



Workforce Strategic Plan

2021-26

Because you ♥atter

Foreword

The Workforce Strategic Plan provides a robust, sustainable framework to ensure patients are cared for by a skilled and safe workforce who are led by leaders with the capability and confidence to deliver the change required. Central to this strategic plan is our ability to maintain a culture which helps grow and develop leaders across the organisation, enabling the Trust to attract, retain and nurture a talented and engaged workforce that is passionate about providing excellent care for patients.

To enable us to do this, we are creating an inspiring workplace, in which we will build the capability of our existing workforce and further attract and retain the best people to come and work with us. We will do this by creating a workplace in which people feel empowered to make decisions, giving people clear frameworks within which to operate and intelligent data, which support informed decisions.

As part of the design of our future model of collaborative working and the development of independent business units, we will need to remodel and reshape the design and structure of our future workforce to ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time to deliver the appropriate care and treatment for our patients. We will also ensure that our workforce is able to respond to the current and immediate demands of the restoration and backlog challenge, supporting both their physical and mental health and wellbeing for them to work and perform at their best.

We will give people the tools to innovate and encourage the sharing of learning to continually improve and develop as an organisation. We will also create mechanisms to ensure that talent is recognised and nurtured, linking our talent pathways to the future skills and capabilities that we require to drive our strategy forward.

As one of the biggest employers in central Cheshire, we remain committed to ensuring that equality, diversity and human rights are embedded throughout the organisation and that our values and behaviours shape the delivery of our strategic plan:



We put you first

involving you in decisions which affect you and making time to learn from what you tell us to get it right for patients and staff every time



We strive for more

setting ourselves high standards, encouraging innovation and sharing best practice to be the best we can be and deliver great quality, safe care



We respect you

embracing diversity and treating everyone with understanding, dignity and compassion to support and care for the people we work with and for



We work together

with colleagues and partners to go beyond traditional boundaries and deliver care which truly benefits our patients and meets their individual needs and wants

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Our plan for 2021-2026

The Workforce Strategic Plan for Mid Cheshire Hospitals Foundation Trust (MCHT) must continue to support the national priorities of the NHS People Plan, as outlined in Appendix 1. However, it must also align itself to ensure that it serves as an enabler to delivering the Trust's five-year strategy.

This requires further prioritisation of projects, tasks, and workloads to ensure the Workforce Directorate is structured appropriately, and the workforce teams have the capacity and capability to deliver the key priorities over the next five years.

These priorities will help us to create an inspiring workplace, where we will foster an environment in which people feel empowered to make decisions, guided by information which supports our drive for continuous quality improvement.

We want to continue to attract and retain the best and most diverse talent – people with ideas and ambition who will enable the organisation to develop its future skills and capabilities. We will create a workplace where staff are healthy, happy and productive, and where the safety and quality of patient care benefits from the positive wellbeing of our staff.

In conjunction with our network of partners, we will review the design and structure of our future workforce, so we have the right people with the right skills in the right place to deliver the appropriate care and treatment for our patients. Together, we will be agile, responsive and supportive in the face of challenges to come.

We will also need to play our part in developing the Trust as a community anchor, by connecting people, organisations, educators, volunteers and communities to improve the health and wellbeing of our population and doing 'good' to support the sustainable environment agenda.

In delivering our strategic plan, we will continue to ensure we meet our statutory and regulatory obligations, including our commitment to improving the diversity of our workforce and ensuring that everyone feels listened to, valued and respected at all times.

Key priorities

We will:

- Attract and retain the best and most diverse talent
- Maximise our workforce supply routes to reduce our vacancy gaps
- Create a fully inclusive workplace where staff are healthy, happy and productive
- Design a future workforce which is agile and responsive to the changing population health needs.
- Build the capability of our leaders to enable them to feel empowered and to make decisions.
- Work with our local partners to improve the opportunities and health and wellbeing of our population, as part of the sustainable environment agenda

How we will deliver

Attract and retain the best and most diverse talent

We will implement flexible methods and processes to attract talent from a variety of pipelines, reaching out to our local communities to offer career pathways. We are introducing talent systems to support the management of talent at every level within the organisation.

The work we need to do is not just about the systems and processes required to manage talent, it is about creating a cultural shift in how we proactively attract, recognise, manage and nurture talent across the organisation.

Our retention work will remain central to our strategic plan as we move towards a new way of working, creating greater flexibility within patterns of work and embracing agile ways of working through enhanced digital technology.

To ensure the sustainability of workforce numbers and to minimise the impact of turnover, we will continue to build on initiatives which are aimed at encouraging staff to continue working for the Trust. These initiatives include the development of a People Recovery Plan to ensure staff feel supported and remain well, and the introduction of pastoral roles, whose role is to support the welfare needs of our staff.

