Overview

East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) wanted a more holistic approach to reward to ensure benefits were effectively communicated. To help aid recruitment and retention the trust needed to review its current reward and benefits offer and make sure it was what staff wanted and needed.

Key benefits and outcomes

1. All benefits in one place in a staff benefit brochure.
2. Modernising the reward offer in line with staff needs.
3. Increasing awareness and uptake of the reward offer.

What the organisation faced

The trust was experiencing difficulties in recruiting to some posts, had some issues retaining staff in their first year of joining and identified an increase in agency and bank spending. The trust wanted to make sure its reward offer was competitive and attractive to new staff and reflected what existing staff needed and wanted.

What the organisation did

ELFT analysed its existing reward offer, including the cost and take up of each benefit. The organisation then engaged with a broad range of staff members to find out what staff wanted and valued. A variety of engagement channels were used including, a survey, focus groups, webinars and interviews. The results were used to review the existing offer and formed the basis of the business case for potential new rewards.
Engagement focused on ten key questions with themes around the awareness and take up of benefits, what benefits they would like and would be attractive to new employees and how rewarded they felt.

The engagement results provided useful insight to what staff at ELFT value. Job satisfaction came out as the main reason staff come to work. It also highlighted that staff feel the trust’s values are important. The results also highlighted that:

- staff were most aware of benefits such as childcare vouchers and the cycle to work scheme
- awareness of benefits such as discounts available was lower
- a high proportion of staff had not used any of the benefits available
- being able to buy additional annual leave would be the most attractive benefit to staff if they were new to the trust.

As a result of the staff engagement, the trust made changes to modernise its reward offer, including amendments to existing benefits and introducing new rewards and benefits for staff. Some of these include:

- A salary sacrifice car scheme that is open to all staff. Previously this was only open to staff who drove 3,500 miles for work purposes. The take up has gradually increased and is stable.
- A salary sacrifice electricals scheme, which has again proved to be popular amongst staff. The scheme runs three times a year
- A benefit, in partnership with Neyber, which provides savings products and education for staff.
- Investment in their health and wellbeing team with the creation of new roles in order to better support the 5,500 staff.
- A smartphone app which automates the bank system.

The trust has also published two editions of a wellbeing and benefits magazine to better promote the benefits that the trust offers.

Benefits & Wellbeing MAG is available in print and online on the trust’s intranet.

Results and benefits

ELFT designed a benefit brochure to bring all the benefits into one place. This is used during recruitment and induction and shared through the intranet and with payslips. The trust feels awareness of its reward offer has increased.
The trust is about to roll out a smartphone app that will automate the bank system by interfacing with HealthRoster, sending notifications of available shifts and allowing staff to self-book.

Takeaway Tips

- Understand what benefits are currently offered by your organisation.
- Analyse the take up rate for benefits and the costs associated with these.
- Engage with staff to gain feedback on what they value.
- Provide feedback to staff when you have asked for their input.
- Ensure effective communication of the entire reward and benefits offer.
- Understand what you’re trying to achieve through reward and evaluate against this.
Further information

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Find out more about reward in the NHS including the Total Reward Engagement Network through our reward web pages and view further case studies and tools in our reward resource library. You can contact the reward team on 0113 306 3000 or by emailing us at reward@nhsemployers.org.