hold regular events across the country.

If you would like to be part of this group contact nhsi.culture@nhs.net



Three outcomes

Our culture and leadership programmes seeks to deliver improvement through three key outcomes:

- quality and value
- continuous Improvement
- healthy, flourishing and engaged staff.

Underpinning this are the 10 leadership behaviours and cultural elements that support collective leadership. These have been identified through work with The Kings Fund.

Leadership behaviours		Cultural elements
Facilitating shared agreement about direction, priorities and objectives	Encouraging pride, positivity and identity in the team / organisation	Vision and values Constant commitment to quality of care
Ensuring effective performance	Ensuring necessary resources are available and used well	Goals and performance Effective, efficient, high quality performance
Modelling support & compassion	Valuing diversity and fairness	Support and compassion Support, compassion & inclusion for all patients and staff
Enabling learning and innovation	Helping people to grow and lead	Learning and innovation Continuous learning, quality improvement and innovation
Building cohesive and effective team working	Building partnerships between teams, departments, and organisations	Team work Enthusiastic cooperation, team working & support within & across orgs.

Where can I find out more?

Contact us at nhsi.culture@nhs.net. You can also use this address to join our growing Community of Practice, a place to share experiences and learning about Culture.

How long does the programme take and how much resource does it need?

It takes time to identify gaps and then to change culture. The length of time your culture and leadership programme will run for depends on the areas you identify for improvement. However work to improve culture should never stop.

This work does require a resource commitment to deliver, and our programme is designed to help you utilise this resource effectively to achieve change.

Where do I start?

The Phase one toolkit is available online at <https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/culture-and-leadership/>

Phase 2 - Design, and Phase 3 - Deliver, will be available autumn 2017 and 2018 respectively.

About the programme

NHS Improvement, the Center for Creative Leadership and the King's Fund are working on a two-year programme to help trusts (foundation trusts and NHS trusts) to develop cultures that enable and sustain continuously improving, safe, high quality, compassionate care.

Compassionate and inclusive leadership is the key to creating cultures that will give NHS staff the freedom and confidence to act in the interests of patients, and will lead to sustainable clinical, operational and financial performance. It will help to continually improve and redesign services and support organisations to develop the environments necessary to enable the new care models envisaged in the Five Year Forward View to grow.

The programme will provide practical support to help trusts diagnose their cultural issues, develop collective leadership strategies to address them and implement any necessary changes. The programme will take place in three phases (diagnose/design/implement) over a two year period.

We will explore and link to existing resources and programmes of work, for example the implementation of the Carter review. Where they add value we will build this into the programme.

To ensure the programme has lasting value for trusts we are working with three pilot NHS trusts that will help develop, design and test all aspects of the support.

The pilot trusts are:

- Central Manchester University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- East London NHS Foundation Trust
- Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

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