

A Human Resources Strategy for NHS Wales - Delivering for Patients

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Foreword

The National Health Service has been a major feature of Welsh society for over 50 years. Throughout this time its staff have made a significant contribution to its development. Over the years the NHS has grown to be the largest employer in Wales and now employs 70,000 staff. In many communities a large percentage of the population works in the NHS and many people have dedicated their entire working life to the care of patients.

Aneurin Bevan had a great vision in 1948. The intervening years have seen many changes and NHS Wales has become a highly complex organisation which requires innovative ways of identifying and tackling the problems it faces. Although NHS Wales must continue to work closely with the health service across the whole of the UK on pay modernisation, workforce planning, occupational and service quality standards, there are many exciting ways in which we can continue to build a health service that meets the specific needs of Wales. One of these is in maintaining and building upon best practice in the area of recruiting, retaining and employing staff.

Delivering for Patients is part of an integrated approach to improve the provision of services in NHS Wales. *Putting Patients First* describes people as 'our greatest asset' and recognises that NHS Wales can only be successful if the people working in it make it so. *Better Health - Better Wales* examines the legacy of ill health in Wales and raises issues relevant to NHS Wales staff including workplace health and the education and training implications of protecting and promoting health. *Quality Care and Clinical Excellence* introduces clinical governance and new standards of quality and efficiency. It sets out to ensure that standards of performance everywhere are comparable with the best.

Building for the Future commits the Assembly to work to encourage better integration in the planning and delivery of services particularly between social care and health services. The national strategy document for health promotion, *Promoting health and well being: A consultation document*, will result in a more coherent approach between national and local levels with better co-ordination and targeting of action. *Realising the Potential* aims to realise the potential of nurses, midwives and health visitors in order to meet, in collaboration with others, the future health needs of the people of Wales. *Securing Health Together* includes an expectation that public sector employers, including NHS Wales, become exemplars in improving the health of staff.

This document is the product of a great deal of work, collaboration and consultation. But this is only the first part of the process of change in the field of human resources in NHS Wales. Much remains to be done. Together, in partnership, NHS Wales can achieve a better future for patients, their carers, the communities it serves and for NHS staff. *Delivering for Patients* is a document for the new millennium which recognises the enormous contribution that staff in particular can make to the continuing success of NHS Wales.

Jane Hutt

Assembly Secretary for Health and Social Services

June 2000

1 THE 'DELIVERING FOR PATIENTS' STRATEGY

1.1 *Delivering for Patients* identifies the staff management issues that need to be addressed by NHS Wales. It is for staff in all areas of health care - clinicians, managers, professional, administrative and support staff - in all hospital, community, primary care and related services. Many issues are common to all, including General Medical and General Dental practices, and good employment practice should underpin all health care delivery. Staff are central to this and NHS Wales can successfully deliver the health agenda only with the continued support and contribution of a workforce which is highly motivated, properly skilled, appropriately rewarded and has a sense of fairness and security in employment.

1.2 It is anticipated that NHS organisations commissioning services will draw to the attention of all contractors the employment practices that this strategy promotes and, wherever possible, ensure these are included in the contractual arrangements.

1.3 The strategy is based on the concept of partnership working between the Assembly, NHS Wales and its staff. *Delivering for Patients* involves all staff, managers, trade unions, staff organisations, health practitioners, education providers and a range of other organisations, particularly those in the local authority and voluntary sectors.

1.4 *Delivering for Patients* will be integrated within the overall NHS and local government agenda through the development of policy frameworks such as Clinical Governance.

1.5 Developing the organisation as well as the individual is essential and *Delivering for Patients* seeks to establish maturity in management, mutual respect and dignity in employment. NHS Wales will enable all its staff to become empowered so that they may contribute fully to delivering a high quality service.

1.6 NHS Wales recognises that staff have responsibilities and roles inside and outside the workplace. It will promote and support lifelong learning principles within the working environment, and will create and implement best practice in staff management, setting standards for others to follow. It aims to achieve and sustain a culture of openness, inclusivity, partnership, involvement and accountability.

