The London Social Partnership Forum (SPF) held their 6th annual conference on 16 March. The theme of the conference was staff health and wellbeing, with a focus on tackling bullying and the collective call to action. The group were delighted to welcome Dame Carol Black as the keynote speaker. Dame Carol has held senior posts in medicine and now holds high level policy advisory positions on health and work.

Danny Mortimer of NHS Employers and Christina McAnea of UNISON gave the employer and trade union side perspective on current issues facing the NHS, a lively panel session followed their presentations.

Delegates had the opportunity to hear a chief executive’s point of view from Dame Jacqueline Docherty, CEO of London North West Hospitals which was very well received.

Breakout sessions (see below) featuring local examples of best practice, along with an area dedicated to the London Healthy Workplace Charter gave delegates the chance to find out more about what their trust colleagues are doing to address staff health and wellbeing.

Learn more about the London Healthy Workplace Charter - The London Healthy Workplace Charter team

Where do You draw the line - University College London Hospital

Staff health and wellbeing at the Royal Free Hospital – The Royal Free Hospital

Staff health and wellbeing at South London and the Maudsley Hospital – South London and the Maudsley Hospital

Delegates were given an update on the London landscape by Helen Bullers, NHS England followed by a panel discussion on workforce supply within adult social services and system changes and challenges.

Keeping with the theme of staff health and wellbeing there was a session on building resilience - making a healthy partnership with ourselves from Dr Philip Hopley, Consultant Psychiatrist and Managing Director, Cognacity, London and an update on the guardian of safe working hours for junior doctors from Dr Glynn Evans, London North West Healthcare NHS Trust.

The conference this year was hosted by UNISON at their Euston office. Approximately 80 delegates attended on the day with a good mix of employers and staff side colleagues, each sitting within their STP areas in order to prompt relevant local discussions.

The conference evaluated well with 91 per cent of delegates saying they agreed/strongly agreed that the conference had helped them to make useful connections with others, 91 per cent of delegates agreed/strongly agreed that the conference helped them to identify and learn about good practice and 94 per cent of delegates agreed/strongly agreed that by attending the conference they better understood the impact of health and wellbeing for staff and how it is supported in partnership.

The London SPF are continuing to address the collective call to action and to work on the staff health and wellbeing agenda via the health and wellbeing sub-group which meets quarterly.
Midlands and East Partnership Conference 2017

The Midlands and East partnership conference took place on 24 March at Kettering Conference Centre. Approximately 90 delegates and speakers took part, sharing best practice to support the overall aim of the conference to make Midlands and East a great place for NHS staff to work.

The conference was opened by Jan Bloomfield, workforce lead for West Suffolk Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. Jan shared her experience of the benefits working in partnership has brought to her organisation. This reminded delegates of the original intent of working in partnership at local and regional levels - to improve the experience for NHS staff and ultimately the quality of patient care.

The morning included horizon scanning to identify the challenges currently facing the health system led by the NHS Confederation; regional and national staff survey results, themes and trends led by NHS Employers; an overview of the work of the national SPF and the Staff Council from Claire Sullivan, Chartered Society of Physiotherapists and Josie Irwin, Royal College of Nursing. Clare and Josie used the opportunity to ask for feedback from delegates on future priorities for the national SPF to inform its work programme.

The morning also included interactive group exercises on how to include partnership working in the development of STPs, as well as opportunities to share management and staff side hot topics, and identify solutions. Feedback from the interactive sessions was shared and added to regional SPF work plans.

The day was rounded off with delegates attending two out of a selection of five workshops. In the workshops individual trusts described how, by working in partnership they had achieved organisational change. Stories included developing a staff health and wellbeing programme, improving absence management and staff health and wellbeing, developing a lifelong learning programme for staff, using cultural ambassadors to impact the number of BME staff involved in employee relations cases, and using partnership working in the local workforce transformation programme and the freedom to speak up guardian role.

Evaluation of the event was positive with 79 per cent of delegates either fully or almost fully agreeing that the event had enabled them to make useful connections.

The next conference will be in early 2018, with a steering group of regional SPF chairs and volunteers from staff side and employers working together to shape the conference themes.
Key actions from the conference included the development of an easy-to-use guide for staff on changes arising from STPs, including new care models. Consideration is also being given to recording a podcast with Liane Langdon and Dr Paul Bowen on partnership working within Clinical Commissioning Groups during system change.

Evaluation from the conference was positive, with 78 per cent of delegates agreeing or strongly agreeing that the event had given them a better understanding of the importance of working in partnership during system change.

Using Slido, delegates were able to give informal reflections, and were asked to summarise the conference in one word. The word most used was informative. The unique hashtag #SPFsystemchange was used before, during and after the event, and twitter posts featured a combination of comments on the conference content and photographs, with a total of 157 tweets posted.

The next North SPF conference will be held on 15 September 2017 in Horizon, Leeds. The event will focus on key issues for the region, including the shifting balance of care from hospital to community and the associated financial challenges.
South West Joint Partnership Conference 2016

Diversity and inclusion

The South West partnership conference was held on 24 November 2016 in Bristol, with good attendance from management and staff side colleagues. The focus of the day was diversity and inclusion.

The conference was opened by the joint South West regional SPF chairs Martin Ringrose (management) and Helen Eccles (staff side). The theme of the conference was introduced by Paul Deemer, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, NHS Employers. The morning had sessions from key note speakers, and in the afternoon delegates joined two workshop sessions led by the keynote speakers (see below).

Roger Kline, NHS England director for the Workforce Race Equality Standard led the keynote speaker session giving a national perspective on diversity and inclusion.

Workshop sessions

- Vicky Boroughs, UNISON considered what a good equality impact assessment looks like.

- Margaret Davies, occupational psychologist and founder of The Glass Lift: Accelerating Difference provided an understanding of opportunities for leadership in the NHS.

- Katy Horner and Linnea Keldusild, DAC Beachcroft led a session on good practice in diversity and inclusion – a legal perspective, looking at gender pay gap reporting and what organisations can do to prepare themselves to meet their new obligations.

- Mayur Bhatt and Jenny Turton, Avon Wiltshire Partnership NHS Trust and Peter Hall, Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion led a session called from data to action: scrutinising, learning, challenging and changing, asking organisations to think about the statement You’ve got the data, but what does it mean? What next?

- Clive Lewis, Globis shared his experiences as a Non Executive Director from a BME background working in the NHS.

The total number of delegates on the day was 37 (41 booked), and the total number of evaluation forms completed and returned was 29, a return rate of 78 per cent. 93 per cent of delegates gave the event an overall rating of good, very good or excellent, and 100 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that the conference enabled greater consideration of views and good practice regarding diversity and inclusion.

The conference ended with delegates committing to taking learning and actions back to their organisations. Delegates also agreed to join a follow up session in 2017 to share how their learning had influenced working practices in their organisations.

You can find more information about the regional partnership conferences on the SPF website www.socialpartnershipforum.org/regional-spf