

2 HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

Introduction

- 2.1 The Human Resources Strategy sets out the strategic goals for NHS Somerset for the period 2009/10 – 2011/12.
- 2.2 The Human Resources Strategy is an integral part of the overall service development strategy of NHS Somerset and there is a strong relationship between the Human Resources Strategy and other strategic frameworks for NHS Somerset, particularly the Strategic Framework for Improving Health in Somerset.
- 2.3 The Human Resources Strategy is also fully aligned with national and NHS South West Human Resources objectives as set out in Section 1.

Intended Outcome

- 2.4 The intended outcomes of this strategy are as follows:
- to demonstrate a world class standard in the management of its people
 - for NHS Staff Survey results to continue to improve and NHS Somerset achieving the upper quartile on each measure
 - a continuation of the effective and constructive partnership working with Staff Side Representatives
 - to reduce the sickness absence rates to the target rate of 3.65% on a sustained basis
 - to evidence the improvement in recruitment and retention rates

Human Resources Vision

- 2.5 The Human Resources vision is for NHS Somerset to become a world class employer in the management of its people and an employer of choice. NHS Somerset clearly recognises that staff are its most valued asset and the aim of NHS Somerset is to develop a culture that:
- expects staff to work to a high professional standard in everything that they do
 - is a learning organisation by investing in its staff, so that staff are developed to their full potential
 - provides staff with rewarding careers

- encourages staff to have a healthy work life balance
- treats its staff with dignity and respect
- rewards staff appropriately
- engages with staff at every level within the organisation

Becoming a World Class Employer

2.6 The Department of Health is committed to developing the NHS as a world class employer and has published the documents 'A High Quality Workforce – NHS Next Stage Review' and 'A National Framework to Support Local Workforce Strategy Development', both of which set out key targets for NHS employers. NHS Somerset is committed to achieving all of these targets.

2.7 NHS Somerset is committed to becoming a world class employer because:

- there is growing evidence that shows there is a substantial link between the way people are managed, employee attitude and service improvement
- world class employers attract, recruit and retain the best staff with the best skills
- world class employers can deliver the best services as a result. They can also attract hard-to-reach groups and should have progressive policies on diversity
- good work-life balance, flexible working, childcare provision and healthy workplace policies are important to ensure that staff can perform to their full potential and have satisfying and rewarding careers
- linking good employment practices with better outcomes for people who use services is crucial

2.8 For NHS Somerset to become a world class employer it must develop and implement the right people management practices for the workforce, which include:

- effective recruitment and induction processes
- support for professional training and continuing professional development
- clear and accessible career structures and opportunities for people to develop and reach their full potential

- effective retention policies
- flexible working practices
- effective childcare support
- progressive policies on diversity
- staff involvement policies and partnership working with Staff Side
- good benefits including reward structures and leave allowances
- effective appraisal systems and personal development planning
- effective policies on bullying, harassment and violence
- effective health and wellbeing policies and practices
- a commitment to achieve key standards such as Improving Working Lives and Investors in People
- partnership working and engagement at local and regional levels with Sector Skills Councils
- implementation of the Skills for Care leadership and management strategy and toolkit for employers
- effective policies and systems for managing temporary staffing

Contractual Relationship with Staff

2.9 NHS Somerset will develop a Staff Charter to set out the contractual relationship between NHS Somerset and its employees. This important framework consists of two parts. These are as follows:

- Part I - The commitment NHS Somerset makes to its employees such as:
 - * fairness at work
 - * staff involvement
 - * work life balance
 - * security
 - * healthy working environment

- * personal development
- * performance review
- Part II - The commitment employees must make to NHS Somerset in return, such as:
 - * embracing the values of NHS Somerset
 - * abiding by the rules, policies and procedures of NHS Somerset
 - * showing courtesy and respect to others
 - * ensuring behaviour is non discriminatory
 - * working to the best of their ability to achieve the highest standards
 - * working co-operatively and supportively with colleagues
 - * working safely

2.10 Working in partnership with Trades Unions and Staff Side, a Staff Charter will be developed for NHS Somerset. The Staff Charter will be published widely, issued to all existing staff and given to all new job applicants during the recruitment process.