2 THE STRATEGIC AIMS OF NHS WALES

'To promote the health and well-being of everyone living in Wales and provide effective and efficient health and social services'

- to improve the health and well-being of the population of Wales and reduce inequalities by tackling the underlying causes of ill health and improving access to services; and
- through financially sustainable organisations, to improve the quality and responsiveness of health and social services in Wales.

3 THE HUMAN RESOURCES AIMS OF NHS WALES FOR STAFF

‘To promote and support the delivery of high quality services in Wales through a high quality, competent workforce, with appropriate staffing levels, which is highly motivated, properly rewarded and has a sense of fairness and pride in employment’

- to create and implement best practice in staff management, setting standards for others to follow;
- to ensure that equality of opportunity and fairness are central principles in all matters affecting staff and to promote a culture where discrimination is not tolerated;
- to achieve and sustain a culture of openness, inclusivity, partnership, involvement and accountability;
- to develop and implement workforce planning procedures which are integrated effectively with service planning and through which NHS Wales can meet changing needs and continue to provide high quality, effective and efficient services;
- to promote and support the Continuing Professional Development of staff and the application of lifelong learning principles within the working environment;
- to develop an effective health and safety strategy, dealing in particular with stress and bullying in work, and to develop a coherent occupational health strategy; and
- to develop a proactive approach for dealing with violence and aggression in the workplace and to ensure relevant statistics are maintained and monitored.

4 PRIORITIES, OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

4.1 The implementation of *Delivering for Patients* will bring about the need to review the development of and investment in the human resources function. Individuals will be identified as accountable for taking specific aspects of the strategy forward.

4.2 The priorities, objectives and targets cover the early years. These will be reviewed annually in conjunction with NHS Wales and the Partnership Forum as well as at local level. The Health Improvement Programme monitoring process will make an important contribution to this review. The Assembly’s Health and Social Services Committee will monitor, develop and expand these as necessary. NHS Wales and its key partners, such as social services, will be regularly informed of progress through

the Committee. The key areas being addressed in NHS Wales' first human resources strategy are:

4.3 Planning for the Future Workforce

Workforce planning is the process used to achieve the most efficient and effective workforce, ensuring the provision of the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. The NHS workforce consumes a large proportion of the total NHS budget. Planning for an efficient and effective workforce enables the best use of NHS financial resources to be made and the maximum number of patients treated.

4.4 Workforce Planning has three dimensions: the demand for staff, the supply of staff and solving the differences between demand and supply. The NHS is a unique employer because the majority of its staff are highly skilled, highly qualified professionals planned for, educated and trained by the NHS within a UK-wide employment market. The planning of education and training has to be organised over a long timescale in order to secure sufficient numbers of highly skilled and qualified professionals. The requirement for Welsh speaking staff will be identified in the process.

4.5 Education, Training and Development

The continuous development of clinical practice and technological advancement needs flexible and timely responses together with a commitment to investing in people. Giving a high priority to educating, training and developing staff will remain critically important.

4.6 Pre-registration education and training equips healthcare professionals with the essential skills and knowledge needed to register to practise.

4.7 In working closely with the Higher Education institutions and professional bodies, NHS Wales will ensure that people are able to access the professional education they require; and through lifelong learning staff will be able to develop and update knowledge and skills throughout their working lives.

4.8 NHS organisations are encouraged to develop appropriate individual training and development strategies through focused Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Personal Development Plans (PDPs) for individual staff will identify and balance their personal, educational and professional development needs with those of the organisation.

4.9 A supporting performance management system will be essential to the delivery of the organisation's responsibility for Clinical Governance.

4.10 Integration of the principles of equality and fairness in both service delivery and within the workplace must become fundamental to all education and developmental activity. The development of cultural competence within the workforce will contribute significantly to the quality of service delivered to patients who are from minority groups.

4.11 Employment

NHS Wales will continue to work to achieve and sustain a culture of openness, inclusivity, partnership, involvement and accountability, especially in the development and application of employment practices.

4.12 NHS Wales is dependent on the skills of its staff and their commitment to delivering the service. Without sufficient numbers of staff, the level and quality of service cannot be provided for patients. One of the strategic aims of *Delivering for Patients* is that NHS Wales can compete effectively with others in recruiting staff, retaining staff and encouraging former staff to return to work in a flexible and welcoming environment.

