



Somerset CCG NHS Staff Survey 2021 Recommendations for Action Plan

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Joining the dots across health and care

Executive Summary

SCW NHS CSU have been asked to work with Somerset CCG (the CCG) to analyse the CCG's results from their National NHS Staff Survey 2021, identify successes and areas for improvement, and engage with staff to discuss solutions to address improvement areas. Furthermore, recommendations are made within this report to support the CCG with the organisation's ongoing commitment to ensure that the CCG is a welcoming and inclusive place to work.

We committed to engage with staff across the CCG as much as possible, to ensure we could identify the most impactful and inclusive set of recommendations. The approach adopted was:

1. All data from the Full and Summary NHS National Staff Survey results was reviewed with high performing areas and lower scoring areas noted
2. An overview of the work was provided to staff using the Colleague Briefing and a high-level report of initial findings was presented to the Colleague Forum for discussion
3. Staff engagement sessions titled 'Listen and Learn' were held with the workforce. Attendees were actively encouraged to participate, interact, challenge, and share their suggestions on how to improve on the lower scoring areas.
4. These suggestions have formed the basis of the recommendations for an Action Plan which are provided in this report.

Further work will be completed in due course once the CCG and ICB Leadership Team have reviewed recommendations and decided upon next steps in forming an Action Plan.

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Section 1
Introduction



Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of Somerset CCG's National Staff Survey Results 2021 and a summary of findings following staff engagement.

This information was used to identify the key areas for improvement which have informed the recommendations provided.

Staff Survey results were overall extremely positive with improvements in most areas when compared to the National Staff Survey Results 2020, despite another challenging year for our NHS workforce with ongoing issues nationally around staff burnout, stress-related absence and poor retention.

This reflects the work that the CCG has carried out over the last year, in response to 2020 survey results, with a focus on developing a compassionate culture where engagement and inclusivity are positively encouraged.

An organisation wide commitment to continue to work on a culture of compassion will enable the CCG to confidently transition into an ICB.



Section 2
Survey Results



National NHS Survey Results: Background

From the usable sample of 282 questionnaires that were sent out to staff, 230 were returned. The CCG's response rate was 81.6%. This is an improvement of +1.4% on the previous response rate of 80.2% in 2020. This response rate is +3.6% above the benchmark response rate across CCGs which was 78%.

For the 2021 survey onwards the questions in the NHS Staff Survey are mostly aligned to the People Promise. This sets out, in the words of NHS staff nationally, the things that would most improve their working experience, and is made up of seven themes: ***We are compassionate and inclusive, recognised and rewarded, we each have a voice that counts, we are safe and healthy, always learning, we work flexibly, and we are a team.*** In addition, two of the themes reported in the 2020 National Staff survey remain. These are ***Staff Engagement and Morale.***

Compared to other organisations in the benchmarking sector, Somerset CCG was above average in eight key themes and average for one theme. This year there were no themes for which Somerset CCG scored below average. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic continuing to challenge our NHS workforce, most questions report an overall positive view of colleague experience (Appendix 1).

National NHS Survey Results: Comparisons

There have been significant improvements in key areas since the publication of the NHS Staff Survey 2020 results and we can see direct links to the subsequent Action Plan that the CCG have been working towards. Comparisons can also be drawn from sector average results from the 14 CCGs that also participated in the National Staff Survey. Some of the highest scores were seen in the following areas:

- **Raising Concerns:** 85% of staff would feel secure about raising concerns with unsafe clinical practice (**2020: 75%** - **2021: 85%** - **Comparator: 83%**)
- **Addressing Concerns:** 80% staff are confident that the CCG would address their concern (**2020: 70%** **2021: 80%** - **Comparator: 76%**)
- **Appraisals:** 90% of staff have had an appraisal, annual review, development review or KSF development review in the last 12 months (**2020: N/A** - **2021: 90%** - **Comparator: 79%**)
- **Job Satisfaction:** 71% staff feel enthusiastic about their job (**2020: 67%** - **2021: 71%** - **Comparator: 66%**)
- **Organisational Approach to Wellbeing:** 77% of staff feel their organisation takes positive action on health and wellbeing (**2020: N/A** - **2021: 77%** - **Comparator: 70%**)

