



**GET YOUR BOARD ONBOARD
WITH HEALTH AND
WELLBEING PRIORITIES**

MARCH 2020

This resource is designed to help you gain access to your senior leaders and board members to discuss and promote your health and wellbeing agenda.

- ✔ It covers who your senior leaders are, their roles and areas of interest.
- ✔ It highlights good practice examples from NHS trusts.
- ✔ It tells you how to build an evidence-based business case to gain senior buy-in.

WHY IS BOARD SUPPORT IMPORTANT?

“It is essential that all NHS trusts put staff health and wellbeing at the heart of their work, with a clearly identified board-level champion and senior managerial support”

- The Boorman Review

Your executive board is a group of influential leaders responsible for making strategic decisions about the future of the organisation, its priorities and resources.

A robust health and wellbeing strategy that is supported and championed by the board will help you overcome organisational barriers, secure investment into resources, embed it in core business, prioritise it as a strategic investment and promote trust-wide engagement.

Evidence from organisations that have successfully implemented their health and wellbeing strategies indicates they did this with the full support of their board.

HOW CAN YOU EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE SENIOR LEADERS?



Getting in front of your board can be a daunting and complex task. Based on good practice from our network of health and wellbeing leads, we've outlined some top tips to help you in your mission of gaining senior buy-in.

- ✓ Getting senior leaders to take notice
- ✓ Securing buy-in and commitment
- ✓ Turning support into action

GETTING SENIOR LEADERS TO TAKE NOTICE

1. Use your available levers to energise momentum around health and wellbeing

- Align your local health and wellbeing strategy to national priorities. This can be especially pertinent as they pick up national momentum such as the Making the NHS the best place to work campaign or the Thriving at Work standards in the national contract.
- Use your local NHS Staff Survey results to highlight target areas of concern, flag risks, and identify the potential solutions that could be gained by implementing your strategy.
- Take advantage of any national funding opportunities that would improve health and wellbeing in your trust. For example, funding was made available to enhance facilities and the working environment for junior doctors.

2. Identify and engage a board level champion for health and wellbeing

- Focus your efforts on identifying and engaging a change agent at board level to champion the health and wellbeing agenda with other board members.
[See our role descriptor for health and wellbeing board leaders.](#)

3. Raise the profile of the health and wellbeing agenda across the trust

- Improve your team's visibility by presenting at forums where senior leaders will be.

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust held a listening event to discuss improving staff experience where staff members and senior board members were present. Comments from group discussions were taken forward to shape the health and wellbeing component of the people strategy.

- Work with your communications team to identify internal channels that can be used to share key messages across the trust, such as the intranet or staff newsletters, that will help embed health and wellbeing into daily conversations.
- Involve and engage different departments to develop a network of health and wellbeing champions to promote health and wellbeing related activities. Use this trust-wide network to sense test and strengthen your plans and ask your champions to endorse and advocate your strategy with senior leaders.

SECURING BUY-IN AND COMMITMENT

1. Demonstrate how your strategy enables the trust to achieve its outcomes and strategic aims

- Show the value and relevance of your strategy to trust outcomes by highlighting how it underpins existing strategic priorities.

Solent NHS Trust showed how its strategy could be used as an enabler to support the trust's overall people strategy agenda.

- Integrate health and wellbeing into wider trust strategies so it's considered, supported and championed at a strategic level.

Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust integrated health and wellbeing objectives into the trust's overall people strategy.

2. Be strategic by operating in the different currencies of your senior leaders

- Tailor your approach so that your information is relevant to specific senior leaders and enables their priorities or areas of focus.

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust tailored its data-driven approach by presenting planned cost savings to the director of finance, and the nursing staff experience implications to the director of nursing.

Solent NHS Foundation Trust used real life case studies about lived staff experience and positive feedback received from health and wellbeing interventions to engage its people-orientated chief executive.

- Understand the passions of your board and link your strategy to the areas of work they lead.

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust engaged executive and non-executive board members by assigning senior leaders a health and wellbeing area to champion within the trust.

3. Take a data-driven approach and build a strong evidence base

- Use your trust's data to evidence the lived staff experience.

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust collated and analysed data across all organisational departments to build a picture of the trust's overall health and wellbeing, which was presented to senior leaders.

- Build a strong evidence base by maintaining regular on-going evaluation.

Lincolnshire Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust developed an annual survey to show the year-on-year improvements in staff experience outcomes alongside ad hoc targeted evaluations to evidence the success of individual interventions and activities.

