

▶ Council of Governors

People Committee Update

Heather Smith, Chair of People Committee
and Non-Executive Director

25 February 2025

Concerns about:

- Sickness absence levels remain a cause for concern (although to note, improvements in long term sickness levels)
- Increase in case work numbers; number of ethnically diverse staff entering formal disciplinary process
- Time to Hire has increased
- Mandatory Training in some subject areas remains stubbornly below the target of 80% compliance
- Supervision and PDR remain under our target of 80% compliance. Particular concerns about the supervision rates in PICU and in Acute wards. Consistency in quality of supervisions remains under scrutiny
- Access to reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities
- Experience of racism and violence and aggression remain a focus for concern.
- The number of clinical staff in senior positions from ethnically diverse groups has not yet met the national target. The next national report is due in July 2025, which will tell us if we have made progress against national performance over the past year.

Positive Progress:

- Professional plans for the following areas have been developed and report to People Committee as part of the People Plan updates:
 - The nursing plan
 - Peer support worker plan
 - Allied health professions plan
 - Psychology services plan
 - Trainee doctor plan
- Assurance reports were received from the tier 2 groups across the year, with annual meeting effectiveness reports being provided to committee in January 2025, which will assist in agreeing the objectives for PC in 2025/26
- The committee received the People Pulse results 3 times a year as well as the improvement plan following the 2023/24 Staff Survey results. The results from the 2024 survey are due to be received at committee in March 2025.
- Long term sickness levels have decreased due to focussed attention by HR partners in service areas.
- The numbers of ethnically diverse staff in higher band roles has increased (but not as much in clinical roles)
- Agency usage has reduced

Examples of recent NED Challenge at Committee:

Sheffield Health
and Social Care
NHS Foundation Trust

- The committee asked that work is undertaken to understand the reasons for high numbers of ethnically diverse staff in employee relation cases.
- The assurance available in the Acute and PICU supervision recovery plan was challenged, and it was agreed that improvements such as a review of the supervision tree and policy are to take place ahead of the next reporting period.
- The committee requested that metrics and data such as trend lines and hot spots relating to violence and aggression in the workplace are reported to People Committee through the Wellbeing and Organisational Development Group assurance report.
- The committee were concerned around not being able to fully utilise the apprenticeship levy, which was noted to be in part due to no longer receiving training grants from Health Education England for nursing qualifications, which means paying for degrees through Open University which outweighs the cost of recruiting a qualified nurse. The committee expressed disappointment as utilising apprenticeships could help tackle inequalities where people wishing to pursue a career in nursing cannot justify the cost of completing a degree.
- The committee noted improvements in numbers of ethnically diverse staff in higher banded roles. However, advised that there is still work to be done in clinical areas to improve this.
- Sickness absence due to stress, anxiety and depression is high. Committee challenged (and sought assurance about) the support available to staff.