Recruitment and Retention

4.12.1 In some specific areas within NHS Wales it is more difficult to recruit some people with the right skills and experience. The shortages that may result may be compounded by high staff turnover, reliance on agency staff and sickness absences. These place a substantial financial burden on the service and a burden on staff in work. This strategy aims to achieve a demonstrable reduction in each.

4.12.2 As a major employer, NHS Wales needs to attract individuals from a broad and representative spectrum of the population. Trusts and Health Authorities should work in partnership with the Employment Service and other relevant bodies to recruit those who are changing careers, such as New Deal clients, into NHS posts. NHS Wales is committed to vocational training initiatives such as the Modern Apprenticeship scheme.

4.12.3 *Delivering for Patients* provides a framework to address the many variables which contribute to successful recruitment and retention. Positive action will be taken to offer flexible induction, education, training and working hours in order to recruit, retain and motivate staff.

Employment Policies and Practice

4.12.4 Employment policies and practices operating in NHS Wales must deliver the new strategic approach. Employment policies across NHS Wales will be reviewed and imaginative examples of best practice will be identified and promoted. In particular the review will seek innovative approaches to partnership working; flexible, employee friendly policies, including recognition of carers' responsibilities; managing change; dealing with workplace violence, aggression, bullying and harassment; and ensuring a healthy workplace environment wherever care is delivered.

4.12.5 Managing change is an ongoing element of staff management within NHS Wales and is essential to the delivery of a high quality service especially during times of change and turbulence. It encompasses performance management, change management strategies, communications, confidentiality and freedom of speech.

4.12.6 Every NHS organisation will need to demonstrate that it has in place appropriate staff management policies and procedures which are consistent with best practice. This will help ensure that organisations are able to adapt to meet future challenges. Policies and procedures will need to be written clearly and be readily available to all staff.

Employee Relations: Partnership, Collaboration and Co-operation

4.12.7 The NHS Partnership Forum, which comprises senior managers, trade union and professional organisation representatives together with Assembly officials, will provide a significant contribution in developing sound employee and employment relations within NHS Wales.

4.12.8 The Forum will develop collaborative and inclusive working through partnership at all levels within NHS Wales at an earlier stage, and with a much wider base of groups than might previously have been the case. It has a remit to work constructively in joint problem solving and to contribute to the development and implementation of innovation and new practices.

4.12.9 Effective machinery for meaningful discussion and consultation underpins the overall strategic approach. Partnership will be forged between NHS staff, management, trade unions, professional organisations, social services, local government and the Assembly.

Equality

4.12.10 Equal access to opportunities and fair treatment is important for all staff working in NHS Wales. From the time people join to the time they leave, their progress and their contribution to delivering effective health care depends on fairness and equality both in their development and in the promotion opportunities available to them.

4.12.11 Fair and just practices for all staff requires a programme of action that challenges discrimination and prejudice at all levels. More opportunities must be secured for those groups that have been vulnerable to disadvantage. NHS Wales must show courage and honesty if it is to recognise that institutionalised and individual action

discriminates against some staff because of their race, colour, ethnicity, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

4.12.12 NHS organisations will implement monitoring processes, take action to assess and, where appropriate, redress the balance in their workforce with regard to the above groups.

4.12.13 Staff appraisal processes must be reviewed on a regular basis if equality is to be sustained. Well designed appraisals will identify potential, focus on education and training needs, and measure the contribution individual staff can make.

4.12.14 NHS organisations must continue to ensure that equality awareness training to a high standard is in place. By ensuring that the work environment is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying and prejudice, NHS Wales can help staff maximise their performance.

4.12.15 The Assembly, and as a consequence NHS Wales, is obliged under sections 48 and 120 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 to have due regard to equality of opportunity for all in its business functions. NHS Wales must take positive action in implementing the Human Rights Act 1998. Staff should be aware of the importance of the Act and the rights it enshrines. Health Authorities and Trusts should audit current practice and procedures to ensure compliance. Access to advice, guidance and in-depth training on relevant aspects of the Act must also be established within the organisation.