Ongoing investment in the health and wellbeing of staff is integral to our recruitment and retention plans which will serve to promote the Trust as an employer of choice. To further embed the principle of healthy living, we will continue to actively encourage staff to improve and maintain their own health and wellbeing, ensuring that the Trust sets an example.

Maximise our workforce supply routes to reduce our vacancy gaps

In the short term, we continue to fill our registered nursing vacancies with the support of our international recruitment programme. Every year, we will forecast the appropriate number of international nurses we need to ensure that we are able to maintain safe staffing levels across our wards and departments. We submit these numbers as part of our annual business planning and provide vacancy rates to enable decisions about future recruitment planning.

We will continue to work with partners across Cheshire and Merseyside to ensure that we achieve best value and continue to provide a quality experience for our international recruits.

Looking at the medium to longer term plan, in 2023 we will benefit from our internal development programme for registered nurses, funded from the apprenticeship levy as part of a 'grow our own' workforce initiative. We will need to ensure that we continue to focus our efforts on locally grown / recruited nurses to enable us to maintain our registered nurse staffing levels and to maximise use of the apprenticeship levy.

In addition to our registered nursing workforce, we must ensure that we are able to fill our Health Care Assistant (HCA) vacancies and more importantly, retain those that we recruit. We will offer pastoral support to our HCA workforce to help them feel valued and cared for, offering them further opportunities to grow and develop through achieving their care certificate.

We pay specific attention to our medical workforce vacancies by continuing to model and predict the vacancy gaps within our most difficult to recruit medical specialties, including Acute Medicine, Respiratory Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Critical Care and Anaesthetics. We will provide data to help plan how we fill current and future gaps and create ideas and solutions to support our medical colleagues.

We must also focus on the recruitment challenges within the wider scientific and Allied Health Professional (AHP) workforce. We will support the development of an AHP workforce plan, working with the clinical lead for AHPs to design and deliver innovative and accessible workforce supply routes.

Create a workplace where staff are healthy, happy and productive

To ensure that our workforce is able to respond to the current and immediate demands of the restoration and backlog challenge, we will need to support both their physical and mental health and wellbeing in order for them to work and perform at their best.

We will need to embed a strong supportive and compassionate leadership culture, where staff health and wellbeing is at the forefront of people's thinking, and where people's health needs are considered in all our business decision making.

We will create flexible working patterns which allow staff to balance the demands of both work and life, creating agile and responsive teams to respond to the current work pressures. We will create a culture where everyone is supported to grow and flourish and where coming to work gives people a sense of purpose, belonging, safety and security. In doing so, we will create a workplace where staff are healthy, happy and productive, and where the safety and quality of patient care benefits through the positive wellbeing of our staff.

Design a future workforce which is agile and responsive to the changing population health needs

As part of the design of our future model of collaborative working and the development of independent business units, we will need to remodel and reshape the design and structure of our future workforce to ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time to deliver the appropriate care and treatment for our patients. We will need to map our existing workforce against the new business models to assess the extent of change required to move to the new ways of working.

We will need to support the Divisions in the review of existing roles and the development of new and alternative roles, maximising the contribution of our volunteer workforce where appropriate to do so.

It will involve widening our workforce model to include community partners, working across healthcare, primary care and social care boundaries to determine the best workforce model for our patients. We will need to think differently about our temporary workforce, offering innovative ways of working to maximise the availability across all our workforce.

We will need to create a workforce whose capability is based on the needs of the patient, the needs of our population's health and support the reduction of health inequalities through effective and creative workforce planning.

We have successfully developed new models of working, such as the introduction of the Physician Associate and Advanced Clinical Practitioner. We now need to ensure that this new workforce has access to attractive career pathways, which will allow further development and growth. We also need to map how this workforce can support the Trust's new business model, and continue the development of our Apprenticeship Strategy, which will introduce new routes in to work and enable better career progression.

Build the capability of our leaders to enable them to feel empowered and make decisions

We will develop our capability and knowledge of data science and analytics in order that our Business Units can use data in an intelligent way to inform their decision making. This will require more than data management skills; it will require a new capability. We will start with accessing the capability of the teams and individuals we have, building on their capability and knowledge, but with the understanding and appreciation that we need to build on this further.

We will need to work with our partners within Public Health, Integrated Care Partnership teams and Councils to bring together our data. Ultimately, we should all be able to access and know how to use data in an intelligent way, having data at our fingertips, but also knowing how to access data and what to look for and then understand what it is telling us.