- Use available national data, statistics and facts to support your case for health and wellbeing in improving staff experience and patient related outcomes.



4. Be clear and consistent in your communication with senior leaders

- Ensure messages to senior leaders are digestible and impactful.

Solent NHS Foundation Trust

refreshed its communications approach with senior leaders and developed a two-page document of key health and wellbeing messages instead of a traditional long report.

- Be clear about what you want to achieve in your strategy.

Lincolnshire Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust highlighted the target areas their strategy would help to improve as supported by relevant data (such as sickness absence statistics).

5. Recognise and celebrate the good work already achieved and build on the trust's strengths

- Celebrate good work by ensuring wins are communicated to senior leaders with plans on how to maximise them in the future. Share evaluation outcomes and feedback from staff on how the initiative has improved staff experience and helped staff deliver their work.
- Show how your strategy has tackled and overcome previously outlined areas of concern.

TURNING SUPPORT INTO ACTION

1. Provide a structured plan to show leaders how they can support the health and wellbeing agenda

- Encourage the board to lead by example and challenge the stigma associated with physical or mental health issues by being open about their own personal experiences.

- Approach board members with a realistic proposal of how you plan to use their support to help push the agenda. Examples of support include publicly advocating and publicising the good work by fronting an initiative, contributing to a blog post, providing senior recognition for staff efforts, getting involved in a health and wellbeing activity.

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- providing senior recognition for staff efforts
- getting involved in a health and wellbeing activity.

- Involve senior leaders in the shaping of the agenda by inviting them to attend a health and wellbeing steering group meeting. Consider presenting updates at committees where senior leaders are present and working collaboratively with other teams on joint projects relating to staff experience (such as retention, staff engagement and diversity and inclusion).

UNDERSTAND WHO SITS ON YOUR BOARD AND WHAT THEIR PRIORITIES ARE

Get to know who makes up your board, what they do, their areas of interest and how you can best engage them.

This summary of key senior leaders provides information on the evidence, statistics and facts that you could share with them when presenting your health and wellbeing business case.

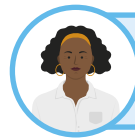


Click on any board member icon to access a top tips on how to engage with that member.

Additional resources

- Download and personalise our template PowerPoint presentation **Making a case for health and wellbeing**, which contains all the facts, statistics and evidence you need to engage and seek the buy in of your senior leaders.
- Download our new **Health and wellbeing board role descriptor**, which identifies the key responsibilities of senior leaders to support and champion the health and wellbeing of staff at board level.
- Access our **Sickness absence savings calculator**.

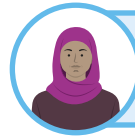
YOUR BOARD



Chair and Non-executive Directors



Chief Executive



Director of Finance



Medical Director



Director of Nursing



Director of Workforce and Organisation Development



Chief Operating Officer



TAILOR YOUR BUSINESS CASE TO THE CHAIR AND NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Key responsibilities

- Provides independent oversight and accountability of board-level decision-making and how the trust is run.
- Has expert experience (financial, legal, clinical etc) in healthcare and other sectors.
- A senior non-executive director who ensures the board meets its obligations.

TOPICS, FACTS AND STATS TO ENGAGE THIS LEADER

1. POOR STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING POSES A RISK TO OUR NHS WORKFORCE AND PATIENTS.

- Over 80% of NHS staff believe that health and wellbeing impacts on patient care.
- The Francis Inquiry into Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust revealed the fatal impact of disconnected and detached staff with poor mental wellbeing and a lack of empathy and emotion.

2. LEADERS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF OUR NHS STAFF.

- Less than a third of respondents in the public sector agree that senior leaders encourage a focus on mental health through their actions and behaviour.

3. MANAGERS FACE BARRIERS TO PRIORITISE THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF THEIR STAFF.

- 62% of managers have had to put the interests of their organisation above staff wellbeing either sometimes, regularly or every day.
- 70% of managers say there are barriers to providing mental health support.
- 41% of employees experiencing a mental health problem reported that there had been no resulting changes or actions taken in the workplace.

What this leader wants to know:

? Are our current priorities right for the trust's workforce and long-term sustainability?

? Have we mitigated potential risks and threats to our workforce and patients?

? Do the trust values prioritise staff experience and are they guiding the work?

? Is the trust meeting legal standards and compliance?

? Is the current health and wellbeing strategy effective?



