
Strategic Group update
The first meeting in 2018 of the SPF Strategic Group took place on 13 February. Members were given an update on the widened role of the new Department of Health and Social Care and then discussed the draft workforce strategy, published for consultation in December 2017. The group hopes to submit a joint SPF response to the consultation. An update was provided on the recent SPF visits to Accountable Care Systems, which will inform the ongoing work the SPF is doing on de-risking system change for staff. NHS Improvement’s Getting it Right First Time programme outlined progress to date and their focus on improving quality and safety. The meeting discussed next steps for tackling bullying in the NHS following the successful SPF creating positive cultures summit, and NHS England shared a paper on their plans to celebrate the NHS at 70, which includes highlighting the contribution of the migrant workforce.

HPMA awards – entry deadline extension
The HPMA Excellence Awards 2018 recognise and reward outstanding work in healthcare human resource management. The SPF partnership award recognises excellent examples of partnership working between employers and trade unions, in the provision of health and social care. If you can demonstrate examples of partnership working from the outset of your project or initiative, the SPF encourages you to apply. The deadline for entries has been extended to 4pm on Monday 5 March 2018. To see our guide to submitting a winning entry, and further details on how to apply, please visit the SPF website. For further updates follow us on twitter @NationalSPF.

Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES)
NHS England has published an indicative timetable for implementation of the Workforce Disability Equality Standard. The proposed standard will use data from the NHS annual staff survey and look at areas such as workforce representation; reasonable adjustments and employment experience, to tackle inequality and improve opportunities for NHS staff with a disability or long-term condition. The timetable is available on the NHS Employers website.
Raising concerns (whistleblowing)
The SPF believe that it is incredibly important that there is an open environment in NHS workplaces, where staff feel confident to raise concerns, and that management, staff and trade unions work together in partnership to use this feedback to improve the services the NHS provides. The SPF website features resources and support to help NHS staff raise concerns, including more information on Speak Up which offers free, independent, confidential advice. NHS Improvement is also working with a number of whistleblowers and NHS employers to develop a whistleblowers' support scheme for secondary care. For more information on this scheme, please see the SPF website.

Creating positive cultures – information and resources
The SPF creating positive cultures summit held at UNISON on 28 November 2017, brought together NHS employers, ALBs and trade unions to reflect on the first year of the call to action and set priorities for the year ahead. Information and resources from the summit can be found on the SPF website, including summit notes and practice posters which showcase the excellent tackling bullying initiatives that have been developed by trusts over the last year. A presentation given by CQC linking the well-led domain to tackling bullying is also available to download. Further activity has taken place since the summit, including a GoTo meeting to progress work on the year two priorities - the slides from this meeting can be viewed here. This work will continue to be progressed through the Workforce Issues Group (WIG).

Have your say on the draft workforce strategy
Facing the facts, shaping the future: a draft health and care workforce strategy for England to 2027 was published in December 2017. There are specific topics in the strategy which the SPF is keen to be involved in including: careers not jobs, workplace cultures/model employer; supporting line managers, workplace equality and the non-clinical workforce. The regional SPFs have and are discussing the strategy and their feedback will be used to inform a national SPF response. The draft health and care workforce strategy is available to view on the HEE website, and you have until 5pm on 23 March to submit your response.

Social partnership working in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System.
Through the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) partnership forum, trade union representatives have been involved in discussions on the development of integrated care systems (ICS) from an early stage. Through this forum trade union representatives can influence and provide insight into system transformation plans and policies, where they impact on the workforce. The forum also enables effective communication and engagement with staff during system change. See the BLMK case study and terms of reference on the SPF website.

London SPF partnership conference
London SPE will hold their annual conference, Celebrating the NHS, Celebrating partnership, on 5 March. Inspired by the NHS’ 70th birthday, this year’s theme will reflect changes in the system past, present and future. For information, please contact Janine Prever Janine.prever@nhsemployers.org