Welcome to the first edition of NHS Employers new bulletin that replaces the HR Directors bulletin previously issued by the Department of Health. Our regular e-mail bulletin will continue to communicate the important information about HR and workforce policy.

Over time we intend to enhance the bulletin by including details of the latest reports and research as well as legal updates. We welcome your feedback on the bulletin and your thoughts and ideas about how to make it better.

Comments about this bulletin: If you have any comments about this bulletin please email them to
nhsworkforcebulletin@nhsemployers.org

E-mail details: To amend your contact details please send them to nhsworkforcebulletin@nhsemployers.org

Web details: www.nhsemployers.org

1. NHS Confederation launches NHS Employers

The NHS Confederation launched NHS Employers on 1 November. This brand new part of the NHS Confederation will bring a fresh approach to managing workforce issues in the NHS in England. We firmly believe that by improving the lives of staff in the NHS we can improve the experience of the patient. But to do this we need to ensure that people in the NHS see workforce issues as not just something that human resources departments deal with, but as a fundamental part of the whole service. We are integrated with an NHS Confederation that is building on the strength of the past and is more than the sum of its parts.

We are about partnership, working together to share ideas, intelligence and good practice.  

cont
NHS Confederation launches NHS Employers

We have four key roles:
- Negotiating on behalf of employers
- Representing employers
- Supporting employers
- Promoting the NHS as an employer

We are a new and evolving organisation. Over the coming months there will be substantial development, of both our work programme and our website.

The Department of Health remains responsible for developing policy, protocols and standards for the health and social care workforce in England. We are independent of the Department of Health but will retain a close working relationship with them.

To find out more information about NHS Employers visit www.nhsemployers.org
Please address enquiries to nhsemployers@nhsconfed.org

2. Elections to NHS Employers Assembly

During the last month, we have been seeking nominations to the assembly and policy board. The nomination process closed on 5 November and we are now preparing for the election process. Electoral Reform Services (ERS) will conduct the election process electronically. ERS will be sending eligible voters an electronic link to a dedicated website together with a unique security number and password. Each voting organisation will then be able to access the site, read supporting information and register their vote. The election process starts on 22 November and the ballot closes on 10 December. We hope to be able to issue the results during week commencing 13 December. The first assembly meeting takes place on 2 February 2005 in London.

For more information contact Dave Thomas email dave.thomas@nhsemployers.org or telephone 0113 254 5875.

3. Healthcare Commission - NHS National Staff Survey 2004

The Healthcare Commission has advised that each trust and SHA will receive a report of their 2004 survey results at the end of February 2005. They will be publishing the results in early March. To ensure the 2004 trust reports are as useful as possible for trusts and SHAs, the Healthcare Commission are seeking feedback on the proposed structure of the reports by Friday 12th November.

In 2003, the following reports were provided:
- Trust feedback report: "Summary of results from XX Trust"
- Guide to Interpretation of Trust Feedback Reports
- Spreadsheets of the detailed responses to every survey question

All these documents are available at www.chi.gov.uk/eng/surveys/nss2003

The Healthcare Commission would welcome your comments on the following issues:

Summary trust report
- were the trust results presented in an accessible way?
- was it easy to pull out the key findings?
- were the figures and tables easy to understand?
- how could we improve the 2004 summary report?

Report Interpretation document
- was this helpful?
- how could it be improved for 2004?

Spreadsheets of detailed responses
- could these be improved for 2004? (e.g. the layout, the website location, the content)

Comments and suggestions to G.M.Foskett@aston.ac.uk, using heading: 2004 Survey Report Consultation.
4. General Medical Council introduces reforms to fitness to practice procedures

On 1 November, the General Medical Council (GMC) implemented wide-ranging reforms of its fitness to practise procedures. The changes introduce simplified and more efficient procedures that enable the GMC to consider all aspects of a doctors' fitness to practise. They reflect the GMC's commitment to working collaboratively as part of a wider framework for protecting patients, including measures taken by the NHS and other employers.

Details of the changes, including specific advice for Medical Directors and other managers, will be available on the GMC website www.gmc-uk.org

For further information email mcotton@gmc-uk.org

5. NHSU - New guide for NHS staff to select and implement a Virtual Learning Environment

On 19th October 2004, the NHSU launched a new guide, Selecting and Implementing a Virtual Learning Environment. The guide, developed in conjunction with SHAs across England, aims to establish common approaches to learning across the health sector, enhancing the knowledge and potentials of learning delivery and support systems. Accessible online and via a CD-rom, the guide incorporates an interactive demonstrator, which shows users how the VLE might work within their organisation and the support available for e-learning. It also includes detailed information and guidance on a range of issues involved in procuring a VLE, enabling organisations to choose the right VLE to meet their needs.

