

South East Regional Partnership Forum Bulletin – Winter 2021 edition

The Regional Social Partnership Forum (RSPF) brings together NHS Employers, NHS trade unions, NHS England & Improvement (NHSEI) to contribute to the development and implementation of positive practice that impacts on the health workforce in the South East.

End of year message from the Chairs

The last two years have proven to be the most challenging of our NHS careers, but it has also provided us with an opportunity to work more closely and to appreciate the strength of partnership working when we are faced with adversity. With much-needed humour and openness, we have discussed the impact of the pandemic on our people and have challenged each other to ensure we made the right decisions for them. We are privileged to Chair the South East Partnership Forum and have been proud to see it grown and develop, so as 2021 ends we would like to thank all our Staff Side and Employer colleagues for their contribution and support.

We wish you a peaceful and happy end of year, whatever this represents for you and to all those who celebrate it, we wish you a very merry Christmas.

Hugh, Liam & Caroline

Our priorities and what we have achieved in partnership ...

Covid-19 engagement

The RSPF met regularly throughout earlier phases of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 and received important updates from our Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (previously PHE) colleague Angela Baker and regular input from NHSI's Caroline Beardall and more recently Sandra Grant. We shared information about the impact of Covid on different areas of the South East and the actions employers were taking to ensure consistency of approach. As the pandemic continues, we aim to meet regularly in 2022.

Just & learning culture

One of our priorities in 2021, we have now heard from colleagues in other parts of the country as well as in our own region about their work to improve processes for staff involved in incidents and errors. As we start 2022, this important piece of work will continue so that good practice can continue to be shared and knowledge is increased across both Staff Side and employer organisations. [Find out more about creating a compassionate & respectful workplace culture here.](#)

Inclusion

Another priority for us in 2021, we have only just started to discuss how we might improve the experience of BAME and disabled staff employed in the NHS in the South East. This will continue to be an area of focus in 2022 and we look forward to hearing examples of good practice from colleagues. If your organisation has done some great work in partnership that has resulted in improvements then we'd love to hear from you!

Vaccination as a Condition of Deployment (VCOD) for Healthcare Workers

Employer and Union colleagues have joined a Task and Finish Group for the south east to discuss practicalities around this important workstream. The group is led by Shahana Ramsden. All are agreed on the importance of a compassionate and supportive approach to staff who have not yet been vaccinated. Trade Unions have put out statements encouraging vaccine uptake and highlighting the importance of encouragement, education and individual discussion as part of the approach. Please direct staff to their Trade Union for further advice.

Future of HR and OD review

The RSPF has been engaged in the review and supports the need to help steer organisations towards the vision set out within the 'We are the NHS: People Plan 2020/21'. Unions and employers will aim to work in partnership towards this and the first step will be in taking forward compassionate and inclusive cultures.

Agile Working – A Partnership research project

The SPF has recently agreed to undertake a research project through agiLab, with the Digital Futures at Work team at the University of Sussex.

The research project "Attending to the agile working needs of NHS staff with lower socio-economic status" will give us the opportunity to hear the voice of NHS staff and will provide recommendations for employers and employees to support the wellbeing and effectiveness of staff in an agile working environment. The work will add to the emerging national research on agile working.

There are already a range of useful resources on agile working [here](#). The South East Partnership Forum has been part of the development of a series of Agile Working workshops held over the past 12 months, the third of which is planned for 1 February 2022.



Please visit our [South East Partnership Forum](#) dedicated webpages for further resources;

2022/23 South East RSPF Meeting dates

18/01/2022	14:30 - 15:30
15/02/2022	14:30 - 15:30
15/03/2022	14:30 - 15:30
19/04/2022	14:30 - 16:00
17/05/2022	14:30 - 16:00
21/06/2022	14:30 - 16:00
19/07/2022	14:30 - 16:00
16/08/2022	14:30 - 16:00
20/09/2022	14:30 - 16:00
18/10/2022	14:30 - 16:00
15/11/2022	14:30 - 16:00
20/12/2022	14:30 - 16:00
17/01/2023	14:30 - 16:00
21/02/2023	14:30 - 16:00
21/03/2023	14:30 - 16:00

Thank you for your support and engagement. Seasons greetings and best wishes for 2022.