National NHS Survey Results: Areas for Improvement

Whilst it is important to celebrate the overall success of the NHS Staff Survey results the CCG must continue to build on this success whilst simultaneously addressing the following areas where improvements can be made:

- **Multi-Team Working:** 51% of staff felt that teams within the CCG work well together to achieve their objectives (**2020: N/A - 2021: 51% - Comparator: 54%**)
- **Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination:** Approx. 7 respondents experienced gender-based discrimination in the last 12 months (**2020: 20% - 2021: 58% - Comparator: 24%**) (NB. This may include staff that have experienced discrimination whilst employed at a different organisation in the last 12 months).
- **Workload and Work Related Stress:** 77% of staff work additional unpaid hours which are over and above contracted hours (**2020: 73% - 2021: 77% - Comparator: 71%**)
- **Retention:** 20% of staff will probably look for a job at a new organisation in the next 12 months (**2020: 23% - 2021: 20% - Comparator: 28%**)
- **Effectiveness of appraisals:** 26% of staff say their appraisal did not help them improve how they do their job (**2020: N/A - 2021: 26% - Comparator: 25%**)



Section 3
Approach



Approach

The approach taken to carry out this work can be summarised in 4 stages. Staff engagement was at the core of this project as CCG colleagues are essential in ensuring that work undertaken aligns with organisational priorities and values. Throughout the process staff were updated regularly. The aim of engagement was to ensure the broadest possible representation of views and to align the Action Plan recommendations with ongoing or planned activity.

Stage 1 Review of National NHS Staff Survey 2021 Data

- Initial analysis of results, following the release of the organisation's Full and Summary Report in March, identified high performing areas
- Areas for action considered which identified potential future risks for the CCG. These areas became the focus of subsequent staff engagement sessions

Stage 2 Presenting Initial Findings

- Presented the findings to the workforce via the Colleague Briefing on 10th March 2022
- Provided staff with an overview of this work, successes and areas for improvement and announced Listen and Learn Staff Engagement Sessions
- A high level report was developed and shared with Colleague Forum on 16th March 2022 with opportunity for discussion of initial findings and next steps, prior to results being published to the wider CCG workforce.

Stage 3 Staff Engagement

- 3 'Listen and Learn' engagement sessions were carried out with staff across the CCG via Microsoft Teams. Positive feedback was received from staff on this approach
- Used Google Jamboard to create interactive sessions that remained confidential (Appendix 2)
- Staff given option to email suggestions where they felt more comfortable doing so
- Sessions were highly successful and staff provided suggestions to address areas for improvement

Stage 4: Recommendation Report

- Review of findings and data gathered from staff engagement sessions
- Create a list of recommended actions
- Report presented to the CCG for further work and Action Plan to be created



Section 4

Staff Engagement: Summary of Findings



Staff Engagement: Findings

During the staff engagement phase, questions were posed to staff based on 6 areas identified as areas for improvement through a series of Listen and Learn sessions (Appendix 2) . There were a number of key learnings to take away from these sessions that staff attended.

1. A broader understanding of how teams and colleagues operate and work within the CCG would support multi-team collaboration and reduce silo working to achieve shared objectives
2. Proactive workforce planning would reduce work related stress stemming from workload issues
3. All staff could benefit from training around bullying, harassment and discrimination to work towards a no-bullying culture. These values stretching beyond the CCG to system partners
4. Informal support for staff that have negative experiences with other colleagues would encourage informal reporting and formal reporting of incidents
5. Increased availability and accessibility of stretch and development opportunities would improve retention rates
6. Staff would benefit from regular supervision, offered to all, and dedicated wellbeing time to counteract work related stress
7. A review of appraisals and additional training for Line Management could increase the effectiveness of annual appraisals
8. The CCG could acknowledge and celebrate good work more effectively
9. Staff are keen for more team building and development days - in person if safe to do so. More opportunity to talk to colleagues in an open and honest way. Build relationships
10. Staff would value opportunities to discuss work, within team meetings with Line Management, that is lower priority and can be 'pushed back,' to achieve a better work/life balance with a clear line on meeting times during working hours



Section 5
Recommendations

Overview of Recommendations:

Supporting a Zero-Bullying Culture

• Recommendation 1

All staff to have mandatory training around Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination. This is in addition to the existing mandatory training module 'Equality, Diversity and Human Rights' that is undertaken annually. This could compliment existing training and ensure that staff are aware of what constitutes bullying and other poor behaviours, what are signs that a colleague is being bullied and how to support those affected. This could empower staff to challenge said behaviours that may have become normalised over time and bring about change through reinforcement of messages defining the boundaries of unacceptable behaviour.