Job Design

4.12.16 Traditionally, jobs in NHS Wales have predominantly been based on full time working. Increasing opportunities to work more flexibly, both in terms of location and time, has long been associated with promoting greater equality of opportunity and treatment. Developing new, innovative approaches to work, combining the need for greater efficiency in the organisation with meeting the needs of individuals and their families, provides NHS Wales with the opportunity to address staff shortages, retain skills and experience, promote equality and reduce costs associated with the recruitment and retention of staff. It will also provide the opportunity to widen the pool of potential applicants when vacant posts are advertised in the wider community.

4.12.17 Health care provision is needed round the clock every day of the year. To provide this effectively, and without placing undue demands on staff, new and innovative approaches to working patterns and job design will be developed. Flexibility in working arrangements will not only serve the needs of patients but will also benefit staff. Changing the way people work in NHS Wales can contribute significantly to service delivery by crossing the artificial boundaries of conventional working hours, working practices and professional conventions.

4.12.18 In taking forward *Delivering for Patients*, consideration will be given to developing means by which extended or seven day cover might be implemented through innovative flexible working schemes. Underpinning the success of flexible working practices as a method of promoting greater equality and fairness is the need for partnership and consultation in the design and implementation of individual schemes and initiatives.

Pay

4.12.19 *Delivering for Patients* dovetails with the developing UK-wide framework for NHS pay and conditions which are intended to enable employers to improve patient services locally through a more modern and flexible system of pay and reward.

4.12.20 Better career progression and simplified conditions of service, with fair rewards, will improve the working lives of NHS staff and enhance the quality of care they then deliver. NHS pay in Wales, as with the rest of the UK, must be based on efficiency, fairness, flexibility and partnership and must give equal pay for work of equal value.

4.12.21 The need to address equal pay has been accepted in *Agenda for Change*. A new pay system will be based on the results of a job evaluation scheme that reflects the demands of different NHS jobs. It will identify where the current system gets pay wrong and where remedies are needed. This will in turn help raise morale and improve

job satisfaction.

A Safe and Healthy Working Environment

4.12.22 The Occupational Health Strategy for Great Britain, *Securing Health Together*, includes an expectation that public sector employers, including the NHS, become exemplars in improving the health of their staff in work.

4.12.23 Violence and aggression in the workplace is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. NHS Wales will develop a proactive approach for dealing with violence and aggression and will develop and implement a mechanism to collect, maintain and monitor relevant statistics.

4.12.24 Health Authorities and Trusts will take steps to protect and promote the physical health, mental health and well being of staff at all times, and will ensure appropriate working environments which provide freedom from mistreatment and danger, including violence and harassment against individuals and groups.

25. Staff can expect employment practices and workplace arrangements, including modern and proactive occupational health services and written risk assessments, which are in accord with Health and Safety best practice. Health Authorities and Trusts will work towards achieving and maintaining the Corporate Health Standard, the quality mark for workplace health in Wales.

Career Maturity and Retirement

4.12.26 The commitment and contribution that staff make through their working life in NHS Wales should be recognised by all NHS employers, especially as retirement approaches. Awards for long service and for special contributions are to be actively pursued.

4.12.27 Career maturity should be recognised. Employers should take the opportunity to draw on and share with other employees the knowledge and experience of long serving staff - for example through developing teaching and mentoring roles in place of some direct operational activity. As each person progresses through employment, their personal situations and needs change. Employers should explore with staff how these needs can be met, to the advantage of all. Staff and employers might seek flexibility in retirement arrangements such as the leaving age, changing roles and responsibilities in the run up to retirement and the flexibility to change hours without it impacting on final pension benefits.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 The implementation of *Delivering for Patients* will be the responsibility of the Human Resources Director NHS Wales and of Health Authority and Trust Boards. In particular, Chief Executives and Human Resources Directors at Health Authorities and Trusts will be held to account for progress within their respective organisations.

5.2 The implementation programme will ensure that all staff will receive a summary of the strategy and its objectives. Staff will also have the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of relevant initiatives and developments through partnership working at local level.

5.3 The National Assembly, together with NHS management and the Partnership Forum, will give consideration to establishing locally agreed pilot schemes to test at Health Authority and/or Trust level the feasibility of initiatives in the strategy.

