

# Culture Progress Report



1. The purpose of this document is to provide an update on the progress made by NHS Highland in implementing the recommendations of the Sturrock Review, and the wider programme to change the culture of the organisation in response to this and other related reviews / surveys (Gallanders Review 2018/19, Argyll and Bute Culture Survey 2019, Culture Audit 2019, iMatter surveys).
2. NHS Highland made a full and public apology for the harm caused to colleagues at the Board meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019, and published an initial action plan in response to the Review on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019 (“Culture Fit for the Future”). Following the action plan publication, a series of listening and engagement events were held with colleagues from across the organisation to gather wide-ranging feedback, which resulted in the development and publication of a longer term action plan to change the culture of the organisation.
3. Whilst a range of actions have been taken to both address the harm caused to colleagues and create the desired open, kind and respectful culture, it needs to be recognised that culture change is a long-term programme of work, and will require ongoing focus and attention from the Board.
4. The actions that have been taken to deliver the Sturrock recommendations and drive the desired cultural change are grouped into the following areas:
  - a. Listening, learning and engagement
  - b. Employee wellbeing and support
  - c. Healing
  - d. Capability and resources
  - e. Governance and oversight

## 5. Listening, learning and engagement

The following are the completed activities designed to improve the Board’s learning and engagement:

- A series of one to one meetings between the Chair and individuals who suffered bullying and inappropriate behaviour while employed by the Board
- A series of one to one meetings between the Chief Executive and individuals who suffered bullying and inappropriate behaviour while employed by the Board
- An externally facilitated 2 day Board workshop held in August 2019 which heard examples of the lived experience of members of staff both at first hand and through written accounts read by a member of the Whistleblower Group
- 23 Executive and Board member-led engagement events were held in 11 locations across the vast Board area from June to October 2019 to gather input and feedback

from colleagues to ensure the full range of employee experience was understood (as Sturrock was only able to engage with 340 colleagues)

- Regular and ongoing engagement events with the Whistleblower Group to take stock and gather feedback
- An independent Argyll and Bute Culture Survey was commissioned and executed early 2020, which has resulted in a specific set of actions focused on addressing the Argyll and Bute colleague feedback and the creation of an Argyll and Bute Culture Group. The findings from this survey were broadly in line with the findings of the Sturrock Review
- There has been an ongoing focus on improving Executive / Senior Manager visibility, through “coffee break” virtual engagement events, “Ask me Anything” all-staff communication sessions and greater use of video to share leadership messages.

## **6. Employee wellbeing and support**

To improve staff wellbeing, the following support infrastructure has been put in place:

- An externally provided, confidential Employee Assistance Programme for employee support, including a dedicated Manager support service, was launched in May 2020 and has in the first 6 months had 82 telephone contacts, 375 online accounts created, and delivered 100 counselling sessions.
- Launch of a Guardian (“Speak Up”) Service in August 2020, which has in the first 4 months supported 66 cases of which 51 gave already been closed, with 330 contacts (emails, calls, f2f). In January 2021, the service will be expanded to include Argyll and Bute Council’s c770 employees from within the HSCP. NHS Highland is the first Board in Scotland to adopt this independent external model which is widely used in NHS England following the Francis report.
- A specific Wellbeing internet site with a range of materials and support available to staff has been created, including materials related to the ongoing COVID response, as well as “Wellbeing Wednesday” all-colleague updates and guidance on specific topics related to health and wellbeing.

## **7. Healing**

Whistleblowers, Managers, HR and Staffside successfully partnered to co-create the Healing Process which was approved by the Board in March 2020 and is now active, with over 190 registrations. As part of the Healing Process, current and former employees have access to one or more options, which are: being heard, an apology, access to psychological therapies or access to the Independent Review panel, who have heard around 80 cases to date. A financial award is one of the potential outcomes of the Healing Process. To date, the outcomes for 60 individuals have been presented to the NHS Highland Remuneration Committee and all have been approved in line with the recommendation of the Independent Review panel.

## **8. Capability and Resources**

The following are the actions that have been taken to improve the overall capability and capacity of the organisation to deliver the desired cultural change:

- Courageous Conversations training has been designed and delivered to around 300 colleagues to date and was successfully adapted to a virtual learning environment given the COVID restrictions. Delivery of this training will continue throughout 2021.
- External mediation and investigation support is in place to support delivery of the core people processes

- A single point of contact (phone and email) for HR support is in place to facilitate employee query management
- An independent, external review of the core people processes (bullying and harassment, disciplinary and grievance and redeployment) has been conducted with a series of recommendations made (which are now in the process of being addressed in partnership with staffside)
- Training in the Once for Scotland policies is underway and continues in 2021
- A Corporate Induction portal and a Manager portal have been designed and launched
- An independent review of the recruitment processes has been completed, and a series of recommendations made to improve their effectiveness and efficiency which are being taken forward in partnership
- Appointment of a full time Director of HR and OD in July 2019
- An External Culture Advisor was appointed to support the design and delivery assurance of the Culture programme and to Chair the Culture Board

## **9. Governance and Oversight**

The following actions have been taken to improve governance and decision-making:

- A review of the Board Committee structures has been delivered, to improve clarity and accountability for decision-making
- The Board has undergone development and support to improve ways of working and assure effective governance
- A cross-functional Culture Programme Board now known as the Culture Oversight Group is in place and meets monthly to review and assure the culture programme delivery
- A series of workshops focused on improving partnership working has been held, the recommendations from which are now in progress.

## **10. Next Steps**

The Culture Group has defined and agreed six priority areas, which will be the focus for the culture programme for the next 6-12 months:

- Launching and embedding a new vision for NHS Highland and the NHS Scotland values across the organisation, with clear and shared behavioural expectations for all colleagues
- Implementing the identified improvements to the People Processes (from the external review)
- Rolling out 'Civility Saves Lives' across the organisation with a focus on 'Call it out with compassion' and use of a train the trainer approach to delivery
- Delivery of a series of modules to improve manager capability, using both virtual and e-learning channels
- Completing a root-cause analysis to ensure all lessons are learned and addressed from the issues of the past
- Defining and implementing a series of metrics to measure and assess organisational culture on an ongoing basis and ensure improvements are tracked and identified.

Each of these priorities is being led by a colleague representing the different geographical and divisional units of NHS Highland including Argyll and Bute, and supported by a small team. The Culture Oversight Group supports and assures delivery of each of these priorities, and oversees the integrated programme plan.