

**Our Commitment to  
Care and Quality**  
The nursing, midwifery  
and allied healthcare  
professions strategy  
2017/20



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## The Chief Nurse's introduction

It is now two years since I became the Chief Nurse at the Trust and I feel proud, and it is a privilege, to lead the nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare professions across West Hertfordshire NHS Trust.

I am committed to delivering the national strategy 'Leading Change, Adding Value' framework by Professor Jane Cummings, Chief Nursing Officer for England. Our strategy builds on the ten commitments. It will help us to further strengthen the contribution we make every day to the health and wellbeing of those we care for.

The strategy will steer the embedding of our practices over the coming years giving a clear outline of our ambitions for the professions in the Trust. Our strategy has been developed through a process of engagement with nurses, midwives, allied healthcare professions and other care staff within the Trust.

At the centre of everything we do is our values and how we make it the way we do things at West Herts. Implementing this strategy will enable us to be consistent in our approach to always getting things right for our patients their families and carers across everything we do.

As professions we continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of healthcare, our patients, their families and carers. We all have a role to play in leading healthcare in the future and strengthening and developing our response to meet the challenges and the opportunities that this will bring to the professions.

As you will know I feel the voice of nursing, midwifery, allied healthcare professionals and care staff is absolutely crucial. You are the best people to improve and shape the future of care for our local population.

Thank you for all your enthusiasm, commitment and hard work to continually improve the care we deliver to our patients. The contributions you make everyday never fail to amaze me, often in challenging circumstances which are really valued and appreciated. It takes remarkable people to be frontline healthcare workers who do amazing things every day.



**Tracey Carter**

Chief Nurse, Director of Infection Prevention and Control  
November 2016



## Introduction

The nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare professions strategy sets out our aims and objectives for the next four years. This strategy is closely aligned to the trusts strategic plan, values, aims, objectives and quality priorities and has also been developed to reflect the national and local policy drivers, notably the Five Year Forward View on nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals and the Chief Nursing Officer for England's strategy for Nurses, Midwives and Care Staff.

*Leading Change, Adding Value: A framework for nursing, midwifery and care staff (2016)*<sup>1</sup> builds on Compassion in Practice and is also directly linked to the Five Year Forward View. We have reflected this National strategy and adopted the principles set out within The Triple Aim to improve outcomes for our patients, provide better experiences for our patients and make better use of resources through reducing unwarranted variation.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council launched a refreshed Code in 2015<sup>2</sup> outlining **Professional standards of practice and behaviour** for nurses and midwives and

our strategy upholds the principles set out within the code to ensure that we:

- Prioritise people
- Practise effectively
- Preserve safety, and
- Promote professionalism and trust.

We have been on a journey and made significant improvements in so much of our practice. This strategy builds on this work and will set our course for achieving our ambitions.

This strategy has been developed by nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions. It identifies the five key objectives for the next four years and outlines the programme of work that underpins how we will achieve our vision to provide the *very best care to every patient, every day*.

1 NHS England (2016) *Leading Change, Adding Value: A framework for nursing, midwifery and care staff*.

2 NMC (2015) *The Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwife*.



## Nursing, midwifery and allied health professions strategy - Our vision towards 2020

The nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals strategy sets out the professions *Commitment to Care* and *Quality* through providing *the very best care to every patient, every day*.

The five objectives for nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare professions over the next four years are:

- For all nurses, midwives and allied health professions to exemplify inspirational leadership at all levels, making WHHT a place where they want to work and stay.
- To provide the very best care to every patient, every day.
- To be stewards of the NHS budget.
- To develop a nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare professions workforce that exemplifies professional practice.
- For patients and their families to feel confident in their care and have the best experience possible throughout their whole care pathway.



## Objective 1:

For all nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions to exemplify *inspirational leadership* at all levels, making West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust a place where they want to work and stay

Our nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions are our most valuable asset and central to the delivery of safe, effective, high quality care. A key objective is for nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions to be highly visible and for their voice to be heard. In order to achieve **objective 1** we will:

- Take *pride* in the professions and display and develop leadership qualities at all levels with renewed focus.
- Set *clear expectations* of roles and behaviours so that staff can work with clear standards of practice and behaviour at all levels.
- Be the Trust of choice for all our *students* and will support them throughout their student journey.
- Ensure our nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions will have access to, and participate in, *leadership development* and competency assessments to be clear about their competence and help them reach their full potential.
- Ensure our nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions will be *kind, caring and thoughtful* to each other.
- Support our matrons and team leaders to be *role models* of exemplary professional standards.

We have supported nurses, midwives allied health professionals to complete leadership development programmes in the last two years.

In 2016 we doubled the number of student nurses and midwives who chose to work at WHHT on qualifying.

### To achieve this we will:

- ✓ Recruit talented nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions who share our trust vision and values.
- ✓ Develop clear career pathways for entry into the professions.
- ✓ Ensure that our uniforms promote professionalism, leadership and are identifiable to all staff and patients.
- ✓ Support all band 7 and 8s to attend and pass an accredited leadership programme.
- ✓ Develop a Competency Framework incorporating the journey from preceptorship through to Advanced Practitioner.
- ✓ Continue to promote the role of Schwartz Rounds as a valuable forum for the profile of the professions to be raised.

## Objective 2:

To provide the *very best care to every patient, every day*

In order to meet our ambition to provide the *very best care to every patient, every day*, we will:

- Provide individualised *seamless care, free from avoidable harm* that is delivered with compassion all of the time.
- *Safeguard* our patients at all times.
- Deliver year on year *improvements in all 'safety thermometer'* indicators.
- Develop and embed *quality improvement* into our everyday work culture.
- Learn from others and *celebrate local improvements* in care.
- *Know the quality of care* that is provided and share best practice and learning from incidents across our teams.
- *Acknowledge and reward high quality* care.
- We will ensure all our patients are cared for in the *right care setting*, supporting their safe discharge.

