

Picker Institute Europe comments on the NHS Staff Survey 2014

Results from the 2014 [NHS Staff Survey](#), published today, portray a service striving to provide good patient care – but struggling to deliver with tight resources.

The survey shows that the NHS is continuing to improve its focus on patient care: 67% of staff said that this was their organisation's top priority in 2014, compared to 66% last year and only 62% in 2012. But despite this positive focus, less than two thirds of staff would be happy with the standard of care provided by their organisation if a friend or relative needed treatment there (down from 65% in 2013, but still an improvement from the 63% recorded in 2012). This measure is strongly related to patient experiences of care, so the fall is concerning.

As well as looking at the quality of care, the survey asks about staff experiences of the NHS as a place of work. Results for some key questions on job satisfaction have declined. Only 56% of staff would recommend their organisation as a place to work (down from 58% in 2013), and only two in five (41%) feel that their organisation values their work. It is clear that staff are feeling the pressure of tight resources: less than a third think there are enough staff for them to do their jobs properly (29%, down from 30% in 2013). And, tellingly, the proportion satisfied with their level of pay has fallen by 5% points – from 38% in 2013 to 33% in 2014. This is the first drop in satisfaction with pay, which has otherwise remained steady, since 2011.

It is encouraging that the proportion of staff reporting that they have recently attended work in spite of feeling unwell has fallen markedly, from 68% in 2013 to 65% this year. Despite this drop, though, it remains a concern that almost two in three staff members report attending work in the past three months despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties. And for the second year running there has been a small but significant increase in the proportion of staff feeling unwell due to work related stress in the last twelve months (39%).

Commenting on the results, Dr Andrew McCulloch, the [Picker Institute's](#) Chief Executive, said: "The NHS Staff Survey is the most comprehensive source of evidence on the experiences and views of the 1.2 million people working for the NHS in England. This year's survey is the largest ever and the results are enlightening. Staff and employers alike are committed to providing good patient care. But there are clear issues about the standards that the service is able to deliver: staff appear all too conscious of the financial pressures, and for the first time in recent years there was real evidence of concerns about pay beginning to bite."

Dr McCulloch continued: "Evidence shows that there is a relationship between staff experience in the NHS and the quality of care patients' experience. For the service to deliver world class care to its users, it first needs to ensure its staff are well looked after. We call on the leaders of all NHS organisations to review their own staff survey results in detail and work with staff to identify and enact action plans to improve people's experiences."

Notes for editors

- The NHS Staff Survey is co-ordinated by the Picker Institute on behalf of NHS England. The 2014 survey was the 12th time the survey has been conducted.
- A total of 287 English NHS organisations participated in the survey, including NHS acute hospital trusts, mental health providers, ambulance trusts, community trusts, and a number of CCGs.
- The survey was sent to over 624,000 NHS staff – more than a 50% increase on the 2013 survey, which had a sample size of around 400,000. The survey had a final response rate of 42%, with 255,000 responses received.
- The survey was conducted between September and December 2014. All staff directly employed by an NHS organisation on 1st September 2014 were eligible.
- Further information about the survey, including detailed results, are available at www.nhsstaffsurveys.com.
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