We will also build our capability around Quality Improvement (QI) and equip our workforce with the tools and confidence to innovate. We will work with our partner, the Advancing Quality Alliance (AqUA) to achieve this, while continuing to support innovation that already exists within the Trust. We also need to build our capability of transformation at scale and routinely share our learning and outcomes, as part of the continual improvement process.

Ultimately, we will build the capability of our senior leadership team, giving them the frameworks, data and governance structures to enable them to make informed decisions, based on intelligent data. We will enable them to work autonomously but also in collaboration with each other and wider system partners.

We will set out the competencies required of our senior leaders and provide the necessary development opportunities to enable them to succeed. We will ensure that our leadership programmes continue to reflect the development needs of our workforce and provide the learning and support that will embed QI as our way of doing things.

Finally, we will equip our corporate teams to support the new ways of working, ensuring that the Business Units have the necessary HR/ Finance / IT / Information support they require. We will standardise our approach where needed and allow greater freedom to act to enable innovation and development.

Work with our local partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our population as part of the sustainable environment agenda

To support the Trust's ambition to become a community anchor, we will work with our local partners to develop a place-based Environmental and Social Responsibility Strategic Plan and identify joint priorities to support the wellbeing of our local population.

We will apply for the Cheshire and Merseyside Social Value Award, which for us means improving the economic and environmental benefits for the people who connect with our services. It means tackling poverty and inequality. It means improving the health and wellbeing of the population. It means making the very best use of every pound we spend to ensure the long-term financial stability of the organisation so we can provide the best possible standard of healthcare to our patients.

Within the Workforce Strategic Plan, our focus will be to improve the health and wellbeing of our workforce, who are also members of our local population. We will look to expand our reach to underrepresented groups, including expanding support and opportunities for younger people wishing to work for the NHS. We will also expand the development opportunities for our Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) colleagues, with the aim of increasing the breadth and depth of diversity within our workforce.

We will work with disability groups and those who are carers to better understand the challenges faced through coming to work. We will continue to support our BAME staff network and will learn from this to establish further staff networks to support our LGBTQ+ colleagues, also creating a Disability and Carers' network.

We will continue to nurture a culture of civility, safety and belonging, where people feel comfortable to speak out when needed, where bullying is not tolerated, building on the work that has been done already by our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

Key enablers

Key enablers for delivering the Workforce Strategic Plan will be the Trust's digital and estate infrastructure plans. The impact of these plans will include changes to our working environment, requiring us to operate differently to deliver treatment. We also want staff to be digitally enabled, working with the latest equipment and technology to carry out their roles. This will help the Trust attract and retain the best people, alongside creating a culture whereby digital solutions are considered first, where appropriate.

Our commitment to compassionate and inclusive leadership will enable us to adopt a different way of working firmly rooted in our values and behaviours. By adopting the competencies set out within our leadership commitments, we will ensure the highest quality and most effective patient services.

The Environmental and Social Responsibility Strategic Plan will support us in expanding our ambition to reach under-represented groups within our communities, providing us with a system wide perspective on improving population health and addressing health inequalities.

We will maintain an efficient and responsive service to maintain our business-as-usual duties. This work will serve to keep the Trust, staff and patients safe through ensuring that our people management practices are robust, safe and reliable. We will ensure that our processes, policies, and procedures are up to date and reflect the very best practice. We will meet our statutory duties by complying with all relevant employment legislation and work in partnership with our Trade Union colleagues to minimise recourse to formal action.

This Workforce Strategic Plan, alongside our business-as-usual work and enabling strategic delivery plans will enable us to transition to the new model of working and help us to focus our efforts on those things that will best enable us to deliver the Trust Strategy. This Workforce Strategic plan will position our people as central to creating a system focus model of health and social care delivery, putting our patients and staff at the forefront of all that we do.

Measuring our performance

We will measure our performance using metrics that will evidence progress against both the National NHS People Plan priorities and our own Workforce Strategic Plan priorities. The Strategic Plan and priorities will be reviewed annually and link with the annual planning cycle.

The Executive Workforce Assurance Group (EWAG) will monitor operational delivery of the Workforce Strategic Plan. Assurance against the strategy and risks to delivery will be reported to the Workforce & Digital Transformation Committee and up to the Board as appropriate. The metrics that we will measure ourselves against are detailed in Appendix 2.

Resourcing our plan

To deliver this ambitious five-year strategic plan, a capacity and capability exercise will be completed within each of the Workforce functions and reviewed annually. Where necessary, resources will be redirected within teams to priority areas and to focus on the key deliverables of the Trust's strategy.

Where additional resources are required, we will develop business cases to support our plans. Where different capabilities are required, we will develop our existing team and recruit new talent where necessary. We will continually evaluate our ability to deliver the Workforce Strategic Plan, bringing in external support should we need bespoke expertise.