Staff Engagement

2.11 Staff engagement and involvement is essential if NHS Somerset is to become a world class employer and improve the delivery of services for the population of Somerset. There are currently a number of formal mechanisms for engaging and involving staff and NHS Somerset is committed to continuing with all of them. The current forms of staff engagement and involvement include:

- NHS Staff Survey
- Health and Wellbeing Survey
- Exit interviews
- Staff Side feedback through the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee
- Staff Side feedback through the Joint Policy Review Group
- Staff Side Feedback through the Improving Working Lives Group
- Staff Suggestion Box

Staff Survey

- 2.12 The NHS Staff Survey is conducted each year and the results are evaluated to drive improvements within the organisation. The results of the Staff Survey are published and communicated to all staff as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- 2.13 It should be noted that, as with all surveys, there is a margin of error and that these can be significant where only a small percentage of responses appear to indicate a problem.
- 2.14 The results of the NHS Staff Survey in 2008 are set out below:
- 75% of staff completed the Staff Survey (national average 59%)
 - 78% of staff who responded said they had taken advantage of flexible working options in their current job (national average 81%)
 - 70% of staff who responded said that they had been appraised in the previous 12 months (national average 66%)
 - 37% of staff who responded said that their appraisal had been well structured (national average 29%)
 - 59% of staff who responded said that they had a personal development plan (national average 59%)
 - 70% of staff who responded said that they had received job related training in the previous 12 months (national average 83%)
 - 55% of staff who responded said that they worked in a well structured team environment (national average 51%)
 - 84% of staff who responded said that they had received Health and Safety training in the previous 12 months (national average 76%)
 - 100% of staff who responded said that they had witnessed an error had reported it (national average 97%)
 - 77% of staff who responded said that they worked longer hours than they were contracted for (national average 65%)
 - 7% of staff who responded said that they had suffered from a work related injury in the previous 12 months (national average 11%)

- 27% of staff who responded said that they had suffered from work related stress in previous 12 months (national average 28%)
- 10% of staff who responded said that they has witnessed potentially harmful errors or near incidents in previous 12 months (national average 24%)
- 0% of staff who responded said that they had experienced physical violence from patients or relatives in previous 12 months (national average 5%)
- 1% of staff who responded said that they had experienced physical violence from staff in previous 12 months (national average 2%)
- 7% of staff who responded said they had experienced bullying or harassment from patients or relatives in previous 12 months (national average 16%)
- 14% of staff who responded said they has experienced bullying or harassment from staff in previous 12 months (national average 15%)
- staff were asked to what extend NHS Somerset was committed to helping them find a good work life balance. In a possible scoring range of 1 - 5 (1 representing virtually no commitment by the organisation and 5 representing excellent commitment by the organisation) NHS Somerset scored 3.7 (national average 3.5)
- staff were asked to assess the extent to which they felt that their manager provided them with support, guidance and feedback on their work and took into account their opinions before making decisions that affect their work. In a possible scoring range of 1 - 5 (1 representing unsupportive managers and 5 representing highly supportive managers) NHS Somerset scored 3.9 (national average 3.7)
- staff were asked to assess the quality of job design (clear job content, feedback and staff involvement). In a possible scoring range of 1 – 5 (1 representing very negative feelings and 5 representing very positive feelings) NHS Somerset scored 3.6 (national average 3.4)
- staff were asked whether they were aware of the procedures for reporting errors, near misses and incidents, and to what extent they felt that the organisation encourages such reports and then treats the reports fairly and confidentially. In a possible scoring range of 1 - 5 (1 representing very unfair and ineffective procedures and 5 representing very fair and

effective reporting procedures) NHS Somerset scored 3.4 (national average 3.4)

- staff were asked about the extent to which they think the organisation takes effective action if staff are physically attacked, harassed or bullied. In a possible scoring range of 1 - 5 (1 representing the organisation never taking effective action and 5 representing the organisation always taking effective action) NHS Somerset scored 3.6 (national average 3.5)
- staff were asked about the availability of hand washing facilities for staff and visitors. In a possible scoring range of 1 - 5 (1 representing no availability and 5 representing full availability) NHS Somerset scored 4.7 (national average 4.4)
- staff were asked about how satisfied they were with various aspects of their job. In a possible scoring range of 1 - 5 (1 representing very dissatisfied and 5 representing very satisfied) NHS Somerset scored 3.7 (national average 3.5)
- staff were asked to assess the extent to which they were considering leaving the organisation and looking for a new job. In a possible scoring range of 1 - 5 (1 representing staff who have no intention of leaving their jobs and 5 representing staff who are very keen to leave their jobs) NHS Somerset scored 2.3 (national average 2.6)