• Recommendation 2

Build in content around zero-bullying culture into regular communications with staff and ensure this enshrined as a key focus of communication planning. This could include anonymous anecdotal content, shared experiences by Senior Leaders and can be delivered alongside National Anti-Bullying Awareness initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week in November and National Bullying Prevention month in October. Regular output of visual and emotive material may help further foster a culture of respect and belonging.

Overview of Recommendations:

Supporting Staff to Report Incidents of Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

• Recommendation 3

Staff could benefit from greater awareness of the independent contacts (separate to their individual team members) available to them in the first instance to raise issues informally and seek initial advice. This includes; a regular reminder of who their Freedom to Speak Out Guardian(s) are, their Union Representatives, Network Leads (EDI and Inclusion Leads) and how to contact them. This could be built into communication plans to ensure staff have this up-to-date information provided to them on a monthly basis. These prompts could result in staff feeling empowered to bring forward their concerns around behaviours in the workplace that they have witnessed or experienced.

• Recommendation 4

Where staff are concerned that reporting concerning behaviours or treatment could negatively impact their place in an individual team, a virtual version of an 'Anonymous Reporting Box.' Prior to the Pandemic, and subsequent homeworking requirements, HR oversaw a physical reporting box. As this was not possible to sustain in the virtual environment an online version could be an appropriate solution. This would ensure that HR are aware of repeated incidents that are not formally reported, and they can respond accordingly. This would also negate some anxieties that staff have around reporting unwanted and unfair experiences.

Overview of Recommendations:

Reducing Work-Related Stress

- **Recommendation 5**

Building in dedicated well-being time can support staff to manage stress levels throughout the working day and beyond. A solution could be an organisation-wide 'Survive and Thrive' hour where colleagues have 1 hour a day, from 1pm until 2pm, during which internal meetings are discouraged and staff are actively encouraged to spend this time in a way that benefits each individual. For example, staff may use this time to focus on responding to emails, to spend time away from their desks, or this could be an opportunity for staff to spend time talking to each other. It will not be possible to decline system meetings but meetings from within the CCG should be avoided during this hour. The result is that staff have a break from virtual meetings and these boundaries could help staff to feel more in control of their workflow, reduce risk of 'Teams Fatigue' and lower stress levels.

- **Recommendation 6**

To reduce workload pressures as a cause of work-related stress, proactive action around workforce planning and vacancies would reduce impact on existing staff when other staff are progressing or leaving the CCG. Any route provided to Line Managers to work with HR to fill these vacancies should be transparent to reassure staff in this position that the issue is being worked on and negative effects of capacity issues on workload is temporary and not the norm. This should involve Line Managers updating staff regularly through conversations about recruitment, how a vacancy is being addressed and what plans going forward will look like.

Overview of Recommendations:

Supporting Hybrid Working and Collaboration

- **Recommendation 7**

Informal networking can be a useful way of supporting staff to learn more about other teams, roles and ways of working. One way that this could be supported is through a monthly, informal meeting with randomly allocated participants that staff can opt in to. Those who choose to opt in would be matched to another member of staff at the CCG who have also signed up to the scheme for a 20-minute coffee and catch-up session. Meetings can be virtual or in person and it is the responsibility of the pair to arrange the meeting. Those signing up to the scheme should agree to ground rules such as making every reasonable step to attend and to give a set amount of notice, where possible, if they cannot attend. The colleague forum can focus on this as the CCG moves across to the ICB. Staff communications can ensure that these meetings are considered essential and legitimate diary entries. Such a scheme can encourage working relationships, shared learning and a reduction in some of the feelings of isolation that some staff experience through home/hybrid working and the Pandemic.

