Organisational Development and Staff Wellbeing bulletin

August 2026

The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice on Organisational Development and Staff Wellbeing

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Guidelines, Policies and Reports

NHS Employers

Freedom to speak up

A safe and effective speaking up culture empowers staff to come forward, reassures them that their concerns will be listened to and met with compassion, and drives improvement through learning and positive action. Speaking up is not always easy, so we have brought together guidance, top tips, resources and case studies to help you create a safe and effective speaking up culture

NHS Employers

NHS Staff Standards Implementation Planning Tool

The NHS Staff Standards set clear national expectations for modern employment across the NHS. They support organisations to improve staff experience, strengthen accountability and create safe, inclusive and supportive workplaces. This tool is designed to support organisations to implement the NHS Staff Standards.

NHS Race and Health Observatory

REACH-OUT: Caring for the healthcare workforce post-COVID-19

The study set out to understand both the medium and long-term impacts on the mental, physical and occupational health of workers including nursing, allied-health professionals and administrators to produce evidence to support workforce recovery and actions for national policy recommendations. 40% of HCW developed Long COVID, with 27% still having symptoms a year after infection.

Published Research

Frontiers in Health Services

Prevalence and experiences of presenteeism in the workplace: a cross-sectional survey of an English National Health Service Mental Health Trust

Presenteeism (working while unwell) is prevalent in the NHS workforce and is associated with substantial costs. Currently little is known about the relationship between presenteeism and staff wellbeing within the NHS. We aimed to identify the proportion of employees working while unwell and how often this occurs, assess differences in views about presenteeism where long-term conditions and line management responsibilities play

a role, and to explore how affected individuals might be identified and supported within the NHS workforce.

Nursing Management
How to implement AI-based rostering to ease the administrative burden on nurse managers [email ulth.library.lincoln@nhs.net to request]
Nurse managers spend a significant amount of their working day on administrative duties, notably rostering, which can leave them with little time to engage with their teams. The use of artificial intelligence-based (AI-based) rostering platforms, combined with flexible staffing schedules, can reduce the administrative burden on nurse managers and provide more flexibility for staff.

Nursing Open
Enablers and Barriers to Nurse Managers' Leadership of Evidence-Based Practice During Organisational Change: A Qualitative Study
Organisational readiness, partnerships and expertise in evidence-based practice shape how nurse managers lead evidence-based practice during organisational change. These factors influence the consistency of care, staff support and the ability to sustain evidence-based practice in evolving healthcare environments.

Blogs/News/Editorials

British Journal of Nursing
The difficult nature of culture change [email ulth.library.lincoln@nhs.net to request]
When you read investigation reports into major NHS patient safety crises there always seem to be several common themes. Some hospitals and trusts are more mature than others when it comes to patient safety. There can be subcultures and cliques. It also seems difficult to find evidence that lessons from past adverse patient safety events and investigations have been learnt and that practice has changed. A defensive attitude from senior management and others to adverse patient safety events is another theme.

National Health Executive
Workforce Crisis: Recruitment, retention, and wellbeing of NHS staff
People are what drive the NHS. Policymakers can put all the emphasis they want on AI and new technology, but the workforce is what has always made the NHS special and will continue to do so in the future. Currently, however, that workforce is under strain thanks to chronic vacancies, rising demand, and exhaustion, putting employees under pressure.

Nursing Management
Nurses need the same psychological care as patients to thrive [email ulth.library.lincoln@nhs.net to request
We are at a critical point in history for our nursing workforce. NHS staff surveys report increasing levels of work-related stress and burnout. Alongside the reduction in continuing professional development opportunities, this is a recipe for disaster. These challenges contribute to an increase in turnover and sickness levels that exacerbate staffing shortage.

Society of Radiographers
NHS staff face worsening racist abuse following rise in anti-immigrant rhetoric, says Society of Radiographers
NHS staff are having to deal with increased racism from patients – including patients refusing to be treated by non-white staff members and referring to a healthcare worker as “a monkey” – according to the Society of Radiographers. Healthcare workers say that such incidents have increased noticeably over the last 18 months, reflecting increasingly

hostile public attitudes to race, diversity and immigration, as well as nationalist movements.

The British Psychological Society
NHS staff sickness rates continue to worsen
This week the latest staff sickness absence data was published. As with previous months, the data points to worrying signs of a workforce that is overworked and inadequately supported. The largest reported reason for sickness absences is due to issues related to mental health and wellbeing, which account for almost one third (29.9%) of sick days. Following a fall in January this year to 27%, the numbers have been growing steadily.

The King's Fund
Beyond 'how can I help?': the Ockenden and Amos maternity reviews and compassionate leadership
Last summer, we asserted that just four simple words – 'how can I help?' – capture the essence of compassionate leadership in health and social care. We reflected on the growing reality of moral injury in health and care and made the case that compassion is not an optional extra; it is a necessary condition for delivering high-quality care and supporting a thriving workforce. That idea, then, makes the reading of two recent publications into maternity services all that more sobering.

The King's Fund
Why radical change in health and care is so hard
What happens when 30 senior leaders are asked to reimagine the NHS from scratch? This challenge was put to participants of The King's Fund's Top Manager programme, inviting them to go beyond incremental reform and rethink what a health and care system should be for. What emerged was a revealing insight into why radical change remains so difficult to achieve, even when leaders are given permission to think differently.

Podcasts/Videos

CIPD
Courageous conversations
Every workplace has a breaking point, often building in silence. So, how can people professionals, line managers, business leaders move from avoidance to courageous conversations – naming what needs to be said with clarity, empathy and confidence?

The King's Fund
More human, less machine: an honest conversation about leading through AI transformation
What is it like to lead AI and digital transformation during a time of constant change? Mark Patterson speaks with three health and care leaders about what often goes unsaid, why successful transformation starts with problems rather than technology, and how leaders can create the conditions for meaningful and lasting change.

Miscellaneous

NHS Employers
Do OD connection events 2026
The Do OD programme supports NHS colleagues working in organisational development to be skilled practitioners who make a positive impact on patient care. Our connection events offer Do OD network members a place to come together and share updates, insights and learning.