



Berkshire Healthcare
People Strategy
2021 – 2024



Outstanding
for everyone



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Our People Strategy

At Berkshire Healthcare, we aspire to be an outstanding organisation for everyone: our people, our patients, their families, and their carers. For our people who work here that means we want Berkshire Healthcare to be a great place to work where everyone can thrive and grow.

Our vision is to continue developing our culture so that we're a place where our people want to work and stay. We need to tackle areas where people have poorer work experiences so that staff retention improves and turnover reduces.

This vision is the core of our new People Strategy and means that we can all:

- Live our values
- Feel we belong and bring our true self to work
- Enjoy an excellent staff experience
- Commit to the NHS People Promise

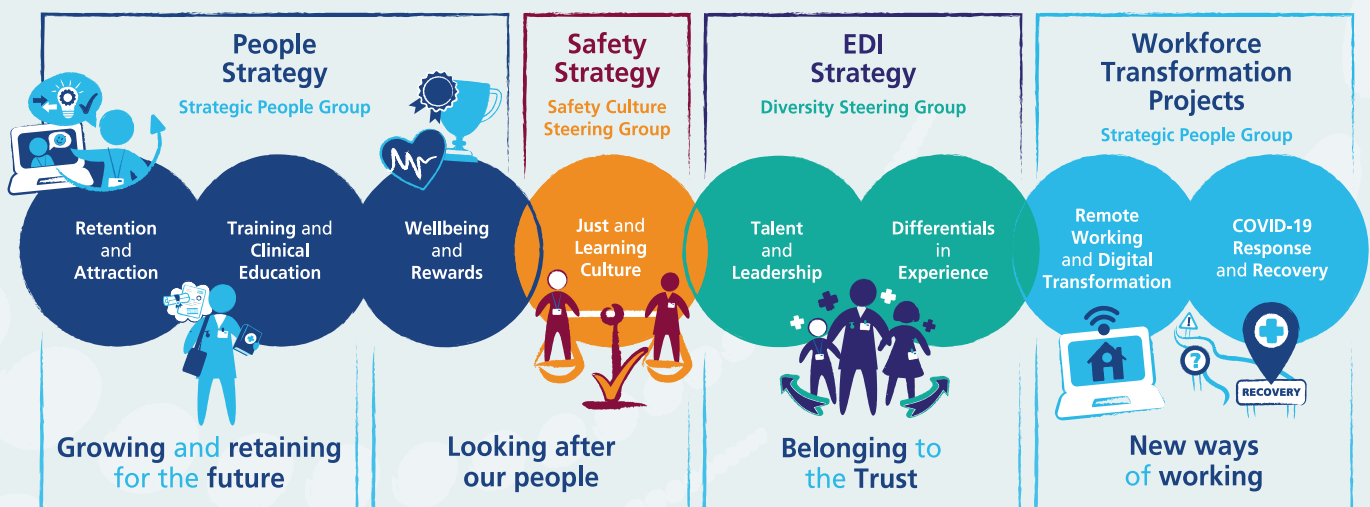


We already deliver safe, compassionate, high-quality care and an excellent patient experience. We want to continue to build on this to meet changing service demands and new challenges. We'll do this through our skilled and engaged workforce in a way that's efficient and safe.

Engaging our People

Through workshops and focus groups we've listened to our people and identified four key priority themes for the People Strategy and strands of work that sit below these. This means we're addressing the issues that people want us to resolve.

- 1 Growing and retaining for the future
- 2 Looking after our people
- 3 Belonging to our organisation
- 4 Finding new ways of working



People Strategy Key Priorities

Through these work strands and a focus on our key priorities, we can maintain constant improvement within Berkshire Healthcare and for everyone that uses our services.



Delivering the People Strategy

The Strategic People Group will take overall responsibility for the delivery of the People Strategy and actively support a number of areas of our work.

The Strategic People Group is accountable for the delivery of:



- Attraction and retention of a diverse workforce
- Training and clinical education
- Wellbeing, benefits and employee experience
- Remote working and digital transformation
- Emergency response and recovery (based on our Covid pandemic experience)

The Diversity Steering Group is accountable for the delivery of:

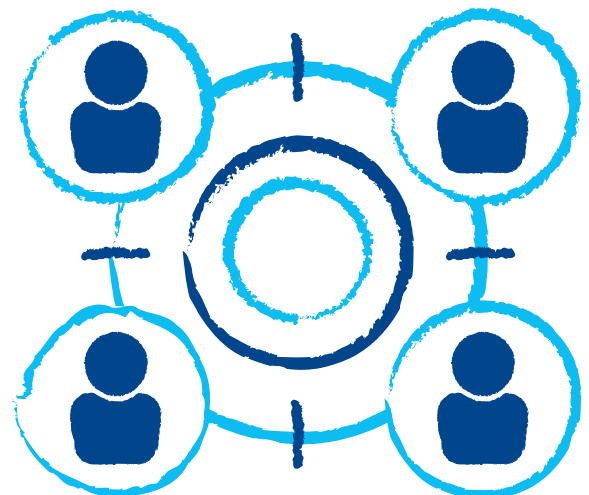


- Inclusive recruitment, career progression and development
- Leadership that supports a culture of inclusion and belonging
- Ways of addressing differentials in experiences

The Safety Culture Steering Group is accountable for the delivery of:



- An approach to handling incidents in a fair and open way using the principles of learning, understanding and trust which we know as Just Culture.



Underpinning our People Strategy

Looking after our people

Our work strands of wellbeing and just and learning culture are an important part of sustaining a culture of safety and will support the Trust Safety Strategy.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We're proud of the wide diversity of our 4,500 staff and want everyone to feel valued and that they belong.

In order to be outstanding for everyone, our EDI strategy will address the differentials in experience and identified inequalities for significant numbers of our workforce.

The People Strategy is inextricably linked to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and its workforce strand will deliver our leadership and differentials in experience priorities.



Workforce planning

Workforce planning underpins our whole People Strategy and plans. Workforce planning is the process of identifying the people and skills we need now, and in the future, to deliver our services. The NHS has a shortage of key workers for many key roles, and in Berkshire and the South East, we have some of the highest vacancy rates in the NHS. It's very important, therefore, that we understand and balance our workforce needs against the workforce that is available. Where we have gaps, we'll work with our service leads to identify solutions. This will include working with clinical leads to look at the potential to deliver services in a different way or with a different mix of skills.





Our Strategic People Priorities

Growing and retaining our people

Retaining our People

Recruitment will always be a vital element for the NHS and we'll continue to focus on recruiting the best people to our roles.

However, our greatest challenge is reducing our high turnover of staff. While some turnover is healthy in an organisation and we don't have the highest turnover of NHS Trusts, our turnover is still too high, averaging just below 15%. We need to focus on making Berkshire Healthcare a place where people want to stay and work.

Attracting, training and retaining a diverse workforce has many benefits. It means we'll be able to keep skilled staff, reduce wasted time and money by not having to continually recruit and train new people, and reduce pressure on existing people whose workload often has to increase to fill the gaps.

Our ambition is:



- To reduce our voluntary staff turnover to 11% by March 2023.
- To reduce the number of staff that leave with less than 12 months service by 50% by March 2022.

Training and clinical education

To provide safe patient care we need competent, agile and capable people. Training and education are also key to improving patient and staff experiences in the workplace. We'll continue to train and develop our people so that everyone can reach their potential, progress to new roles and be equipped with future-facing knowledge and skills. We'll continue to provide the highest quality clinical

training and professional development to maximise the capabilities of our clinical workforce to deliver safe and effective patient and family-centred care, now and into the future.

Our people have told us they need clear career pathways and equal access to opportunities to grow and develop in their work. Career development and opportunities for progression are both vital for growing and retaining a competent workforce and we'll make sure we provide this.

We'll continue to increase the number of clinical students trained within Berkshire Healthcare and provide a positive, personalised learning experience to make Berkshire Healthcare a place where they want to work and stay. We'll use technology and innovation to develop new training programmes and increase our training capacity in areas of high demand.

Our ambition is:



- To complete a review of our learning and development programme, and make sure there's sufficient training and clinical education provision to meet the needs of our workforce now and in the future.
- To make sure these programmes are equally and easily accessible to all staff. We'll deliver our plan by the end of quarter three 2021.
- To develop and execute a strategy to increase our recruitment pipeline through clinical student placement, staff conversion programmes, apprenticeships, and international nurse programmes so that we have a minimum 50 extra clinical candidates per year available for recruitment into various workforce roles





Looking after our people

Wellbeing and rewards

The wellbeing of our people is at the centre of our organisational culture. Our aim is to make sure our people feel well and supported at work. Wellbeing starts with good managers who lead with compassion and care, and being part of a team with caring and supportive colleagues. We can only thrive and perform well at work if we feel engaged, valued, and physically and psychologically supported.

The main reasons our people are off sick are anxiety, mental health and muscular skeletal problems. The added pressure of Covid 19 has strengthened the focus on looking after our people. Therefore, we'll focus on reducing work related anxiety, mental health and muscular skeletal problems, and achieve a positive and timely return to work for our people who have a period of sickness absence.

