Working in partnership

Tackling bullying and harassment in the NHS

**What can my organisation do?**
- Promote NHS England’s civility and respect toolkit to meet the People Plan’s vision.
- Create policies to develop and promote a positive culture.
- Appoint a leader to work with your freedom to speak up guardian.
- Monitor organisational data to identify patterns to target interventions.

**What can my manager do?**
- Identify early warning signs and challenge inappropriate behaviours.
- Respond quickly to complaints and issues, ensuring effective wellbeing conversations are had.
- Engage and involve trade union colleagues.
- Provide training on inappropriate behaviour and its impact.

**What can I do?**
- Ask the individual to stop.
- Speak to your manager, senior colleague and/or union rep.
- Keep a record of the incidents.
- Speak up when you see staff treated unkindly.
- Report the incident to your freedom to speak up guardian.

**Disproportionate impact**
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff are more likely to experience bullying and harassment.
- 25% of disabled staff reported bullying or harassment by other colleagues in the last year.
- Bisexual and gay staff are more likely to experience bullying or harassment than heterosexual staff.

**What is the impact?**

**On the organisation:**
- Greater risk of human error
- Poorer patient care
- Lower morale
- Increased absenteeism
- Reduced productivity and teamwork

**On the individual:**
- Anxiety and depression
- Disengagement and isolation
- Take their feelings home with them
- Reduced confidence

**Costs to the NHS**
- Toxic behaviour costs the NHS more than £2bn a year.
- If bullied NHS workers left their jobs, it would mean a loss of 42,681 staff.
- The cost of replacing those staff would be £231.9m.
- Sickness presenteeism due to bullying costs £604.4m a year.

**What can I do?**

1. NHS Staff Survey, 2022
4. Make or Break: Incivility in the workplace ESTH 2019, www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1EDatTYmMk
5. Evidence synthesis on the occurrence, causes, consequences, prevention and management of bullying and harassing behaviours to inform decision-making in the NHS. Illing et al, (February 2013).
7. NHS England’s Supporting our staff - A toolkit to promote cultures of civility and respect.