

Making People Count

Bulletin August 2020



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Compiled by John Gale, JET Library (Mid-Cheshire NHS Foundation Trust)

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People Management

Government unveils new NHS people plan

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Government's love producing documents with the word 'plan,' at the end of their title. It makes people think they know where they want to go and that they've got a clear idea of how they want to get there – despite plenty of experience to the contrary. The Government has now unveiled its new [NHS People Plan](#) which aims to deliver 50,000 more nurses, 6,000 more doctors in general practice and 26,000 primary-care professionals. All jobs in NHS England and NHS Improvement will be advertised as being suitable for flexible working and all former staff will be encouraged to return to the health service. The plan also focuses on looking after people including greater support for health and wellbeing via a dedicated support line, specialist bereavement support and free access to health and wellbeing apps. There are also plans to pilot a programme of resilience hubs, working in partnership with occupational health programmes to coordinate referrals to treatment and support to help staff stay well and in work. 350 training grants will be offered to nurses to become cancer or chemotherapy nurses; there will be an extra 5,000 undergraduate places in nursing, midwifery, allied health professions and dental therapy and hygiene and there will be a £10m fund for clinical placements for nurses, midwives and allied-health professionals.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/nhs-people-plan-2020-21/>

The ins and outs of succession planning

Source: Nursing Forum

In a nutshell: As anyone who's followed the fortunes of Arsenal, Manchester United and both main political parties over the last few years will tell you it's not always easy replacing people at the top when they leave. In this study Laura K. Phillips, from the University of West Georgia, combed through the literature in an attempt to get to the bottom of succession planning. She found it was linked to five factors: organisational support; organisational culture; attitude; commitment; and resources. Antecedents of succession planning included: strategic planning; identification of potential individuals; leadership development; mentoring programmes; and the identification of leadership competencies. Benefits of succession planning included:

- Improved retention
- Better recruitment
- Better leadership
- Decreased "role-transition stress."
- A healthier work environment

You can read the abstract of this article at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12490>



Top tips for managing homeworkers

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Working from home means different things to different people. Some are happy playing in the back garden with the kids while checking in on Teams periodically to allay suspicion; others welcome the chance to get their head down and crack on undisturbed by discussions of the minutiae of Doctor Who; and others spend every moment possible Zooming and chatting in an attempt to maintain the social life of the office/fill the meaningless void of emptiness in their soul. In this article Esther Langdon from the international law firm Vedder Price offers a few top tips for managing remote workers. These include:

- Getting back to basics, what does good performance look like in the new way we are working? What parameters have been set around homeworking? What are the objectives/metrics to assess performance and do they make sense in the new reality, especially with people working from home and facing disruption on many levels? Do employees understand what is expected of them? Are changes to formal policies or performance improvement plans needed?
- Do employees know how to raise concerns or suggest improvements? Can they talk to someone other than their manager if this would help?
- Do managers know how to spot and handle any performance or conduct issues even while employees are working remotely? In particular, how will managers replace the informal coffee which can often pre-empt work issues escalating?
- Are managers equipped with the knowledge and the tools to deal with tricky issues without letting them slide and do they know how to have difficult conversations?
- Have managers had the right training – for example, conducting disciplinary proceedings, equal opportunities, anti-harassment and bullying, unconscious bias, speak up/whistleblowing, managing sickness and so on.
- Personal information – do managers understand their obligations when processing personal data, and do they understand the business' obligations in response to subject access requests and litigation disclosure?
- How does HR support and partner managers, both regularly and in sensitive issues?
- Making sure managers have the knowledge to spot potential HR issues and the confidence to address them proactively should pay dividends in increasing employee engagement and retention and also reducing the risk of disputes and litigation.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/how-to-manage-remote-teams/>



Helping neuro-divergent people with the new normal

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: Neuro-divergent people have found “the new normal,” something of a mixed blessing. On the one hand routines have been disrupted and – if one chooses to believe the Government – death lurks around every corner for those not obeying a set of complex and contradictory rules. On the other they don’t have to go into the office, be constantly interrupted and forced to make small talk in the absence of alcohol. In this article Matthew Terise and Angela Armstrong from [DMA Talent](#) offer a few tips to managers to help address neuro-divergence post-Covid-19.