- **Recommendation 8**

Increased visibility of contacts within each team would support staff to work across teams and collaborate to achieve objectives and reduce silo working. This could be achieved by updating the existing Structure Charts that are circulated amongst staff. For example, links could be added to allow staff to access further detail about an individual's role or team and how to contact them. Furthermore, the Structure Chart could be made live and editable so that Line Managers could update them as required. This would reduce the time and work required by HR to carry out larger updates to the document and ensure that staff have up-to-date information that is readily available.

Overview of Recommendations:

Improving Staff Retention

• Recommendation 9

Greater accessibility and opportunity for learning and development would encourage staff who want to progress in their careers to remain with the CCG. This can be both formally and informally- recognising that clinical staff should be supported to complete essential CPD for revalidation. Refreshing staff knowledge regarding how to apply for training opportunities through HR could support this with a focus on career development in future 1:1s. Regular updates around upcoming opportunities as the CCG moves to become an ICB should be provided to staff. This should be available for all staff who wish to advance out of their current role and can be advertised via comms through HR. Greater opportunities and conversations about potential upcoming opportunities can help staff to feel reassured that they have the ability to grow in the CCG.

• Recommendation 10

Create more opportunities to celebrate and acknowledge staff and ensure that this is a value and behaviour which is seen at both an organisational level through to 1:1s with Line Management. Currently, the organisation-wide Somerset Stars Awards recognises individuals for their achievements. More closely and within individual teams across the CCG, staff could be asked to put forward one employee per month to acknowledge work or support that an employee has offered that month. Staff that feel valued by their teams and Managers are more likely to stay with the CCG according to colleague feedback. This behaviour can be role modelled by CCG Directors through a commitment to celebrating successes weekly. Training around championing success may be of benefit to Line Management. By building in time to acknowledge and champion staff the workforce will be motivated to continue to output high quality work.

Overview of Recommendations:

Improving Effectiveness of Appraisals

- **Recommendation 11**

Staff report inconsistencies in how their appraisals are carried out, how often they have them and what follow up action is taken. A review of the appraisal process, with particular attention to frequency of reviewal meetings, to include engagement from all staff could ensure that appraisals and developmental reviews are beneficial to all staff. Changes to the process could include implementing a 'live' version of the appraisal document that is worked on monthly between Line Management and staff; ensuring that staff desire to progress is captured, objectives are clear, and development is worked on regularly.

- **Recommendation 12**

Line Management may benefit from training on how to give effective appraisals to ensure high quality support and coaching for all staff when receiving an appraisal or developmental review. Currently, 26% of staff do not feel as though their appraisals are helpful. With a clear and consistent approach across all Line Management, the workforce should have the ability to receive a beneficial appraisal that supports their role and develop within the CCG.



Section 6
Next Steps



Next Steps

HR, the CCG's Leadership Team, and ICB Directors will be presented with these findings and recommendations to determine next steps in formulating an Action Plan in response. To ensure that improvements are continuous and sustainable the CCG will need to implement a number of measures to support this. Last year, the HPO SROs monitored the Action Plan to ensure that it was progressing. Subsequently, a 'We Said, We Did' report should be developed to summarise decisions made and steps taken and should be made available to all staff.

The wider workforce should also be given the opportunity to review these recommendations. Staff should remain updated as this work continues and their support and enthusiasm to get involved in the formulation of an Action Plan should be encouraged where possible. As the CCG prepares to move to become an ICB, there is uncertainty that many staff may identify with. This change can be used as an opportunity to make powerful steps in resolving and improving the areas identified as risks within this Report. Overall, the CCG is in a strong position to move confidently to ICB status.

Appendix 1: Performance Table (By Theme)

	We are compassionate and inclusive	We are recognised and rewarded	We each have a voice that counts	We are safe and healthy	We are always learning	We work flexibly	We are a team	Staff Engagement	Morale
Best	8.6	7.9	8.3	7.6	7.1	9.0	8.2	8.0	7.3
Somerset CCG	7.9	7.2	7.5	6.6	5.9	7.6	7.5	7.4	6.5
Sector Average	7.7	6.9	7.3	6.6	5.5	7.4	7.2	7.2	6.2
Worst	7.0	6.1	6.6	6.0	4.4	6.5	6.7	6.5	5.3

Appendix 2: Colleague Feedback

How can we support teams across the CCG to work together more effectively to achieve our objectives?

