Caring for staff wellbeing – improving patient care

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Improving Staff Health and Wellbeing: Reducing Sickness Absence

Caroline Corrigan
National Director of People Strategy

@NHSImprovement #CaringForOurPeople

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The current picture:

Annualised sickness absence rates in the NHS in England (weighted)
Jan 2017 - Dec 2017

- Ambulance: 5.42%
- Mental Health and...: 4.79%
- Community Provider Trust: 4.73%
- Acute: 3.95%
- Commissioning Support Unit: 2.85%
- Clinical Commissioning...: 2.82%
- Special Health Authority: 2.80%
- ENGLAND NHS AVERAGE: 4.13%
Improving Staff Health and Wellbeing: Reducing Sickness Absence

Absence Rate by AfC Band and selected Cluster Groups in England, November 2017
The current picture: Occupation Groups

Improving Staff Health and Wellbeing: Reducing Sickness Absence

Professionally Qualified
Support to Clinical & Admin

NHS Improvement
Health at work

Main causes for lost working days in 2013

- Musculoskeletal conditions: 31m days
- Minor illnesses (coughs and colds): 27m days
- Stress, anxiety or depression: 15m days

1 in 3 of employees with a long term health condition have not discussed it with their employer.

52% of employees report having access to occupational health through their work.

39% report having access to independent counselling.

Costs of presenteeism (attending work while ill) are estimated to be £30bn annually.

Employers spend £9bn each year on sick pay and associated costs.


Improving Staff Health and Wellbeing: Reducing Sickness Absence
Stevenson-Farmer Review

We will work with Trust leaders at all levels to further develop:
- Positive and supportive workplace cultures,
- Good people management practices and
- Improved staff engagement and wellbeing that will reduce sickness absence levels caused by mental ill health.
Our improvement collaborative with 73 Trusts

All 10 Ambulance Trusts:
- Implementing and evaluating interventions such as Fast-Track Occupational Health Services

12 Improvement Sites:
- 15 Trusts facing attendance challenges in the last year

All 36 Trusts:
- 36 Fast-track engagement via existing Retention Improvement Programme

All Trusts:
- Health and Wellbeing Framework, access to thematic interventions, case studies and the resources supplied and developed during the programme

Improving Staff Health and Wellbeing: Reducing Sickness Absence
An overview of the Health and Wellbeing Improvement Direct Support Programme

Day 1-30
- Data packs and Health and Wellbeing Direct Support Programme launch event

Day 31-60
- Buddying trusts with NHS Improvement workforce leads, Trust visits and close support

Day 61-90
- Trusts develop Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan and submit plan after 90 days

Day 90+
- The aim is to see improvements in sickness absence rates in the next 6-12 months.

Trusts are not necessarily expected to develop a new plan; plans should build on and refine existing work, as well as exploring new areas of opportunity.
Final thoughts

“NHS leaders should investigate the importance of nurturing positive, trusting cultures within which staff have high levels of wellbeing; where they feel valued, respected and supported; where they have high levels of influence in their workplaces; and where they are consequently more highly engaged.” Dawson and West, Kings Fund 2017
Jennifer Gardner, Interim Assistant Director
Who are NHS Employers
The development and employment team
Ready, steady, resilience
Key resources and guidance
Who are NHS Employers?

As an organisation, our intention is to be the authoritative voice of workforce leaders, experts in HR, and negotiate fairly to get the best deal for patients.

Lead,
Represent,
Support.
The health and wellbeing programme

Engage with NHS, key stakeholders and experts in field

Provide latest information, support and resources.

Health and wellbeing leads community and network

Represent and influence future work and development
Ready, Steady, Resilience

A day in the life...........
How are you feeling today?

Start
Vital signs – eight elements

Know your data
Prevention
Intervention
Evaluate and act

Leadership
Shared strategic vision
Engagement
Communication
Thank you

• [www.nhsemployers.org/healthandwellbeing](http://www.nhsemployers.org/healthandwellbeing)

• Email: healthandwellbeing@nhsemployers.org

• @NHSE_Wellbeing

• @NHSEmployers
‘Know Your Staff’

Putting the person (not the process) at the heart of people management

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The background to this journey

April 2015:
• Bullying?
• Culture?
• Staff relations?
• HR/ staff side relations?
• Where’s the carrot?
• Disempowered managers?

... Something had to change ... but what ... and how?
We chose the Sickness Management Policy and it became the Attendance Policy

• The current policy and approach was not working – we agreed a new Attendance Policy \textit{WITH} the staff side
• It demonstrated a desire for change
• It set a positive tone for the future
• This was more than just re-engineering a policy

It was the catalyst for change to people management and relationships with the staff side
Key statistical evidence base:

The **25:15:60 rule** (fixed)
- 25% of absences are self-certified up to 7 days; 60% are greater than 28 days.

The **first week rule**: off for >7 days = absent for 1-3 months
- If a staff member does not resume within the first week, on average, the duration of the absence will be 6 weeks.

The ‘**computer says no’** principle
- Do not hide behind the computer. You are the manager. Be approachable so that your staff feel comfortable to share their concerns for you to act upon.
KNOW YOUR STAFF

Outcomes focused

People before process

No surprises

Apply discretion

Clarity, Ownership, Accountability

Trust, Relationships, Engagement, Empowered

Our Values: People focused, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, Excellence
‘KNOW YOUR STAFF’

Use your discretion – you are the manager!
So ... what?

- Sickness is down 11% in 12 months
- 40 extra staff available every day
- Fewer staff have 4+ absences
- Staff with no absences in last 12 months
- Fewer staff being sanctioned

... and ‘Know your staff’ is embedding