For further information contact Pamela Rennie email: pamela.rennie@nhsu.org.uk telephone 020 8528 1542 or visit the NHSU website: www.nhsu.nhs.uk/webportal/vle/index.jsp

6. NHSU - First annual report 2003/04

On 30 September 2004, NHSU published its first annual report, Improvement through Learning. This report covers NHSU’s activities and progress over the 12 month period to April 2004, as well as a financial report for the months of December 2003 to April 2004 (the duration for which it has held Special Health Authority status). The report also includes details of NHSU’s next steps and areas for development during 2004/05.

Hard copies of NHSU’s annual report can be obtained by calling 0800 555 550
The report is also available on the NHSU website www.nhsu.nhs.uk

For further information please contact Stephanie Aneto email Stephanie.aneto@nhsu.org.uk or telephone 020 8528 1577.

7. Events:

i) Agenda for Change & NHS Pension Scheme Review sessions.

The NHS Confederation and NHS Employers have worked closely with DH, MA, and wider stakeholders to devise a series of half day workshops to assist in local consultation and implementation. The events will take place in venues across the country and on a selection of dates during November, December and January.

We would ask that delegates attend the event corresponding to their local Strategic Health Authority. The events are specifically for chief executives, HR directors, trade union stewards, modernisation leads, agenda for change project leads, finance directors and related HR personnel; all of which are directly affected by the changes ahead.

The Agenda for Change sessions will enable delegates to define the benefits they are seeking from Agenda for Change. Delegates will hear lessons learnt from the implementation of the consultant contract and how these translate to Agenda for Change. Additionally how the Early Implementer sites will report how they have used Agenda for Change as a catalyst for modernisation.

The NHS Pension Scheme Review sessions will support the consultation period of the review. As
employers are required to consult their staff on the proposed changes, these events will disseminate essential information, explain how the changes support the design of the new pension scheme that makes benefits more appropriate for today’s workforce and update you on the impact of any changes on your organisation.

For further information on these events please email Rachel.pomeroy@nhsconfed.org

ii) Consultant Contract Appeal Panel Training Workshops

The MA’s Consultant Contract Implementation Team, in partnership with the BMA is hosting a number of consultant contract appeal panel member training workshops for panel chairs, consultant nominees, and third panel members identified by the BMA/BDA and SHAs. The workshops will assist panel members in understanding the appeals process for consultants who have failed to resolve their job planning & pay progression dispute through mediation.

Dates & Venues:

23 November, Victoria Park Plaza Hotel, London
am: General, pm: Panel Chairs

29 November, Crowne Plaza, Birmingham NEC
am: Panel Chairs, pm: General

1 December, Victoria Park Plaza Hotel, London
am: Panel Chairs, pm: General

6 December, Crowne Plaza, Leeds
am: General, pm: Panel Chairs

The workshops are offered free of charge, but failure to attend without notice will incur a £100 charge.

For further information or to register, please see: www.modern.nhs.uk/consultants/events or contact Julie Ayo 020 7061 6727

iii) Ways of Managing People with a Disability Workshop

Wednesday 8 December 2004, London South Bank University, Keyworth Centre

The Ambulance Service Association (ASA) has arranged a workshop entitled Ways of Managing People with a Disability. The purpose of the workshop is to facilitate the development of new approaches around how to work with people of differing skills, experience and abilities. The event will not only look at the implications of the recent legislation and best practice, but also responsibilities around access and how role redesign and the consideration of alternative working arrangements based on disability could be used to attract and retain existing or potential staff.

Speakers will include, David Cooke, ACAS Advisor, Linda Van Henden, Director of Disability at the Metropolitan Police, and Mr Mike Adams, Head of the National Disability Unit.

Please register your place by booking online via the ASA Website at www.asa.uk.net in the events section.

For further information please contact Mohamed Jogi, National Programme Manager, ASA email mohamed.jogi@asa.uk.net

8. Further interest:

i) NHS Employers welcomes Agenda for Change ballot result – media release 9 November 2004 is available at www.nhsemployers.org/press

ii) ESR News, October edition of the Electronic Staff Record newsletter is available at www.esrsolution.co.uk

iii) Calling time… MA update on meeting the Working Time Directive, Issue 13, is available at www.modern.nhs.uk/workingtime/bulletin