- Face to face team days
- Show-and-Tell from departments
- A 'go to' place for headline objectives for each team
- Directory of services in Wynford House with lead contacts
- Equitable application of policies and performance management
- An online directory of all staff and their teams, titles, and role description
- Providing new starters with info packs including useful links, file storage info etc
- Structure chart with added tasks attached which are updated regularly so we can see what is being worked on in real time
- Cross team building day
- Greater awareness of upcoming projects in pipeline to enhance communication and promote collaboration across relevant teams
- Overview of NHS structure for new starters during induction period
- Include all grades in cross team work (not just senior staff)
- Ensure adequate IT equipment
- Safeguarding and Quality under same Director to aid planning and communication
- Encourage and develop matrix working further

- Introducing teams and their objectives during colleague briefing
- Clear objectives
- Structure charts on teams that can be edited quickly by staff
- Greater team awareness of IHI improvement methodology
- Organic/Ad Hoc/Informal conversations
- Organisational networking event
- Hierarchical structure prevents information being passed down
- Training sessions for all new software
- Reintroduce directorate meetings
- Searchable skillset tool
- Organisational coffee breaks on teams
- Regular communications
- More information added to structure charts
- Recognition of a transition period from virtual to hybrid needed, support to plan and more information on what this will look like
- More formal welcomes and goodbyes to staff joining and leaving
- We have been fortunate to work from home during covid and a return to office should be cautious

Appendix 2: Colleague Feedback

How can we support you to achieve a manageable workload and prevent work related stress?

- Daily team catch ups to create space to talk
- More staff/ensuring we have adequate staffing levels
- Ensure part time staff aren't operating at full time workloads
- Creating an 'It's okay not to be okay' culture
- Supporting boundaries around working hours including no meetings outside of these hours
- Clear overtime/unpaid hours policy
- Back-to-back meetings (reduce these)
- People using personal phones where 3XC isn't working well
- 3XC not working well for people with wifi strength issues
- Support for internet upgrades at home
- Awareness and support to portfolio holders who are over stretched
- Recognising good leadership- encouraging breaks, taking leave and consistent support
- Home working always makes work accessible
- Supporting staff to speak out when workload is unmanageable
- 1-2-1s held regularly to discuss workload
- More structured and supportive introduction for new starters, less 'learn as you go'
- Regular supervision that isn't line management

- 'Take sick leave when unwell' requires a culture shift
- Feeling as though you can't raise concerns
- Encourage use of CCG Facebook as seen at peak pandemic
- Team building/Away days to build relationships
- Identifying work we can pause or delay when there are capacity issues
- More info about changes to roles needed when moving to ICS
- More openness and flexibility around flexible working requests from Line Managers
- Workforce planning improvements, focus on backfill and talent pool
- HR hold vacancy red list and follow up with line managers
- Taking daily wellbeing time
- Regular supervision for staff
- Finish meetings 5-10 mins early
- Trusting homeworking staff and flexibility with returning to office at own pace
- Fixed term contracts and worry of taking sick days
- Clear and realistic deadlines
- Bank resource availability
- Virtual 'cuppa and chat'

Appendix 2: Colleague Feedback

What could the organisation do to encourage and support you to report bullying, harassment and discrimination?