2.15 The results of the Staff Survey identify some areas of good practice and satisfaction which can be built upon across the organisation. However, there are also some areas identified where further organisational development is required. The key actions identified include:

- review the appraisal policy and provide comprehensive appraisal training for both managers and staff
- ensure that all managers attend the newly developed 'Management Development Programme' so that management competencies are developed and improved
- review the processes and communication channels for reporting errors, near misses and incidents
- review the Health and Safety Strategy and policy
- finalise and implement the new Stress Management Strategy and policy
- develop an effective Zero Tolerance policy for tackling violence, bullying and harassment against staff

2.16 A separate Action Plan has been developed to address the issues raised in the 2008 Staff Survey.

2.17 NHS Somerset is totally committed to the NHS Staff Survey and will continue to conduct the survey on an annual basis.

Exit Interviews

2.18 Exit interviews are an extremely effective way of finding out the true feelings staff have towards the organisation. Carrying out Exit Interviews is therefore important and it is the intention of NHS Somerset to provide every member of staff leaving the employment of the organisation with an Exit Interview.

2.19 The aims of an Exit Interview are as follows:

- to establish the reason why the staff member is leaving
- to provide an opportunity to discuss matters that may be of concern to the member of staff
- to ensure that the good aspects of the member of staff's employment is promoted as good practice and built upon
- to analyse trends in the reasons given for leaving
- to feedback to Directorates for action planning purposes

2.20 Currently, Exit Interviews are only undertaken sporadically across the organisation and therefore an Exit Interview Policy will be developed to encourage all staff leaving the employment of NHS Somerset to attend an Exit Interview.

2.21 Results from Exit Interviews will be recorded anonymously and the findings will be reported in the Workforce Information Reports which are presented to the Board.

Joint Management and Staff Side Committee

2.22 NHS Somerset recognises that it is to the mutual benefit of NHS Somerset and its employees for employees to be represented by Trades Unions. NHS Somerset therefore recognises all the major Trades Unions and there is an active Joint Management and Staff Side Committee.

2.23 The Joint Management and Staff Side Committee meets bi monthly and is well supported and attended by Senior Management and Staff Side Representatives from different staffing groups and Trades Unions.

2.24 The purpose of the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee is to not only ensure there is collective consultation and negotiation

with staff, but to ensure that there is meaningful partnership working. This does not only improve the working lives of staff, but improves health care services for the Somerset population.

- 2.25 NHS Somerset is not only committed to continuing its support for the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee, but will also work closely with the Staff Side to identifying ways to improve partnership working further in the future.
- 2.26 To support Staff Side Representatives with their development needs, a recurring annual budget of £10,000 will be made available to the Staff Side Chair. The budget allocation will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Joint Policy Review Group

- 2.27 The Joint Policy Review Group is a sub group of the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee. Membership of the group consists of elected Staff Side representatives, Human Resources professionals, and a representative from the NHS Counter Fraud Service.
- 2.28 The purpose of the Joint Policy Review Group is to provide a forum for effective staff consultation on all Human Resources policies. Policies that have been consulted on at the Joint Policy Review Group are forwarded to the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee for ratification.
- 2.29 The ratification of policies at the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee is necessary as it demonstrates that there has not only been effective consultation on every Human Resources policy, but that there has been partnership working between Management and the Staff Side. However, the ratification of policies by the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee does not necessarily mean that the Staff Side are in agreement with every policy, but rather that there has been a process of effective staff consultation.
- 2.30 NHS Somerset is totally committed to continuing its support for the Joint Policy Review Group.

Improving Working Lives Group

- 2.31 Improving Working Lives was a national Department of Health initiative which was launched to embed good Human Resource practice across all staff groups and make the NHS a model employer which delivers modern working practices throughout the workforce.
- 2.32 Although the Department of Health has now ended the formal Improving Working Lives accreditation process, the principles of Improving Working Lives remain standards of good Human

Resources practice and NHS Somerset continues to be committed to the Improving Working Lives principles and to embed the standards within the organisation.

