

KENT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Kent and Medway People Strategy

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Summary

This report will provide the Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) with an overview of the Kent and Medway People Strategy and delivery plan, as requested at the previous Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the nursing workforce update.

1. National context

- 1.1 NHS England have published the Long Term Workforce Plan, which describes the set of priority areas the NHS will focus on to ensure it has the workforce it needs for the future.
- 1.2 These areas are:
 - Train – through growing the workforce by expanding domestic education, training and recruitment
 - Retain- through ensuring fewer staff leave the NHS by improving culture, leadership and wellbeing
 - Reform – through working differently by harnessing digital innovations, utilising new roles and improving learner experience

2. Kent and Medway People Strategy

- 2.1 Kent and Medway's interim Integrated Care Strategy described our commitment and shared outcome across partners to make Kent and Medway a great place to work, live and learn. People priorities were developed under this shared outcome in the interim Integrated Care Strategy and NHS Joint Forward Plan. From these priorities, a five-year Kent and Medway People strategy for the NHS (our 'People Strategy') has been developed.
- 2.2 The People Strategy has been developed by the Chief People Officer of NHS Kent and Medway, with support of the Kent and Medway Chief People Officer's group and wide stakeholder engagement. The strategy focuses on the work that Kent and Medway partners will work on together, rather than a duplication of individual people strategies of our providers and partners.
- 2.3 We have worked with our NHS Chief People Officers to align the delivery milestones for 2023/24 and 2024/25 so we have a clear delivery plan to achieve the outcomes we've committed to in our strategy, the forward plan and NHS Long Term Workforce Plan for the next 18 months.

- 2.4 The Kent and Medway People Strategy was published in October 2023, and is included as Appendix 1 for reference.
- 2.5 The strategy sets out five people pillars:
- Growing our workforce and skills
 - Building 'one workforce' at place
 - Looking after our people
 - Using our current teams more efficiency and reducing high agency costs
 - Champion inclusive teams
- 2.6 These pillars and commitments sitting beneath them align with national policy including the NHS People Plan, NHSE Long Term Workforce Plan, NHSE Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Workforce Improvement Plan and the NHS People Promise.
- 2.7 Embedded within the commitments of our Kent and Medway People Strategy and local provider strategies, we have a workforce plan for 2023/24 and 2024/25 which includes:
- Reducing whole time equivalent vacancies to a rate of 7.7% for 23/24 (or less) and a further reduction to 6.9% for 24/25 (or less). [As at M05 23/24 our vacancy rate in providers is 8.7%](#)
 - Have a turnover rate of 12.4% for 23/24 (or less) and 11.4% for 24/25 (or less). [As at M05 our turnover rate for providers is 12.8%](#)
 - A sickness rate of 4.5% for 23/24 (or less) and a further reduction to 3.8% for 24/25 (or less). [As at M05 our sickness rate in providers is 4.4%](#)
 - Establishing a Health and Care Academy. [The Kent and Medway Health and Care Academy website is available as a single point of contact for Kent and Medway residents and students to access education, information, advice and guidance about health and care careers.](#)

3. Workforce Priorities to Deliver Outcomes

To support the People Strategy delivery plan outcomes, we have 10 strategic commitments for 23/24:

- **We will deliver targeted recruitment campaigns to reduction our vacancy position** – includes recruiting collaboratively against our hard to fill roles, creating a Kent and Medway employee value proposition and developing employability programmes with partners including the Department of Work and Pensions.
- **We will expand education and training opportunities and implement new ways of learning** – includes diversifying our education provision and increasing our learning and placement capacity.
- **We will grow more routes into health and care careers and maximise our use of apprenticeships** – includes expanding our health and care ambassador programme, and developing a strategic apprenticeship plan.
- **We will develop place-based workforce plans to enable new models of care and transformation** – including evaluating integrated care neighbourhood team

pilots, supporting new models of care through role redesign, new roles and transformation and developing a Kent and Medway Enhanced Care Framework.

- **We will implement retention interventions which improve the experience of our colleagues** – includes scaling best practice related to staff survey priorities, evaluating our pensions awareness programme, achieving quality mark for National Preceptorship programmes, focussing on improving our flexible working and new starter offers and implementing a collaborative international recruitment and support offer.
- **We will develop wrap-around occupational health and wellbeing service** - includes scoping services to be commissioned at ICS level and increase occupational health capacity and achieving the menopause accreditation.
- **We will deliver a set of high impact actions which will reduce our agency spend** - includes joining regional improvement projects to reduce spend and cost, reviewing end to end agency procedures to improve grip and control processes.
- **We will build a plan and deliver services to support transformation and more efficient ways of working** – includes reviewing drivers for workforce growth since 2019, developing a 5 year workforce model and system intelligence dashboards.
- **We will embed a compassionate and inclusive culture and respond to the national EDI Workforce Improvement Plan** – includes implementing a cultural intelligence programme, focussing on addressing gender pay gaps and setting collaborative board objectives to support inclusion.
- **We will deliver a series of interventions which support the development of colleagues – focussing on those with protected characteristics** – includes evaluating our aspiring development and debiasing recruitment programmes to identify opportunities to scale and delivering a series of reciprocal and reverse mentoring schemes.

Our priorities for 24/25 are based on the above and in-line with our commitments made through NHS operational priorities and actions emerging from the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan. We will evaluate the progress and effectiveness of these programmes ahead of 24/25 through our governance structures to ensure we are set to deliver on our 24/25 outcomes.

4. Programme Architecture and Governance to drive delivery

- 4.1 We will deliver our People Strategy through a strong system governance structure existing of three programmes: ICS Workforce Resourcing, ICS Staff Experience and ICS Education and Careers. These programmes will make sure

the right level of shared leadership and delivery, oversight and support is in place to drive improvement and achieve our collective commitments.

- 4.2 Leadership and strategic oversight will be provided by NHS Chief People Officers through the Chief People Officers' Group, with day-to-day management of the programme being led by the Director of People Strategy and Deputy Chief People Officers through programme boards and sub-groups. These will be attended by health and care partners across Kent and Medway where appropriate.
- 4.3 Each programme area will have a Chief People Officer as its senior responsible officer and will be required to report on progress, successes, risks and issues on a regular basis.
- 4.4 All groups will be accountable to our ICB People Committee – which brings together health and care leaders across Kent and Medway and is our senior assurance committee to assure and oversee the delivery of our Kent and Medway People Strategy and delivery plan

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Kent and Medway People Strategy is not an accumulation of individual organisational people strategies; rather the collective ambitions and strategic priorities which leaders across Kent and Medway will work on together. In doing so, this is the collective commitment and ambition of all our health and care employers to make Kent and Medway a great place to live, work and learn.