We are developing extra support for our people to achieve these aims. This will include proactive

wellbeing conversations to promote early identification of potential health and wellbeing concerns; and wellbeing hubs that focus on building resilience and providing rapid psychological support to our people where needed.

Our ambition is:



- To increase the percentage of people reporting that the organisation takes positive action on health and wellbeing in the Staff Survey from 33% in 2019 to at least 55% by 2022
- To be best in class for the health and wellbeing theme in the Staff Survey within the next three years.

Just and learning culture

We know some staff groups are more likely to be involved in disciplinary cases and investigations than others, particularly our BAME staff. We want to understand the reasons why this is and to reduce unwarranted disciplinary action and disproportionate sanctions for all staff so that you are no more likely to be subject to formal disciplinary processes if you're from a BAME background or white background.

We also recognise that workplace conflicts inevitably arise from time to time, but currently the number that are not resolved early and quickly is too high. We're changing our approach to handling incidents in order to develop a fair and open culture of learning, understanding and trust. Our new approach will help us resolve workplace conflicts quickly and be honest and open about mistakes so we can learn from them if they occur.

To help us achieve a new approach, we'll develop a pool of trained investigators and mediators, meaning that early intervention and mediation can largely replace formal investigations wherever possible. We have always aimed to reduce any conflict at the earliest opportunity and in an informal way – and the adoption and embedding of a just and learning culture will support us in our achievement of this.

Our ambition is:



- To reduce the number of disciplinary cases that involve BAME staff from 65% in 2019 to 30% by 2022 as a first step to reducing any unwarranted disciplinary action and disproportionate sanctions for all staff, so that you're no more likely to be subject to formal disciplinary processes if you're from a BAME background or a white background.

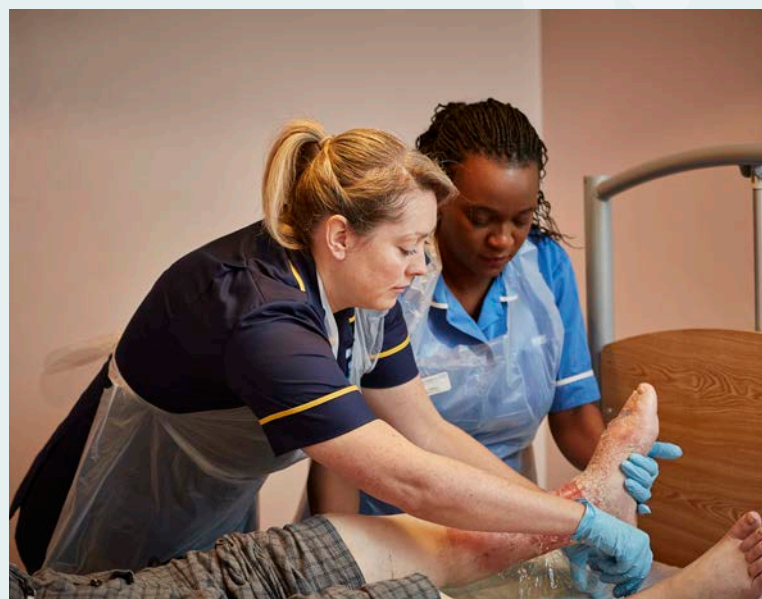
Belonging to our organisation

We want our people to feel valued and to feel that they belong in Berkshire Healthcare. We'll do this by

focusing on developing inclusive leaders who inspire and motivate people to be the best they can be and by tackling the reasons why some of our people have poor experiences at work.

Talent and leadership

Our leadership is recognised in the NHS Staff Survey as one of the best in its class. We want Berkshire Healthcare to continue to be an example of great leadership as great leaders make this a great place to work for everyone.



However, our leadership group is not always reflective of the people who work here. Currently, we still have fewer BAME members of staff in our most senior roles. This issue needs to be addressed. Everyone should feel valued, represented and able to progress in Berkshire Healthcare. This means helping our current leaders to understand and unlock the career barriers that some groups face, as well as ensuring that all our people have fair access and support to career development opportunities.

We are reviewing our support to leaders and potential leaders. This includes refreshing our successful leadership programme to give managers the skills and confidence to lead compassionately and inclusively as well as supporting managers to develop their skills and confidence to lead people in both traditional and virtual workplaces.

Our ambition is:



- To increase our position in the NHS Staff Survey to best in class within the 'immediate manager theme' by focusing on improving the leadership behaviours in those areas of our organisation with lower leadership scores to ensure that Berkshire Healthcare is a great place to work for everyone.