2.33 NHS Somerset has therefore established an Improving Working Lives Project Group. Staff Representatives from different staffing groups, together with Human Resource professionals meet quarterly.

2.34 The purpose of the Improving Working Lives Group is to not only oversee the effective delivery of the Improving Working Lives Standards but to:

- support NHS Somerset in achieving the Investors in People Standards
- review the results of the NHS Staff Survey and agree priority areas for improvement
- act as a steering group for the Health Workplace Strategy
- act as a steering group for the Major Incident Human Resources Strategy

2.35 NHS Somerset will continue its commitment to the success of the Improving Working Lives Group to ensure that there is effective staff consultation and staff involvement in the organisation's drive to become a world class employer.

Staff Suggestion Box

2.36 An electronic Staff Suggestion Box has been developed to encourage staff to get more involved in the work of NHS Somerset for the purposes of improving healthcare and improving the working lives of staff. The Staff Suggestion Box also provides an opportunity for all staff to contact the Director of Workforce directly.

2.37 All staff suggestions are received and acknowledged by the Director of Workforce where the sender has chosen to provide their contact details. However, a facility exists for staff to make anonymous staff suggestions if they prefer.

2.38 All staff suggestions are recorded and shared at the Joint Management and Staff Side Committee on a regular basis.

2.39 NHS Somerset is committed to continuing with the Staff Suggest Box as it provides an effective forum for staff to raise issues, raise concerns, and make recommendations to Management.

2.40 All of the above forms of staff engagement provide valuable mechanisms for staff to get involved in the activities of NHS Somerset. Not only will all of the above forms of staff engagement

continue, but new ways of encouraging staff engagement will be sought in partnership with Staff Side Representatives.

Investors in People

2.41 The Investors in People Standard is a business improvement tool designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people. It was developed in 1990 by a partnership of leading businesses and national organisations to help organisations to improve performance and realise objectives through the management and development of their people. Since it was developed, the Standard has been reviewed every three years to ensure that it remains relevant, accessible and attractive to all.

2.42 Investors in People provides a flexible framework which any organisation can adapt for its own requirements. It mirrors the business planning cycle (Plan, Do, Review), making it clear for organisations to follow and implement in their own planning cycle. The principles and indicators of the Investors in People Standards are set out below:

- Plan - developing strategies to improve the performance of the organisation. The indicators are:
 - * a strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood
 - * learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives
 - * strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people
 - * the capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood
- Do - taking action to improve the performance of the organisation. The indicators are:
 - * managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people
 - * people's contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued
 - * people are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision making
 - * people learn and develop effectively

- Review - evaluating the impact on the performance of the organisation. The indicators are:
 - * investment in people improves the performance of the organisation
 - * improvements are continually made to the way people are managed and developed

2.43 NHS Somerset is committed to the Investors in People Standards and will pledge in 2009 to achieve the Standards in 2011.

Human Resources High Impact Changes

2.44 The Department of Health has published a document titled 'A National Framework to Support Local Workforce Strategy Development', which included 10 Human Resources High Impact Changes. The 10 Human Resources High Impact Changes are areas where Human Resources interventions can make a real difference to the bottom line impact in terms of cost, quality, patient care and efficiency.

2.45 The 10 Human Resources High Impact Changes do not only demonstrate a clear 'line of sight' between what Human Resources does every day and its clear value to the organisation, but also helps Human Resources become more focused on the 'bottom line', and in turn enable Human Resources to demonstrate its true value.

2.46 The 10 Human Resources High Impact Changes are set out below:

- support and lead effective change management
- develop effective recruitment, good induction and supportive management
- develop shared service models and effective use of information technology
- manage temporary staffing costs
- promote staff health and manage sickness absence
- promote job and service re-design
- develop and implement appraisal
- involve staff and work in partnership to develop good employee relations
- champion good people management practices

- provide effective training and development

2.47 NHS Somerset is committed to the Human Resources High Impact Changes and these have been incorporated into the Workforce Strategy. The Human Resources High Impact Change which has not been incorporated into Workforce Strategy is the development of shared service models. The appropriateness of this Human Resources High Impact Change will be reviewed to see if there is an evidence base for developing shared services for Human Resources.