6 MONITORING

6.1 *Delivering for Patients* provides for specific action in the management and development of staff at all levels within NHS Wales. Monitoring arrangements, including benchmarking, will be brought into place to measure how its aims are being met and to assist NHS Wales in identifying its future priorities. Performance measures, which reflect the priorities of the strategy and relate directly to staff, will be developed and incorporated into the Health Improvement Programme for NHS Wales and the annual

review process.

6.2 It is a fundamental principle of *Delivering for Patients* that the priorities and needs of NHS Wales are taken fully into account in achieving the strategic aims. The development of appropriate targets and indicators and the review process will be undertaken in conjunction with NHS Wales and other stakeholders.

6.3 Consideration will also be given to an annual survey of staff satisfaction to provide a baseline and then as an additional indicator of progress.

Copies of *Delivering for Patients* are available from Cath Pitman, Human Resources Division (5), National Assembly for Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ. Telephone 029 2082 5318, fax 029 2082 5352, e-mail cath.pitman@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Delivering for Patients can be found on the Internet at www.wales.gov.uk and is available to NHS Wales on CymruWeb.

<u>Planning for the Future Workforce</u>			
OBJECTIVE		ACCOUNTABILITY	TARGET DATE
1	To undertake a full review of the workforce planning process in consultation with NHS Wales, other interested organisations and the Department of Health; and to put in place an agreed process for integrated workforce planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Director, NHS Wales, National Assembly 	December 2000
<u>Education, Training and Development</u>			
2	To develop a programme for the systematic examination of education provision which will identify areas for common core training; and to ensure that clinical placements meet workforce demand from NHS Wales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Director, NHS Wales, National Assembly • Trust Chief Executives and HR Directors • Health Authority Chief Executives and HR Directors 	December 2000
<u>Recruitment and Retention</u>			

3	To establish and publish targets for reducing staff shortages, turnover and retention rates; and to review flexibility of employment and refresher arrangements to enable qualified staff to return to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trust Chief Executives and HR Directors ● Health Authority Chief Executives and HR Directors ● HR Director, NHS Wales, National Assembly 	April 2001
<u>Employment Policies and Practice</u>			
4	To initiate and complete a review of employment policies across NHS Wales; and to initiate and implement a mechanism for monitoring the effectiveness of employment policies which identify and promote examples of best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HR Director, NHS Wales, National Assembly ● Trust Chief Executives and HR Directors ● Health Authority Chief Executives and HR Directors 	February 2001
5	To monitor and support the management of change by developing and implementing effective internal communication policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trust HR Directors ● Health Authority HR Directors 	April 2001
<u>Equality</u>			
6	<p>To increase understanding of equality and human rights in NHS Wales by:</p> <p>(i) raising awareness of cultural and language issues for all front-line staff;</p> <p>(ii) designing and implementing a programme of training which addresses equality issues in the workplace;</p> <p>(iii) implementing awareness raising, training and monitoring programmes in relation to equality, diversity, bullying and harassment; and</p> <p>(iv) developing and implementing a mechanism for monitoring workforce equality including recruitment, selection and career development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trust Chief Executives and HR Directors ● Health Authority Chief Executives and HR Directors ● HR Director, NHS Wales National Assembly ● Head of NHS Wales Equality Unit 	April 2001
<u>Job Design</u>			

7	To work with NHS Wales, trade unions, professional bodies and others to develop an approach to examine job design and flexibility to provide up to 24 hour cover in patient related work areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Director, NHS Wales, National Assembly 	December 2001
<u>A Safe and Healthy Workplace Environment</u>			
8	To establish an advisory group and report on a review of occupational health services and workplace health and safety available to staff in NHS Wales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Director, NHS Wales, National Assembly 	December 2000
9	To establish baseline data on the incidence of accidents, violence, aggression, absence and sickness in NHS Wales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust Chief Executives and HR Directors • Health Authority Chief Executives and HR Directors 	December 2000
<u>Career maturity and retirement</u>			
10	To consider the principles and identify options for career maturity pathways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Director, NHS Wales, National Assembly 	April 2001