- Increase the number of supervisors, manager, and leaders who are proficient at managing remotely by outcomes/results rather than by task/presenteeism
- Allow staff to work from home indefinitely if they want to
- Provide clarity with health-and-safety notices
- Allow people more time to transition from one environment to another
- Ask people if they prefer not to be touched before any meet-ups
- Respect the fact that some people might be exempt from wearing a face mask due to sensory issues
- Provide areas for project work and quiet zones
- Continue using video calls: only one person can speak at once; there is an audio-only option and volume control; eye contact is reduced; and there is less physical proximity
- Provide reassurance about how often rooms are cleaned
- Break furloughed staff back in gently
- Encourage staff to learn and develop skills to improve their confidence
- Check for any mental-health problems that may have developed over lockdown
- Let the extroverts return first; introverts can come back later when everyone has stopped doing high-fives
- Limit how many people go back into the office each day and try to encourage set space for individual teams
- Introduce mandatory training on neurodiversity
- Appoint a neurodiversity representative who can liaise with HR and L&D

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/neurodiversity-post-lockdown-coronavirus-advice/>



Talent management and innovation

Source: City University Research Journal

In a nutshell: In this study Zubair Alam Khan, from Hazara University in Pakistan, led a team of researchers investigating the links between talent-management practices and “innovative work behaviour,” in a study of public-sector university employees. The researchers study found that talent management practices improved the employees’ psychological empowerment, which, in turn, led to more innovative behaviour. How much the employees shared knowledge with one another influenced the strength of the link between talent management and innovation.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<http://www.cusitjournals.com/index.php/CURJ/article/view/263>

Four tips to get you Galluping to success

Source: fistfuloftalent.com

In a nutshell: Every year polling company Gallup gives out a Gallup Manager of the Year Award for which manages in all the companies Gallup works for are eligible. This year they interviewed the finalists and asked them how they lead, how they manage change in the workplace, and how they developed successful teams. In this article John Holton picks out four tips from the Gallup finalists:

1. Commit to one meaningful conversation a week with each team member. The managers connected with team mates on a daily, or weekly basis. Gallup found that only 20% of US employees strongly agreed that they had had a meaningful conversation with their manager in the last six months.
2. Coach your team in ways that allow for genuine candour. Continual improvement can only be achieved through honest conversation. Great managers ask questions that lower defences
3. Care about your employees as real people. Great managers find ways of adapting, adjusting and individualising roles to fit the needs of employees. Small tweaks can make a big difference in how much an employee loves their job
4. Recognise and reward excellence. Only three in 10 US employees strongly agree that in the last seven days they have received recognition or praise for doing good work. Identify and celebrate successes – even if they are small at first. Even if nobody else believes in your team, you must encourage your employees, and do it often.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://fistfuloftalent.com/2020/08/sick-of-bad-bosses-here-are-4-things-great-managers-do.html>



Wellbeing

[Mental-health leave for paramedics triples since 2011](#)

Source: The Guardian

In a nutshell: Journalism isn't always about rifling through people's bins, taking sources out to lunch on expenses or hacking into people's phones. Sometimes it involves writing off for information then spending long hours poring over a spreadsheet analysing it. The Guardian took the latter approach when it analysed the amount of sick leave being taken by paramedics. They found that the overall number of sick days taken had risen from 18,184 in 2011 to 52,040 days in 2019. Although the number of paramedics has increased during this time the average days taken off per paramedic since 2011 has risen from 2.8 to 5.8. Despite Trusts introducing initiatives such as named psychologists, online therapy sessions, mindfulness training, chaplaincy support and "wellbeing rooms," 1,313 paramedics were forced to take time off with mental-health problems in 2019, up 235% since 2011. The worst-affected Trusts were the East Midlands Ambulance Service, the East of England Ambulance Service and the North-East Ambulance Service. According to NHS Employers stress accounts for a third of sickness absence in the NHS, costing the service £300m a year.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/jul/23/mental-health-leave-for-paramedics-in-england-nearly-triples-since-2011>

[Women doctors struggle with the menopause](#)

Source: The Guardian

In a nutshell: The British Medical Association (BMA) has been asking women doctors of a certain age how they are finding work during their menopause. The results are enough to bring any HR directors of Trusts out in a hot flush. The BMA spoke to 2,000 women doctors and found that 90% of them said their menopause symptoms had affected their working lives. 38% said they were unable to make the changes they needed to their working patterns to cope with symptoms. Almost half said they had wanted to discuss their symptoms and seek support but did not feel comfortable doing so. A significant number said they would be "laughed at or ridiculed," by both managers and peers if they spoke about the menopause and only 16% had discussed their menopause symptoms with their manager. Women doctors were reducing their hours, moving to lower-paid roles or retiring early from medicine. There are currently more than 30,000 women doctors aged between 45-55.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/aug/06/female-doctors-in-menopause-retiring-early-due-to-sexism-says-study>