- Share (bullying, harassment, and discrimination) policy
- Regular comms in Weekly Wraps etc with info
- Opportunity to speak to an independent person outside of individual teams in first instance
- Awareness/Training regarding message sensitivities, low level papercut issues, passive aggressive virtual communication
- Union Rep information required
- Challenge external negative behaviours that are directed at CCG staff
- Mandatory Bystander training for all staff
- Reminders on who Freedom to Speak Up Guardians are
- Thank and champion colleagues
- Managing these issues through Colleague Forum, EDI colleagues and the compassionate network
- Understanding, approachable line management
- Bullying and harassment is easier to report now
- Easily accessible pathway for reporting
- More training for Line Managers

- Culture change since homeworking and pandemic
- Informal reporting outside of individual teams as relationships within team can make incidents difficult to raise internally.
- Protection from any repercussions or fault out from reporting
- Training and comms around what does bullying look like at work (this could be in form of bitesize videos), signs and how it affects people
- Ensure all staff have supervision
- Non-specific examples where reporting has made a difference
- Anonymous box – virtual version
- Reluctance to speak out where it may affect organisation
- Questioning of experience when you are working in isolation
- Fear of reporting being a stressful process and result in the alleged victim leaving organisation
- A list of people within CCG who are happy to provide impartial supervision
- Representation of protected characteristics in senior roles

Appendix 2: Colleague Feedback

What makes people want to stay with the CCG and/or what makes people think about moving on?

- Feeling valued and part of the CCG
- Having great line management that wants to see you progress
- Being part of a strong and supportive team
- Apprenticeships are a great opportunity
- Good pay
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Hybrid working
- To make a difference to healthcare and the success of the CCG
- Having clear, mutually agreed objectives that are fulfilling and rewarding
- Support to do further training
- Flexibility and autonomy
- Offer CCG staff opportunity to take forward work and backfill instead of bringing in additional staff

(and what makes people think of moving on?)

- Lack of development opportunities
- Imposter syndrome
- Missing clinical development and clinical role
- Toxic colleagues
- ICB and uncertainty around future role
- Flexible working request ignored
- No recognition
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of personal contact for new starters
- Respect for all ranks/grades
- Poor induction process into new roles
- Understaffed
- Structure changes make jobs feel less secure

Appendix 2: Colleague Feedback

What needs to happen to eliminate bullying and discrimination in our organisation?

- Check-ins from managers/colleagues but these can feel forced and not genuine
- Regular training on what bullying looks like/signs
- More robust initial response from CCG when a concern is first reported
- Quick response to concerns raised
- Openness to feedback from peers
- A clear and consistent message on the kind of culture we want to achieve
- Feeling safe to say 'I don't think you look fine' and 'I'm not okay'
- Team approach of looking out for each other
- Structured supervision
- System wide approach not just CCG focussed
- Ensure we employ people with values that align with CCG
- Advertise Freedom to Speak Up Guardians and process to call out bullies (training for bystander)

- Hold providers to account
- Providers/Organisations could sign off on an approach we will all follow collectively
- Empower staff to challenge behaviour that doesn't meet our organisations values
- High workloads causing tension
- Building ICB values and deciding how we trust each other
- Recognise we are in a strong position moving into ICB with Jonathan Higman as he has provider experience
- Senior Management and Directors championing work of CCG and how we help providers

Appendix 2: Colleague Feedback

90% of staff had an appraisal or developmental review in 2021 but how could they be more beneficial to you?

- Both parties prepare in advance
- Line Manager training on what professional career progression might look like for staff
- Recognition of what is going well
- Check in with objectives through 1:1s as appraisals can feel standalone once completed
- Managers also rate you on performance and behaviours- rather than rely on self-assessment
- Some staff view it as a tick box exercise and think it's too admin heavy with paperwork as a barrier
- Review of appraisal process, paperwork and policy
- Line Managers to follow up on progress with developmental aspects in ongoing conversations post appraisal
- Update objectives throughout the year
- 1:1s are more beneficial
- Line Manager training
- Development comes secondary to service needs and workloads
- Dislike maximising talent potential conversations tool

- CCG should full support professional qualifications that required a level of CPD undertaken per year
- Difficult to find time in diary for appraisals
- Individual development budget and set number of development days to spend per year would make delivery equitable
- More informal development ie days with Provider but workload is too high
- More information on how to complete paperwork and who has responsibility to do so
- Appraisal process is too corporate, formal and time consuming
- Process does not seem valued and is a missed opportunity
- Appraisal forms aren't helpful and the values section is repetitive
- Feel pressured to aim for higher band/more senior role when you are happy where you are
- System where people can access their choice of appraiser
- Supervision availability should be monitored to ensure all staff are at least offered it
- Like the way behaviours and values are explored



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