We have significantly reduced the number of hospital acquired category 3 pressure ulcers in the last two years.

We were the 2015 HSJ winners for reducing mortality rates in patients following fractured neck of femur surgery.

### To achieve this we will:

- ✓ Launch a ward development framework which will mean all our wards will be accredited to Platinum standard by 2020, recognising and rewarding Excellence in all we do.
- ✓ Develop a robust programme of learning and development to learn from when we get things wrong.
- ✓ Continue to embed and review clinical documentation to ensure that all our patients have risk assessments and plans of care in place to meet their needs.
- ✓ Continue to champion and lead on embedding our pledges in our Sign Up to Safety campaign.
- ✓ Continue to reduce harm to our patients each year so that by 2020 all our patients will receive harm free care.
- ✓ Explore further options for the use of innovative technology to improve the experience of our staff and patients.

## Objective 3:

### To be stewards of the NHS *budget*

The requirement to reduce productivity and performance variations across the NHS was set out by Lord Carter in 2016. The recommendations in this review suggest that there is significant scope to reduce unnecessary expenditure on workforce. At WHHT we will ensure that the nursing, midwifery allied healthcare professions are as efficient as possible and we will continuously review the skill mix, time spent with patients and working patterns. In order to achieve **objective 3** we will:

- Ensure that all wards and clinical departments are held to account for *spending within their allocated resources* and for all nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professionals to understand their personal accountability in driving up quality while reducing costs.
- Work with all clinical nurse specialists and consultant nurses, midwives therapists to deliver an *improved patient experience with less patient time* spent in the acute care setting.
- Ensure that staffing levels and *skill mix* is planned according to the acuity and dependency of the patients.

Through developing clear lines of accountability we significantly reduced our spend on agency workers. This has meant that we have been able to invest in recruiting substantive, high calibre staff.

We have recruited over 300 new nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professionals in the last twelve months significantly reducing our vacancy rate.

#### To achieve this we will:

- ✓ Increase the direct contact care time with our patients.
- ✓ Implement the full benefits of the upgrade to the electronic rostering system.
- ✓ Continue to reduce the reliance on high cost temporary agency staff.
- ✓ Improve the health and wellbeing of our nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions to reduce sickness absence to less than 3.5%.



## Objective 4:

To develop a nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare professions workforce that exemplifies *professional practice*

It is essential that nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professionals practice in an environment of lifelong learning and development. We will make the education and training of nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professions a priority. In order to achieve **objective 4** we will:

- Develop and *recognise excellence* across our nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare professional care assistants.
- Develop *clear career pathways* for our nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professionals with increasing access into training.
- Ensure that there are grade specific *competencies* and appropriate *education programmes* to support individuals who work with us.
- Develop and embed a *robust preceptorship programme* that ensures we retain and adequately supports our newly qualified staff.
- Develop and embed a robust induction programme for all new staff.
- Encourage and support all nurses, midwives and allied healthcare professionals to contribute to the wider *research and development* agenda, consistently using best evidence to improve the quality of patient care.
- Ensure all registered nurses and midwives have the support needed to meet the full requirements of *Revalidation*.

We have provided multiple training, 1:1s and coaching session, supporting all our nurses and midwives to Revalidate as planned.

We have successfully supported over 200 transitional nurses and midwives through programmes of preceptorship.

### To achieve this we will:

- ✓ Develop all our band 7s to be working at a graduate level and support all our band 8as to be working at Masters level by 2020.
- ✓ Work collaboratively with our HEIs to develop innovative nursing, midwifery and therapy roles.
- ✓ Ensure that there is a communication programme in place that shares and celebrates the successes of the workforce.
- ✓ Overhaul the NMC and HCPC referrals database and put in place systems to ensure causes for concern are effectively managed and supported.
- ✓ Achieve 90% mentorship compliance rates across the Trust and have systems in place for ensuring this is maintained.
- ✓ Continue to support all our nurses and midwives to revalidate and reflect on their practice.

## Objective 5:

For patients and their families to feel confident in their care and have the best *experience* throughout their whole care pathway

We will actively seek and publish the views of our patients, their families and their carers responding to feedback, to review and improve our services. We will ensure that:

- Senior sisters and team leaders will *work clinically* at least 80% of the time and will be known to all their patients in the ward or department.
- No decisions about patients and families are made without their *direct involvement*.
- *Patients feel confident* in their care, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Midwives *empower women* to remain independent and active partners in their maternity care and,
- Our Midwives *“are always working towards providing positive women’s experiences, everyday”*.
- Patient experience relating to nursing and midwifery care is *in the top 10%* of the national inpatient survey results by 2020.

More patients than ever now would recommend our services

We have developed a programme of improvements to ensure we always ‘get the basics right’, enhancing our patient experience.

### To achieve this we will:

- ✓ Develop robust discharge pathways for our patients and ensure that this is shared in a timely fashion with their carers and their families all of the time.
- ✓ Increase the awareness in the care of our vulnerable patients, focusing on those with learning disabilities, dementia and mental health needs.
- ✓ Ensure the successful implementation of the Patient Experience and Carers Strategy (2016/19).
- ✓ Promote health prevention, promotion and wellbeing to all our patients, carers and families.
- ✓ Increase the number of patients who would recommend our Trust each year.

## Governance to support the implementation of the strategy

The Guardian of the nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare professions strategy will be the Professional Advisory Council (PAC). Leads will be identified for each of the five Objectives. Quarterly reports will be provided by the Deputy Chief Nurse outlining the achievements against the Objectives set out in the strategy.



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