

Shaping organisational culture



We are
compassionate
and **inclusive**

Healthy cultures in NHS organisations are crucial to ensuring the delivery of high-quality, safe and effective patient care.

Improving staff retention should be led through an inspiring, forward-looking, and ambitious vision focused on offering high-quality, compassionate care. Good leaders reiterate this at every level to ensure that everyone understands and acts on this commitment.

Understanding how staff perceive culture and want to be treated will help to create and implement a collective leadership strategy and to develop compassionate, fair and inclusive working environments where all staff can thrive. If we create positive, supportive environments for staff, where they share in local decision making, they in turn create caring, supportive environments and deliver high-quality care for patients. Such leadership cultures encourage staff engagement.

Organisational development (OD) practitioners are an invaluable resource in generating and implementing solutions to specific retention challenges you may have. There are many OD models which you can choose to support the development of your retention activities. Change teams, which are groups of people made up of staff, patient representatives and partners, can also carry out the culture and leadership change within an

organisation or system. Compassionate and inclusive working environments have a positive impact on staff engagement and can help build an organisational culture which our NHS people enjoy being part of. This will increase the likelihood of staff wanting to stay.

Activity: What does good look like?

Try an activity with your board or leadership teams. Split the team into four groups and ask them to look at ‘what good retention looks like’ from one of the following perspectives: the board, an HR professional, line managers and staff within the organisation. Compare and contrast where there are similarities and differences between the four perspectives. Draw up three to five actions from the activity to take away and work on.

Making this happen

Leaders can:

- Take a look at NHS England and NHS Improvement’s Culture and Leadership programme, which provides opportunities for organisations to understand their own culture and deliver culture change. It has been used in over 40 NHS organisations, who have found it helpful as a way of getting started on their journey of culture change.

Managers can:

- Take a look at the Do OD Team toolkit when working with your staff to help embrace team working and recognise the contribution it can make

to the delivery of compassionate patient care, from committed staff working within a common culture.

- Find out how Maggie Oldham turned the Isle of Wight NHS Trust around to become one of the NHS Staff Survey's most improved trusts, and how the NHS England and NHS Improvement Culture and Leadership Programme supported putting compassionate leadership at the heart of change. Read the full case study.
- Watch this video to hear how Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust engaged all parts of their workforce in implementing a just and learning culture in order to create an environment where staff feel supported and empowered, and able to learn when things do not go as expected, rather than feeling blamed.
- Find out how North East London NHS Foundation Trust achieved an inclusive culture by addressing its staff engagement and cultural awareness, and ensuring its recruitment process was inclusive, and put people first. Read the full case study.

Tools and further reading

- Keep up to date with interventions and practical solutions on NHS England and NHS Improvement's website.
- NHS England and NHS Improvement's the future of NHS human resources and organisations development report outlines the ten-year plan to transform HR and OD services in the NHS.
- Do OD is the expert resource on OD for health and care. Do OD's latest resource, The OD practitioner and culture change handbook, is built around ten culture provocations and 'what if?' statements that invite us to examine and challenge our views, and practices.
- Improving NHS Culture tool from the King's Fund.
- Changing healthcare cultures – through collective leadership.