

NORTH EAST AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST

KEY IMPLICATIONS OF THE BOORMAN REVIEW

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF WORKFORCE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides the Board with an update on the key findings of the Boorman Review and also the Trust's response to the key issues outlined in the Action Plan. Full copies of the final report are available at www.dh.gov.uk/publications.

2. Background

- 2.1 Dr Steve Boorman was commissioned by the Department of Health to undertake a review of the current state of the NHS workforce health and wellbeing and to make the case for investing in improving staff health and wellbeing services to the benefit of individual staff, patients and employers. An interim report was produced in August 2009 which was the subject of a major consultation exercise across the NHS which resulted in an input from over 1,000 staff, staff representatives and key stakeholders. Dr Boorman's report built on Dame Carol Black's report on the health of the working age population "Working for a Healthier Tomorrow".
- 2.2 Dr Boorman's final report was published in November 2009 and was welcomed by Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for Health and an Action Plan (outlining the 20 key actions from the overall review) developed for implementation across the NHS.

3. Summary of Key Messages

- 3.1 The overall key messages outlined within the report are as follows:

- The NHS must be an exemplar employer in ensuring the health and wellbeing of its staff, if it is to make a real impact on the public health;
- Good staff health and wellbeing improves the quality of services for patients;
- Reducing sickness absence and improving staff health and wellbeing makes a significant contribution to productivity.

- 3.2 The review focuses on the strong business case for reduction of absence levels which currently stand at 10.7 million days sickness absence each year at a cost of £1.7bn. It outlines the need for a strategic approach to ensuring staff health and wellbeing and proposes that savings of £55 million a year could be made. The overall report indicates that absence levels vary across the different parts of the NHS with variations from 1.75% to 7.42% which supports the proposal that savings are achievable.

- 3.3 Both the interim and final report had the following 3 key recommendations for all NHS Trusts (further details are outlined in the Boorman Action Plan - Appendix 1.)

(a) Improving organisational behaviours and performance

It is recommended that all NHS organisations provide staff health and wellbeing services that are centred on prevention of work related ill health.

(b) Achieving an exemplar service

It is proposed in the review that all Trusts draw up a staff health and wellbeing strategy and that Trusts commit to a full assessment of priorities and risk factors which should fully reflect the legal requirements in this area.

(c) Embedding staff health and wellbeing in NHS systems and infrastructure

It was proposed that the NHS Operating Framework should clearly establish the requirement for Staff health and wellbeing to be included in national and local governance frameworks to ensure proper board accountability for its implementation.

4. Implementation Plan

4.1 The key actions arising out of the recommendations within the review are outlined in Appendix 1 together with a commentary on local NEAS actions taken to support the key findings. However, the Board should consider in particular the following key requirements:

- It is recommended that all NHS organisations take responsibility for creating and delivering a staff health and wellbeing strategy, tailored to the needs of the organisation and identify a Board level champion for health and wellbeing as well as having a senior manager who is accountable for the delivery of the overall strategy.
- Trusts provide staff health and wellbeing services which are centred on prevention (both of work related and lifestyle influenced ill health) are fully aligned with wider public health policies and initiatives.
- NHS leaders and managers are developed and equipped to recognise the link between staff health and wellbeing and organisational performance and their individual contribution to maintaining staff health and wellbeing is measured as a key organisational priority.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Further work is ongoing within the regional Strategic Partnership Forum to agree a consistent approach across the North East to the recommendations of the Boorman Review and the Trust is represented on this group. The Trust is working towards reduction of sickness absence as part of the overall cost improvement project and through this will ensure that the Boorman review key messages, as well as the good practice case studies, are considered.

It is proposed that the Board will receive quarterly updates on progress made in relation to the Boorman Review action plan and that the Board will continue to receive updates within the Integrated Performance Report on sickness absence levels and key trends.

6. Recommendations

The Board is asked to review the key findings of the Boorman Review and to endorse the plans outlined in the Action Plan - Appendix 1.

Elma Alexander
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