LEEDS TEACHING HOSPITALS
NHS TRUST
THE LEEDS WAY – OUR JOURNEY TO BE
THE BEST PLACE TO WORK

Background
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTHT) is one of the largest acute trusts in the country. We are a major employer with over 15,000 staff, a budget of £1 billion and we treat approximately 1.5 million patients a year delivering services from seven sites. We provide care for the population of Leeds, as well as patients from further afield – regionally, nationally and internationally.

Challenges facing the trust
For many years our staff survey scores were low and this was reflected in the number of indicators in the bottom 20 per cent of trusts across the country.

During 2013/14, the trust went through a considerable period of change with the arrival of a new chair, chief executive and executive team. In October 2013, Julian Hartley arrived at LTHT in the role of chief executive officer. Many challenges were faced by the trust over a number of years, these included staff morale, financial and performance. Julian believed that cultural change and engagement were key to the organisation’s future success.

What is The Leeds Way?
The Leeds Way is ‘the way we do things around here’ – it’s what we do and crucially, how we do it, it’s our goals and our values. It’s our organisational culture where our engagement activity is driven by staff, developed through innovative engagement methods and embedded in a co-produced set of values and behaviours. We want our staff to feel part of the organisation and help shape its future. Capturing staff feedback through our WayFinder tool plays an important role in creating a clear culture for the trust.
Starting our journey – what did we do?

- Before Julian arrived in the trust, he wrote to 1000 staff including clinical directors, senior managers, senior nurses, consultants and staff side representatives and asked them for an honest opinion on ‘what were the key improvements that needed to be made and if they could fix it, what would they do?’.

- During his first 100 days, Julian and members of his executive team visited every clinical area, ward and department talking to staff and patients. Julian committed to spend 40 per cent of his time during the first 100 days engaging with staff.

- A ‘start the week’ communication and recognition bulletin was introduced that included Julian’s personal ‘view from the top’ updates on what was happening at LTHT that week, where and how he was spending his time and also celebrated success of staff in the organisation.

- We then embarked on developing ‘The Leeds Way’ – we provided an opportunity for all staff to contribute their views and help shape the vision, values and goals of the trust. We used an online crowdsourcing platform called WayFinder. The tool is a collaborative online platform that enables users to share ideas and comments in an anonymous way but everyone can access the responses, comment on and rate others ideas. We made sure all staff could access this technology from any computer, tablet and smartphone and as a result we had over 45,000 contributions to this work. The outputs of this work were also developed further at two large scale engagement events.

Following this six month programme of engagement with patients, the public, our partners and staff we launched our five year strategy setting out a clear vision to be the best provider in the country for integrated and specialist care. This would be achieved through the delivery of five core values and goals. We also agreed one of our five goals as ‘the best place to work’ where we develop a highly engaged, high performing workforce and positive patient-centred culture delivering great care for patients.
New staff engagement strategy

In September 2014, Dean Royles joined the trust as the new director of HR & OD. Dean was keen that we develop a staff engagement strategy to build upon the good work in place, allowing it to be aligned and accelerated to embed The Leeds Way as ‘the way we do things around here’. The strategy strives to develop a sense of community where every individual (staff, students and volunteers) feels part of the organisation, takes pride in what they do, works as part of a successful team and delivers the best possible care for patients.

The strategy focuses on our work programmes for two-way communications, health and wellbeing, improvements in the employee journey and recognition and celebration and is set in the context of organisational learning and strong leadership. Equality considerations and priorities are woven through the work-streams within the strategy.

This strategy is a chapter of our broader people strategy that includes supporting and complementary chapters that focus on our volunteers, talent and leadership, education and training, and workforce planning to ensure we have the right staff, at the right time with the right skills.

The strategy and its supporting priority work programmes were developed through feedback from the business planning processes of the CSUs, results of staff feedback activities (for example, National Staff Survey and Friends and Family Test) and national drivers of best practice, both internally and external to the NHS.

Delivery of the strategy will be overseen by a staff engagement group that will be chaired by Julian. Membership will include the director of HR, operational representatives, staff side and senior corporate leads.

Using the WayFinder tool

We have continued to develop our engagement with staff and the use of the WayFinder tool:

- Staff from each Clinical Service Unit (CSU) being trained in the use of the tool as part of a WayFinder Academy.

- The tool was used as part of extensive engagement activity at local service level to develop CSU clinical business strategies.
• We are developing an annual programme of corporate campaigns to engage staff in shaping the direction of the trust, supported by this technology. Examples of campaigns that we have already run include suggestions for how we learn more from incidents, ideas for improvements to our intranet and public web site and in March we will use WayFinder to support the development of our equality strategy.

**Tracking our progress**

Although we recognise it is early days, we are starting to see some real improvements:

• During Q1 2014/15 of the Staff Friends and Family Test, we had a response rate of 750 staff, this increased to 1514 staff in Q4. Our recommendation scores as a place to work increased from 57 per cent to 68 per cent during this time and as a place to receive treatment from 73 per cent to 84 per cent.

• In the Staff Survey 2014 we undertook a larger 5000 sample of staff to maximise the feedback opportunity and to enable us to obtain results at local level. Our response rate was 50 per cent, putting us above average for acute trusts in the country.

• A consistent theme of the feedback through WayFinder was the concern about staffing levels. The trust board therefore approved an additional £6 million investment in nursing and midwifery staffing for 2014/15.

• We have seen an 11 per cent increase in staff confirming that they have had an appraisal since 2013 which puts us in the best 20 per cent of trusts nationally. Our focus for 2015 is to maintain the increased rates and continue to focus on the quality of appraisals.

• In the results of the 2012 Staff Survey, we had 18 key findings in the bottom 20 per cent of trusts in the country; in 2014 this had reduced to four.

• We have seen a 15 per cent increase in staff reporting good communication between senior managers and staff since 2012.
Watch our video and hear for yourself what our staff are saying about the introduction of WayFinder and the development of The Leeds Way.

Conclusions
There is no doubt that we are the start of an important journey in terms of embedding The Leeds Way in everything we do – how we recruit, how we induct new staff and how we appraise. But we have clear plans and a shared understanding about how we can achieve this to make Leeds Teaching Hospitals the best place to work.

Top tips for other trusts
- It’s a journey - don’t expect rapid results. It takes time to build trust and create momentum.
- Ensure there is leadership and drive from all of the executive team.
- Have a clear framework but be opportunistic and agile.
- Use new and innovative methods (for example online crowd sourcing) alongside face-to-face and other traditional forms of engagement.
- Work in partnership with Trade unions through joint working in analysing and action planning.
- Don’t forget that feedback is an essential part of the cycle - let staff know how their ideas were used and they will get involved next time.

Further information
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