We will also support the development of the wider workforce in delivering this strategic plan. It will be important to upskill and support line managers to enable them to be the best people managers and to be equipped to transition to the new ways of working.

Appendix 1

National NHS People Plan Priorities

The delivery of our Workforce Strategic Plan must be set within the context of delivering the priorities and outcomes detailed within the National NHS People plan as follows:

- **Looking after our People:** particularly the actions we must all take to keep our people safe, healthy, and well – both physically and psychologically.
- **Belonging in the NHS:** highlighting the support and action needed to create an organisational culture where everyone feels they belong.
- **Growing for the Future:** particularly by building on the renewed interest in NHS careers to expand and develop our workforce, as well as retaining colleagues for longer.
- **New Ways of Working and Delivering Care:** emphasising that we need to make effective use of the full range of our people's skills and experience to deliver the best possible patient care.

These priorities are supported by 'Our People Promise', which is a promise we must all make to each other, to work together to improve the experience of working in the NHS for everyone.



Appendix 2

People Plan	MCHT Strategic Workforce Plan		Metrics	Frequency	Data Source
Looking after our people	Workforce welfare	1	Proportion of staff who say they have personally experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work from a) manager, b) other colleagues, c) patients / service users, their relatives or other members or the public in the last 12 months	Annual	NHS Staff Survey
		2	Proportion of working days lost to sickness absence	Quarterly	ESR
		3	Number of staff who have had a flu vaccination and number of staff who have had a Covid vaccination	Annual	Occupational Health
		4	Proportion of staff with a completed risk assessment	Quarterly	ESR
		5	Safe Environment Culture score	Annual	NHS Staff Survey
		6	Reason for absence being work-related stress / anxiety	Quarterly	ESR
	Work-life balance and agile working	7	Percentage of staff who say they are satisfied or very satisfied with the opportunities for flexible working patterns	Annual	NHS Staff Survey
		8	Percentage of colleagues who feel a) informed, b) supported, c) able to have a work-life balance and d) confident in local leaders	Quarterly	NHS Staff Pulse Survey
		9	Reason for leaving – work-life balance	Annual	ESR
		10	Number of posts advertised as suitable for flexible working	Quarterly	TRAC
		11	Progress on achieving one of the e- rostering and e-job planning levels of attainment	Annual	NHSEI
	Retention	12	Proportion of staff leaving the Trust each year	Annual	ESR
		13	Number of RN and HCA vacancies	Quarterly	ESR / Finance Ledger

		14	Number of medical vacancies (key specialties)	Quarterly	ESR / Finance Ledger
		15	Number of AHP vacancies	Quarterly	ESR / Finance Ledger
We all belong in the NHS	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	16	Proportion of staff in senior leadership roles who (a) are from a BME background (b) women	Annual	WRES programme
		17	Proportion of staff who say they have personally experienced discrimination at work from a) patients / services users, their relatives or other members of the public, b) manager / team leader or c) other colleagues in the last 12 months	Annual	NHS Staff Survey
		18	Proportion of staff who agree that their organisation acts fairly with regard to career progression / promotion, regardless of ethnic background, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age	Annual	NHS Staff Survey
	Staff Engagement	19	NHS Staff Survey engagement Score	Annual	NHS Staff Survey
		20	NHS Staff Survey response rate	Annual	NHS Staff Survey
		21	Number of F2SU concerns raised	Quarterly	F2SU Guardian data base
	Culture and Freedom to Speak Up	22	'Our Leadership Way' baseline assessment	Annual	Various sources
		23	Number of advanced clinical practitioners in the workforce	Quarterly	ESR
New Ways of Working and Delivering Care	New ways of working	24	Increased clinical placement capacity	Annual	HEE
		25	Number of QI trained staff	Annual	ESR
		26	Apprenticeship Levy Spend	Quarterly	
		27	Number of people beginning apprenticeships each year	Annual	
		28	Number of registered nurses and HCAs employed by the Trust	Quarterly	ESR
		29	Number of international recruits against planned trajectory	Quarterly	ESR

Growing for the future	Increasing number of clinical staff	30	Number of medical staff employed by the Trust	Quarterly	ESR
		31	Number of AHPs employed by the Trust	Quarterly	ESR
		32	Number of volunteers within the Trust	Annual	
		33	Annual expenditure on agency / locum staff as a proportion of total staff expenditure	Quarterly	Finance Ledger
	Talent Management	34	Percentage of appraisal compliance	Quarterly	ESR
		35	Number of delegates on internal leadership programmes	Annual	ESR
		36	Number of internal promotions	Annual	ESR