TAILOR YOUR BUSINESS CASE TO THE **CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Key responsibilities

- Sets the strategic vision and direction for the organisation in the short, medium and long term.
- Responsible for performance and quality of service provision, as well as financial and corporate viability. Leads by example to inspire the workforce to deliver and perform.

TOPICS, FACTS AND STATS TO **ENGAGE THIS LEADER**

1. POOR MENTAL HEALTH AFFECTS A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF THE WORKFORCE

- As many as one in four UK workers with poor mental health struggle in silence.

2. POSITIVE STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPROVES ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES.

- Healthy and happy staff improves employee productivity and profitability.
- Long-term workplace wellness interventions in trusts resulted in improvements in staff health behaviours, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and reductions in sickness absence.

3. POOR STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING RELATES TO POORER OUTCOMES FOR PATIENTS

- Association between staff burnout and patient safety.
- The Francis Inquiry into Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust revealed the fatal impact of disconnected and detached staff with poor mental wellbeing and a lack of empathy and emotion.
- Schwartz rounds increased feelings of interconnectivity and compassion among staff, leading to improvements in patient experience.
- Trust-led staff health and wellbeing schemes improve safety efficiency and patient experience.

What this leader wants to know:

? How does staff experience relate to patient experience and outcomes?

? What is the impact of staff experience on organisational performance and outcomes?

? What is the return on investment of staff health and wellbeing interventions on patient and organisational outcomes?

? How does health and wellbeing secure long-term workforce supply and staff retention?

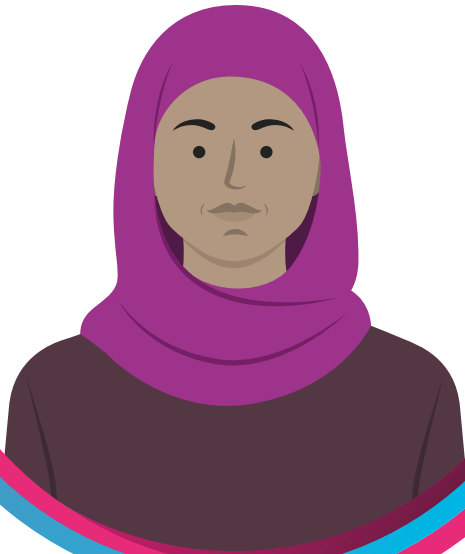
? How does staff experience relate to the trust's long-term viability?

? Are we aligned to national priorities such as making the NHS the best place to work?

TAILOR YOUR BUSINESS CASE TO THE **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

Key responsibilities

- Responsible for strategic financial, economic and fiscal leadership and providing advice to the trust board on matters of financial governance.



TOPICS, FACTS AND STATS TO **ENGAGE THIS LEADER**

1. POOR STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING COSTS THE NHS A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF MONEY.

- The cost of poor mental health in the NHS equates to £1,794-£2,174 per employee per year.
- Overall cost of sickness absence is estimated at £2.4 billion. If sickness absence was reduced by one day per person per year that would equate to a financial saving of £150m (6,000 full time staff).
- Various studies suggest that presenteeism is increasing year on year. Cost of presenteeism is £17bn to £26bn.

2. INVESTING IN EFFECTIVE STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING INTERVENTIONS OFFERS A RETURN ON INVESTMENT.

- The return on investment in workplace mental health interventions is £4.20 for every £1 spent.

3. POSITIVE STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPROVES PRODUCTIVITY

- Healthy and happy staff improve employee productivity and profitability.

What this leader wants to know:

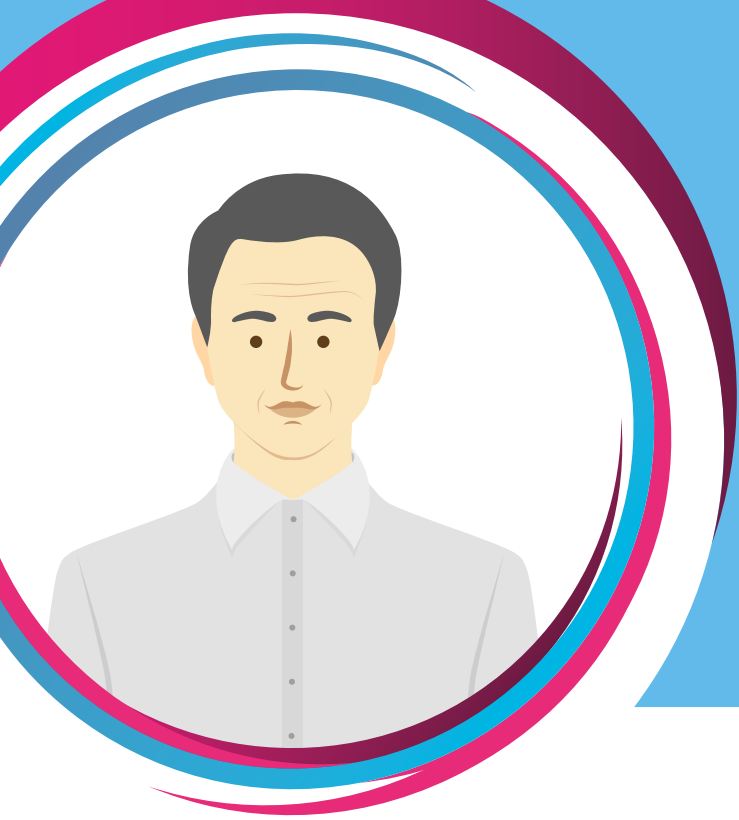
? What are the long-term financial gains of investing in staff health and wellbeing?

? How can we maximise return on investment of health and wellbeing interventions?

? What is the cost-benefit analysis of investing in health and wellbeing interventions?

? Why should the financial wellbeing of our staff be prioritised?

? What impact does poor staff health and wellbeing have on our financial position?



TAILOR YOUR BUSINESS CASE TO THE **MEDICAL DIRECTOR**

Key responsibilities

- Provides medical leadership and management of the services delivered by doctors and medical workforce-related issues.
- Responsible for leading management of medical staff, ensuring they deliver safe, effective and high-quality care to patients. Responsible for ensuring trust delivers its clinical targets.

TOPICS, FACTS AND STATS TO **ENGAGE THIS LEADER**

1. DOCTORS AND DOCTORS IN TRAINING ARE AT-RISK GROUPS SUSCEPTIBLE TO BURNOUT, SUICIDE AND MENTAL ILL HEALTH.

- Evidence indicates doctors are at considerable risk of work-related stress and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety compared to the general population.
- Rates of depression among training graduate doctors estimated at about 30%.
- Risk of suicide especially among general practitioners, psychiatrists and trainees is high compared to the general population.
- The suicide rate among UK doctors has been estimated to 2-5 times the rate of the general population.

2. DOCTORS ARE UNLIKELY TO DISCLOSE POOR MENTAL WELLBEING AT WORK.

- A survey of 3,500 doctors showed that 73% would choose to disclose mental ill health to family or friends rather than a healthcare professional.

What this leader wants to know:

? How does the health and wellbeing of doctors affect our patients' clinical outcomes: patient safety, experience and care?

? How can positive health and wellbeing improve the quality of medical services delivered?

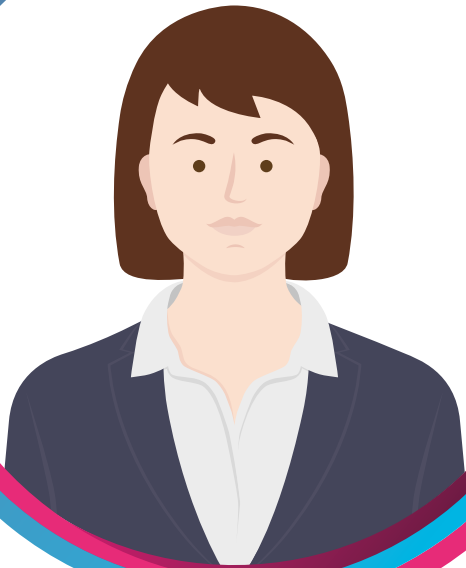
? How does health and wellbeing improve the productivity of doctors and medical staff?

? Why should we focus on the health and wellbeing of doctors in particular?

TAILOR YOUR BUSINESS CASE TO THE **DIRECTOR OF NURSING**

Key responsibilities

- Provides nursing leadership and management of nursing workforce-related issues and the services delivered by nurses.
- Responsible for ensuring the trust delivers its clinical targets. Responsible for leading effective management of nursing staff, ensuring they deliver safe, effective and high-quality care to patients.



