

Inspire

Anchor institutions

An anchor institution is a large organisation that supports the health and wellbeing of its local population through, for example, good employment opportunities and inclusive recruitment practices.

NHS organisations are anchor institutions and can play an important role in the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, 6 NHS organisations were awarded funding to implement and test projects that aim to embed anchor practices and tackle health inequalities in their local areas.

Throughout this toolkit we refer to anchor institutions, and implementing the good practice contained here will help your organisation further establish itself in this role.

Suggested further reading on the subject includes The King's Fund and The Health Foundation.

Your staffing pipeline includes trainees, new graduates, those returning to practice and overseas candidates. Reducing net migration continues to be high on the government's agenda and as the country continues to feel the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that organisations strengthen local strategies to enhance domestic supply routes and continue to be an employer of choice. A focus on widening participation and tapping into programmes such as Step into health will help you become an anchor institution within your communities.

Your existing organisational workforce data will help to show what is happening, for example high turnover, and identify areas for improvement. This then needs to be considered and understood both at an organisational and team level to help inform future improvement activities.

Evaluation

Continual improvement of any practice requires ongoing evaluation and it is worthwhile building this into your recruitment activity from the beginning, considering what elements you want to regularly measure and how this can help improve your future activity.

Questions to consider:

Do you understand your trust vacancy rate data?

Do you have opportunities to plan across your local health system to understand and manage risk?

What's your organisational workforce plan for the next few years and beyond?

Labour market trends and competition

While helpful to look at national workforce trends, it is important you understand your own local workforce profile and patterns, and how this can impact recruitment.

In a competitive market, you should also consider the unique selling points your organisation has over other sectors, such as staff rights to request flexible working from day one of their employment. Understanding why candidates are choosing to work in other sectors will also help your organisation adapt in a competitive market.

The NHS is often the largest employer in a local community. Does all of your community see you as an employer for them?

The most recent Labour market overview report shows that an increase in part-time workers is driving the employment rate over the most recent

supporting economic recovery briefing highlights the impact of COVID-19 and the role the NHS can play in supporting local recovery.

Workforce redesign

Workforce redesign is about seeking new ways of working for your existing staff to develop their current skills and gain support in building resilience and confidence; meeting the needs of new organisational systems and processes to improve patient care.

Visit our workforce redesign webpage for examples and benefits of workforce design, as well as resources to help you plan and develop workforce redesign ideas.

Read how the University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust increased their trainee nursing associate apprenticeships and developed a strategy that could be replicated across the Devon Integrated Care System.