[NHS People Plan pilots beefed-up occupational-health service](#)

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: In July the NHS published the NHS People Plan setting out how it hopes to manage, recruit and look after its workforce. This article concentrates on the last of these three objectives. The NHS plans to pilot an improved occupational health service for NHS staff, incorporating "a wider wellbeing offer," as well as trial "resilience hubs," to support staff's mental health. There will be more safe spaces for staff to rest, recuperate and



manage the physical and psychological demands of the job as well as a focus on creating and sustaining physically healthy work environments and more support to help employees switch off properly from work. Employees over 40 should be able to have a career conversation with their line manager, HR and occupational health. All NHS organisations should have a “wellbeing,” guardian in place and, from January, all advertised job roles should be available for flexible-working.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/nhs-to-pilot-improved-occupational-health-as-well-as-resilience-hubs/>

[How inclusive leadership can keep staff going through Covid-19](#)

Source: International Journal of Nursing Studies

In a nutshell: Looking after people’s mental health is important enough at the best of times, let alone in the midst of a pandemic. In this study Fuqiang Zhao, from Wuhan University of Technology, led a team of researchers investigating the effect of inclusive leadership on nurses’ psychological distress during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study involved 451 nurses from five hospitals and found that inclusive leadership created a psychologically-safe environment which, in turn, reduced nurses’ levels of psychological distress.

You can read the abstract of this article at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2020.103725>

[On the night shift but not on a diet](#)

Source: BMJ Open

In a nutshell: It’s no surprise, perhaps, that working through the night leads people to consume rather more tea, coffee and sweet things than is good for them or that having done so people are less inclined to nip out for a cycle ride or slip on a pair of jogging trainers. Research can often be defined as a long, elaborate, and expensive process designed to find out what common sense can tell you in five minutes though, and following along in this tradition were a team of researchers led by Yukihiro Tanikawa, from Kyoto University in Japan. The researchers studied 9,243 overweight or obese workers of whom 1,390 worked nights or shifts which included nights. The researchers concluded that “in workers with overweight or obesity, a night/shift work schedule was associated with a lower motivation for behavioural change in lifestyle, and the association was strengthened in those with long working hours.”

You can read the abstract of this article at

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2019-033000>

[Women suffer during pandemic](#)

Source: The Guardian

In a nutshell: The Health and Care Women Leaders Network have been asking women working in the NHS how things have been going for them during the pandemic – the short answer being, not well. 1,300 women took part in



the study, 72% of whom said that their job was having a greater than usual negative effect on their wellbeing. More than half (52%) reported a negative impact on their physical health. Staff reported taking on an average of 11.22 extra hours of caring responsibilities each week but had only reduced their working time by an average of 1.44 hours. 26% of the women did not feel safe sharing personal concerns with their boss. The report recommended that staff should be discouraged from working unpaid overtime and encouraged to maintain good work-life boundaries, and that requests to work flexible or reduced hours should always be accommodated unless there are exceptional reasons.

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/aug/25/survey-of-female-nhs-staff-raises-concerns-over-burnout-in-covid-pandemic>

[Could emotional-intelligence training help surgeons deal with burnout?](#)

Source: Personnel Today

In a nutshell: During operations surgeons don't really need to interact with their patients other than – like a six-year-old doing art work - making sure they cut neatly along the dotted line, don't go over the edges and put everything back where it belongs. Problems arise however, when they become burnt out and start treating conscious people as if they were impersonal objects. A study in the [ANZ Journal of Surgery](#), by a team of researchers led by Lorna Bourke, from Liverpool Hope University, found that higher levels of emotional intelligence – the ability to understand one's own emotions and the emotions of those around you – could reduce feelings of stress and burnout, improve leadership and enhance patient trust. Lorna Bourke suggested that regular emotional-intelligence testing and training would reduce the stigma associated with reaching out for emotional support and would lead to better health outcomes for both surgeons and patients. "Emotional intelligence training needs to be treated like going to the dentist – normalised, where surgeons can check in, or request more sessions, if they think it would be beneficial."

You can read the whole of this article at

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/emotional-intelligence-training-could-halt-burnout-epidemic-among-surgeons/>