TOPICS, FACTS AND STATS TO **ENGAGE THIS LEADER**

1. **NURSES ARE AN AT-RISK GROUP FOR UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLE BEHAVIOURS.**

- In an acute trust in the UK, more than half of the nurses surveyed did not meet public health recommendations for physical activity, indicating a need for intervention to establish healthy lifestyle behaviours early on in career.
- Promoting physical activity in student nurses increases wellbeing (self-esteem, life satisfaction) and decreases risk of anxiety and depression.

2. **IMPACT OF SHIFT-WORKING ON NURSE HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

- Nurses who work 12-hour shifts are two and half times more likely to experience symptoms of nurse burnout than those working shorter shifts.

3. **POOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING AFFECTS PATIENT CARE**

- Association between staff burnout and patient safety.

What this leader wants to know:

- ? How does health and wellbeing enable retention in nurses?
- ? How can health and wellbeing make our trust a more attractive employer for nurses?
- ? Why should we focus on the health and wellbeing of nurses in particular?



TAILOR YOUR BUSINESS CASE TO THE DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE AND ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT

Key responsibilities

- Responsible for the development and strategic planning of a workforce that has the capacity and capability to meet the trust's vision, values and objectives to deliver high-quality services now and in the future.
- Responsible for ensuring a well-motivated, highly and appropriately skilled, high-performing workforce. Capabilities of workforce are aligned to strategic direction and needs of organisation.

TOPICS, FACTS AND STATS TO ENGAGE THIS LEADER

1. POOR STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONTRIBUTES TO STAFF TURNOVER AND PRESENTEEISM

- Poor staff health and wellbeing decreases employee satisfaction and increases staff turnover.
- An employee may leave their employer if they feel unable to work due to the impact of poor mental health. Cost of staff turnover is £8bn.
- One in two staff members have attended work despite feeling unwell because they felt pressure from their manager, colleagues or themselves.

2. WORK-RELATED STRESS IMPACTS SIGNIFICANTLY ON STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- One in three of the NHS workforce have felt unwell due to work-related stress.
- Top three causes of stress related absence: high workload (62%), management style (43%) and relationships at work (30%).

3. LINE MANAGERS FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE OR ILL-EQUIPPED TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

- 51% of line managers feel comfortable talking generally in the workplace about mental health issues.
- 11% of managers in the UK have received training on understanding workplace stressors.

What this leader wants to know:

? How does health and wellbeing enable a motivated, productive, resilient and high-performing workforce?

? How can health and wellbeing initiatives improve staff experience and retention?

? Why is it important to embed a workplace culture that prioritises staff health and wellbeing?

? How can health and wellbeing make our trust an attractive employer and boost recruitment?



TAILOR YOUR BUSINESS CASE TO THE **CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**

Key responsibilities

- Responsible for leading the operational delivery to ensure the trust delivers high-quality and patient-centred services. Plays a central role in improving services, developing and maintain effective relationships with key stakeholders.
- Ensures high-quality, cost effective services that are innovative and responsive to needs of patients.

TOPICS, FACTS AND STATS TO **ENGAGE THIS LEADER**

1. STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING AFFECTS PATIENT SAFETY AND THE RISK OF A NEVER EVENT.

- Poor staff wellbeing correlates to worse patient safety.
- Trust-led staff health and wellbeing schemes improve safety efficiency and patient experience.

2. STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING AFFECTS PATIENT EXPERIENCE AND QUALITY OF CARE.

- Good staff health, wellbeing and engagement can lead to improvements in patient experience of care, productivity and reduced used of agency staff.
- The Francis Inquiry into Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust where patients died as a consequence of neglect revealed the fatal impact of disconnected and detached staff with poor mental wellbeing and a lack of empathy and emotion.
- Schwartz rounds increased feelings of interconnectivity and compassion among staff, leading to improvements in patient experience.

3. STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING AFFECTS SICKNESS ABSENCE AND STAFFING LEVELS.

- Staff experience is associated with sickness absence rates, spend on agency staff and staffing levels.
- Various studies suggest that presenteeism is increasing year on year. Cost of presenteeism is £17bn to £26bn.

What this leader wants to know:

? How does staff health and wellbeing relate to patient experience, safety and care?

? How can health and wellbeing enable a high-performing and productive workforce that delivers a high-quality service?

? How does the experience of our staff impact the long-term viability of the services we provide?

? How does health and wellbeing of the workforce enable us to meet our targets?

REFERENCE

i Click on any reference to access the original source material.

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