

Staff survey shows NHS is moving in the right direction but more still needs to be done, says NHS Employers

For immediate use

'Employers are continuing to improve the workplace for NHS staff, but there is still more that we need to do', says Steve Barnett, director of NHS Employers, today in response to the staff survey results.

The results, released by the Healthcare Commission, show that the drive to improve the working lives of NHS staff has again had a positive impact with satisfaction levels maintained or improved in a number of key areas.

Improvements are evident in areas where employers have focussed particular attention, such as the violence, bullying and harassment of staff and work-related stress. However, more clearly needs to be done in these areas and in others indicated by the survey.

Steve Barnett said:

'The results are an encouraging reflection of the views of staff and show that generally NHS employees are satisfied with working in the NHS. This is a real testament to the improvements that have been made in recent years and is reflected in the high rating of the quality of senior management leadership.

I am particularly encouraged to see that on the whole the trend is moving in the right direction and things are getting better. In particular there is evidence of an improvement in HR and management practices with more staff receiving training, appraisals and personal development opportunities. There is also evidence that more staff feel supported by their employers, for example in cases of abuse by patients or relatives.

But it is also clear that there is more work to be done. The figures relating to violence and bullying in the workplace are still unacceptable. The improvements each year, albeit slight, are welcome and our challenge for the future is to drive this improvement at a faster pace.

NHS Employers is leading on the work in many of the areas covered by the survey and we will ensure that our work programme is shaped by the survey findings. We will continue to work closely with the Healthcare Commission, staff-side organisations and employers in the NHS to continue to improve the work-life of NHS staff'.

Working in partnership with NHS employers and staff organisations, NHS Employers is building on work already underway to address the issues raised by the staff survey. In particular, NHS Employers will take forward a number of initiatives including:

- a campaign on stress in the workplace - particularly highlighting issues around work related stress and the costs to the individual and organisation
- scoping the future direction of Improving Working Lives with a particular focus on individual professional groups