Addressing differentials in experience

It is acknowledged that the most diverse teams and organisations are the most successful ones. More importantly, they deliver the highest quality patient care, but however successful we are in practicing compassion and inclusivity, our people with a protected characteristic (Disabled, LGBT+ and BAME) still report more bullying and harassment than those without a protected characteristic. This is not acceptable and we have set improvement measures to reduce the gap between the experiences of different staff groups.

Our aim is to reduce poor experiences for all our people. However, we'll not do this if we accept the higher levels of bullying and harassment that some of our staff groups experience. Our first step, therefore, is to reduce the levels of bullying and harassment these groups experience so that we see no differences in experience between our staff groups. We'll begin a programme of targeted interventions to address these inequalities. Once this programme is embedded, we expect to see a reduction in the people reporting differences in experience and specifically reports of bullying and harassment.

We are creating a new role to tackle any bullying and harassment that our staff experience from the general public and we'll provide targeted support and interventions in those areas when people report any aggression, bullying or harassment.

Our ambition is:



- That no one in our trust experiences bullying or harassment and our first step towards achieving this is that by 2023 we have eliminated the differential in experience between staff with identified inequalities in comparison to the rest of our people.

New ways of working

Covid response and recovery

For all the difficulties and strain the Covid pandemic placed on the NHS, it has been a valuable period in terms of our ability to respond to such a broad emergency. We'll continue to respond to the pandemic in the best ways we can for our staff and in line with national guidance. We'll also continue to support the national Covid vaccination programme for our people.

Once the emergency has passed and we are able to initiate our recovery plans, we'll use our learning from this experience to determine how best to re-establish normality for our people.

Our ambition is:



- To continue supporting our people in line with national guidance and requirements until the pandemic is over.
- To support the Berkshire Healthcare recovery plans by identifying those services where we have the most workforce pressures and develop and deliver a plan of targeted workforce reviews to address short-term and longer-term workforce needs. This workforce review plan will be delivered in collaboration with clinicians, service leads, strategy, finance and contracting.
- To recognise that some of our new ways of working, adopted through necessity in March 2020 can be sustained in some roles and will benefit wellbeing.

Remote working and digital transformation

Covid has made us reconsider how and where we work. We've learnt how to work more flexibly and remotely and of the benefits of homeworking for many of our staff.

Since March 2020, we've overcome many immediate challenges, from practical equipment issues to the wellbeing of those working remotely for the first time. This transformation of many of our processes using new technology is ongoing.

We'll continue to work using technology efficiently in 2021/22 and beyond, learning from our experiences during Covid and embracing further developments. Some of the changes will be sustained, for example, the use of virtual meetings in many recruitment interviews and also supporting our clinicians to work remotely where appropriate. Remote working and digital transformation have attracted a wider group of candidates for some roles as they're able to work from home. This means we can now potentially attract more people with disabilities for whom working from home is either easier or essential.

Remote working has also helped us reduce costs as more people work wholly or partially from home. Equally important, our people tell us that home working frequently benefits their wellbeing, flexibility and work life balance.

We want to continue to learn from this experience and, where we're able, take a more flexible approach to how we work in the future – whether that's offering more flexible working patterns, [more home and remote working or creating new types of roles.

Our ambition is:

- To develop and implement a new remote working strategy in 2021 that supports our people to work safely and productively at home when their role allows this.

Digital systems transformation

We'll use our learning from the last three years to continue to enhance our use of digital technology to streamline our people processes and services.

Our vision is that:

- Our people have all the digital tools they need to work from anywhere, anytime.
- All of our internal operating processes will be automated and eliminate manual and paper processes, saving staff time and providing more time to care.

To gain the greatest benefits from technology, we also need to ensure that our staff and leaders have the digital confidence and competence to use digital tools to deliver their services, identify and develop new models of care provision; promoting inclusive ways of working and supporting staff wellbeing and work life balance.

Our ambition is:

- To agree and deliver a plan to streamline those people processes that involve the most waste, duplication of effort or potential for error, releasing the administrative burden on our people and allowing more time to care for our patients.





In conclusion

The People Strategy will help make working for Berkshire Healthcare a positive experience for everyone, at every level of the organisation. By following through on our plans, and with the support of all the people who work in the trust, we'll:

- Start to tackle differentials of experience and show that it is possible for us to be genuinely outstanding for everyone.
- Achieve a compassionate and inclusive culture that makes Berkshire Healthcare a place where people feel they belong and can thrive.
- Train and develop people so they can work safely and reach their potential.
- Learn from our mistakes and always seek to improve the way we work.
- Continue to work in an agile way and respond positively to new challenges and new ways of working.
- Serve the needs of our patients and service users and make sure they also feel that Berkshire Healthcare is outstanding for everyone.
- Make a promise to our people that we'll do all that we can to make Berkshire Healthcare outstanding for everyone.

Thank you



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