Policies and Procedures

2.48 The development of a comprehensive list of Human Resources policies and procedures is fundamental to the business needs of NHS Somerset. Policies provide guidance to managers about what to do in a particular circumstance, and helps employees understand what NHS Somerset expects of them.

2.49 NHS Somerset also has a legal obligation to have certain policies and procedures to ensure that staff rights, which are enshrined in law, are protected. The policies that NHS Somerset are required to have by law include:

- equality policies
- health and safety policies
- disciplinary and grievance policies
- maternity, paternity and adoption policies

2.50 NHS Somerset is committed to developing policies and procedures which:

- have been drafted to a high standard
- reflect the business needs of NHS Somerset
- have been drafted in partnership with the Staff Side
- comply with employment law
- reflect NHS Somerset's aspiration to become a world class employer

2.51 NHS Somerset currently has 30 Human Resources policies and procedures. By December 2009, a total of 55 Human Resources policies and procedures will be developed.

Sustainable Development

2.52 NHS Somerset is committed to reducing the harmful effects of its activities on the environment and NHS Somerset has developed a Sustainable Development and Carbon Management Strategy. The document has six key themes which are as follows:

- transport
- procurement
- facilities management
- employment and skills
- community engagement
- new buildings

2.53 In relation to employment and skills, the Sustainable Development and Carbon Management Strategy says:

- sound, sustainable Human Resources practices help improve the mental and physical health of employees and have considerable knock-on effects for employees' friends and family. They also contribute to the sustainable development of the NHS through direct support of reducing carbon emissions by supporting policies such as:
 - * permitting and encouraging flexible working where appropriate to the role
 - * providing training for staff to develop skills which support carbon emission reduction such as in procurement, reducing the need for travel through the use of telephone/video conferencing, using local training facilities, increased use of Digital Versatile Discs (DVDs), electronic learning (e-Learning) and portable media player (iPod) training
 - * recruiting and training local people
- the NHS can also support the broader aims of sustainable development and reducing health inequalities by contributing to local regeneration, and maintaining a happy and healthy workforce

2.54 The importance of sustainable development has been considered in the development of all the strategies contained within the 'umbrella' Workforce Strategy.

Performance Management

- 2.55 The production of comprehensive workforce reports is essential for purposes of governance, manpower planning, and performance management. The Workforce Directorate currently produces quarterly Workforce Information Reports for the Board and managers which includes information on a range of workforce statistics covering the workforce profile, equality and diversity statistics, training and development activity, performance statistics, and workforce indicators.
- 2.56 The quarterly Workforce Information Reports will not only continue to be produced, but will be continuously improved and developed to ensure that the Board and managers are provided with ever improving information on the workforce of NHS Somerset.

Equality and Diversity

- 2.57 NHS Somerset is committed to promoting diversity and enabling equality of opportunity for all staff, patients and its local communities with regard to access to health services, employment and training.
- 2.58 NHS Somerset takes its statutory responsibilities seriously and has developed a separate Equality and Diversity Strategy which incorporates the statutory Equality Schemes (Race, Disability and Gender) and has an action plan that provides the tool to monitor and review its policies and practices with the aim of continuously improving upon its commitment to equity.
- 2.59 The Equality and Diversity Strategy aims to give a framework to all employees of NHS Somerset, and an explanation to all stakeholders with regard to how it will achieve its aim to commission and deliver services in an equitable manner to all members of the community within the resources available to it without discriminating and whilst promoting equality.
- 2.60 The Board has a nominated champion for equality and diversity who will ensure that the actions referred to in the strategy are delivered upon. In addition, there is an equality and diversity lead for NHS Somerset, and a dedicated equality and diversity lead specifically for the Workforce Directorate.
- 2.61 All the strategies contained in the 'umbrella' Workforce Strategy apply to all staff and NHS Somerset will not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, social background, education, values, marital status, disability, sexual orientation/preference, race, colour, religion, beliefs, nationality, ethnic, national or social origin, work and life experience, domestic circumstances, social and employment status, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) status,

gender reassignment, political affiliation or trades union membership.

Conclusion

- 2.62 This Human Resources Strategy sets out the vision and strategic objectives of NHS Somerset to ensure NHS Somerset becomes a world class employer of the future.
- 2.63 This strategy will be subject to full discussion with Staff Side Representatives in accordance with normal policy.
- 2.64 A comprehensive Action Plan has been developed to support the Human Resources Strategy.