

Supporting new starters and those moving roles



Placing the candidate experience at the centre of recruitment, selection and onboarding is essential to reducing the turnover of newly employed staff. Developing an engaging and pro-active recruitment and onboarding experience for new starters allows them to get a realistic picture of the role they are applying for and creates a good first impression of your organisation.

Using recruitment to support retention

In a competitive labour market, a timely and effective recruitment process helps to ensure that staff with the right knowledge, skills and values join your organisation quickly. Discussions with potential applicants should focus on giving them a realistic insight into the role they're applying for, and the organisation as a whole. Making sure candidates have realistic expectations of the role will help reduce the likelihood of them leaving the organisation in the first few months.

The NHS Employers Inspire, Attract and Recruit toolkit can help you with the different stages of recruitment and aims to spark ideas for the process of attracting and recruiting new staff.

employment checks and statutory and mandatory training.

The NHS England and NHS Improvement Enabling Staff Movement toolkit supports organisations to put in place local workforce sharing agreements, to provide the legal underpinning for staff to safely be moved temporarily between NHS organisations.

The COVID-19 Digital Staff Passport takes this further, helping to speed up the process by providing a modern, digital way for staff to be in control of their own verified information on their smart phone that eliminates unnecessary administration for employers with the legal underpinning agreements automated within it. This is the first phase of NHS England and NHS Improvement's overall ambition to develop a Digital Staff Passport to support all movements of staff. For further information, email england.enablingstaffmovements@nhs.net

Post offer

Keeping in touch with staff between their offer and their start date can help to reduce postoffer dropouts and is a great way of getting candidates engaged in what's happening in your organisation. You may wish to consider:

- Providing the candidate with a dedicated email address of a line manager who they can ask any questions of prior to starting.
- Introducing the candidate to some of the key colleagues they will be working with in advance of their start date so they can feel part of the team as soon as they accept their offer.
- Giving access to key information and e-learning as soon as they begin their role, so they feel prepared and valued.

Induction and early years support

A robust induction provides new employees with the support and practical information they need to work effectively and helps them feel part of the team. Regular catch ups or one-to-one meetings will help assess progress and offer support, as well offering new employees

additional support through a buddy, or a network with other new starters. Several trusts have implemented supportive approaches to inductions, for example inviting newly qualified nurses to tea with a member of the team

or board director. This helps to promote a culture where people feel valued and supported in their new roles.

Legacy mentoring is another approach some organisations have taken, where experienced staff provide mentoring and pastoral support to new employees that can lead to improved attrition in those first few years.

Preceptorships are often offered to newly qualified staff and provide support to those make the transition from study into practice. Having robust and consistently applied preceptorship frameworks, with access to timely support, is key to helping people feel valued and that their development is considered important. Preceptorship schemes are offered to newly qualified nurses, nursing associates, midwives and allied health professionals.

Things to consider

- Has your organisation implemented values-based recruitment and standards of behaviour in employment?
- Could recruitment processes and preemployment checks be streamlined to maintain quality and assurance while moving at pace to improve the candidate experience?
- What do inductions look like in your organisation? Are there areas of good practice which could be rolled out across the organisation?
- Could support be provided to employees beyond induction, for example preceptorships and/or early years support for the first two to three years post-qualifying or joining your organisation?
- Do newly qualified employees benefit from mentoring or pastoral support either from either their peers or from legacy mentors?
- Do all staff have meaningful objectives and development plans?

Making this happen

Leaders can:

- Promote health and wellbeing and resources to support people in new roles.
- Ensure the recruitment process is as streamlined as possible.

Managers can:

- Keep in touch with new starters between appointment and start date.
- Check in with new starters across their induction period, making sure they have the right equipment as soon as they start and have a buddy.
- If applicable, apply the preceptorship scheme in a fair and consistent way, and check in with new employees that it's meeting their needs.

Case studies

- Barking, Havering and Redbridge NHS Trust implemented legacy nurse mentoring and has now expanded the scheme to provide mentoring and pastoral support to midwives, allied health professionals and healthcare assistants due to its success. They have reported a reduction in both turnover and their vacancy rates.
- Oxford University Hospital Trust introduced a three-tier foundation preceptorship programme where preceptors helped to inform organisational changes through the identification of common themes. New nurses indicated the preceptorship programme had positive value and improved the experience of newly qualified nurses during their first year of clinical practice The Flyer Programme.

Tools and further reading

- Keep up to date with interventions and practical solutions on NHS England and NHS Improvement's website.
- There are a range of resources available on the NHS Employers website.
- Exploring preceptorship programmes: Implications for future design. Taylor et al., 2018.

- Characteristics of successful interventions to reduce turnover and increase retention of early career nurses: A systematic review. Brook et al., 2019.
- Podiatry as a career in the UK - what attracts Generation Z? A qualitative exploration with university and college students. Whitman et al., 2021.