

To:

- Trust Chief People Officers / HR Directors
- Trust Chief Nurses
- Trust Directors of Nursing
- Trust Directors and Heads of Midwifery

NHS England
Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8UG

13 July 2022

cc.

- NHSE Regional Workforce Directors
- NHSE Regional Chief Nurses
- Regional Chief Midwives
- ICB Chief People Officers / HR Directors
- ICB Chief Nurses

Dear colleague,

Retaining our nursing and midwifery colleagues

Thank you to you and your teams for your collective dedication, commitment, leadership and support in delivering our nursing and midwifery priorities during one of the most challenging times in the history of our NHS. We recognise the vital role nursing and midwifery staff play in ensuring the delivery of safe and effective healthcare.

As we move towards recovery, we are consolidating the focus on evidence-based interventions that have the greatest impact on the retention of nurses and midwives.

Based on the evidence we have, there are two important principles which will support the retention of nurses and midwives; namely:

1. **Targeted intervention for different career stages: early career, experience at work and later career.** There are different risk points related to job satisfaction and retention of nurses and midwives at these stages, and our response and support needs to be tailored accordingly.
2. **Bundles of high-impact actions are more effective than single actions.** A bundle approach is needed to deliver sustained gains, applied to the different career stages and informed by evidence of what drives job satisfaction, experience and therefore retention.

We are championing this focussed approach and to support you in this, ask that each organisation, if not already doing so, from July 2022 prioritises the delivery of **five high impact actions** that will impact on early career, experience at work, and late career staff, maximising the retention and experience of our nursing and midwifery staff. Trusts should have in place retention action plans, including improvement metrics and leaver rate trajectories approved by your boards which will provide the focus for your improvement plans.

To provide you with further information on the high impact actions, we are inviting you to a **nursing and midwifery retention webinar on 20 July 2022 at 11am – 12.30pm**. If you are unable to join us, please ensure your organisation has a representative in attendance to support you with this work. Please register your interest via the NHS England website and an invitation will be sent out in due course.

High impact actions

1. **Complete the nursing and midwifery retention self-assessment tool** to identify the biggest gaps against globally evidenced best practice and the People Promise areas and implement a retention improvement action plan from July 2022. The tool is hosted on the [NHS England website](#).

The nursing and midwifery retention self-assessment tool brings together national and international evidence related to the bundle of interventions that are likely to have the greatest impact on job satisfaction and retention of nurses and midwives. The tool will enable organisations to assess themselves against this bundle and use the outcome of this to develop a high-quality retention improvement plan.

2. **Implement the National Preceptorship Framework.**

We recognise that many systems and organisations may already have preceptorship programmes or support for early career nurses and midwives. Ensuring supportive transition and ongoing guidance and development beyond the preceptorship period is also critical. We know that the quality of preceptorship nationally is variable and to ensure consistency in delivery and ensure a high-quality preceptorship experience for all early career nurses and midwives, we are asking you to adopt the National Preceptorship Framework due to be launched in September 2022. Further information will be provided ahead of the launch.

3. **Implement legacy mentoring schemes** to support late career nurses and midwives to extend their NHS career whilst supporting early career nurses and

midwives. We will provide you with a guidance on implementation of legacy mentors from September 2022.

4. **Encourage staff to attend national pension seminars** and access information on [pensions and flexible retirement options](#) and encourage trusts to ensure the availability of flexible retirement options.

5. **Develop a menopause policy / guidance** or add to existing policies and action plan or amend your policies and take action to ensure availability of menopause support. Other relevant policies could include flexible working, health and wellbeing and equality diversity and inclusion. National guidance on menopause is in development.

We will provide some national support to enable you to implement these interventions that address key drivers for retention.

If you have questions in the meantime, please contact the National Retention Programme: england.lookingafterourpeople@nhs.net

Yours faithfully,



Prof Em Wilkinson-Brice
National Director for People
NHS England



Dame Ruth May, DBE
Chief Nursing Officer, England
NHS England