

Community Nursing Healthcare Policy Update

Week ending 4th August 2017

Nurses

Reassurance needed for EU staff

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has [called](#) for EU staff to be given reassurance on their future following Brexit. Figures show that staff from European Union states are already leaving the profession: 3,081 in 2016/17 compared to 1,173 in 2012/13, and concerns are now being raised regarding the NHS' ability to cope.

"In some hospitals one in five members of staff are trained elsewhere in Europe and they just couldn't cope if suddenly everyone decided to leave. The risk is that people will start to leave and we are now starting to see that happen. We simply can't afford to lose any more nurses; we don't have enough as it is".

Bursary for male nursing students

Coventry University [launched](#) the 'National Express Scholarship for Health Professionals', which will see ten male students studying subjects in which they are under-represented, awarded a £3,000 bursary. Approximately 10% of nursing students are UK Universities are male.

GPs

39% of GPs are likely to leave the profession in the next five years

[Research](#) commissioned by The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) found that 39% of GPs report that it is unlikely they will be working in the profession in five years' time. Whilst the number of GPs entering speciality training has increased, with 2,927 foundation doctors signed up in 2016 following recruitment round two, there are concerns regarding the retention of current GPs.

The RCGP [commented](#): *"This is really concerning and very sad. We cannot – and must not – allow this 'brain drain' of future GPs to be lost to our profession and to future generations of patients ... After a decade of under-investment, we urgently need to turn general practice around and make it the attractive career option that it once was".*

Mental Health

Mental Health workforce plan

QNI Community Nursing Healthcare Policy Update.

By Louise Clanfield, QNI Research Officer.

Health Education England (HEE), NHS England, NHS Improvement, the Royal College of Psychiatrists and other mental health experts have developed a [plan](#) to revamp mental health services.

An extra £1.3 billion has been committed to services alongside a pledge to treat one million more patients by 2020/21, services operating 24 hours a day seven days a week and the integration of physical and mental health services. To meet this pledge, by 2020/21, 21,000 new positions will be created in priority areas, in order to deliver the commitments. The plan also includes measures such as:

- Improving the retention of current mental health staff
- A 'Return to Practice' campaign encouraging a proportion of the 30,000 mental health nurses and 4,000 psychiatrists currently not employed by the NHS to return to the profession
- A campaign to encourage more trainees to pursue mental health as a career area and to incorporate experience in psychiatry into junior doctors' training
- Improve the workforce's resilience and mental health.

The RCN [commented](#): *"If these nurses were going to be ready in time, they would be starting training next month. But we have seen that the withdrawal of the bursary has led to a sharp fall in university applications and we are yet to see funding for additional places. We welcome the development of new supporting roles but their responsibilities must be clearly defined to avoid down-banding or substitution. There must also be recognition of the excellent support roles already in place".*

Other

Bullying and Harassment

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust commissioned a [review](#) into bullying and harassment, following concerns raised in the Trust's staff survey and a report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

42% of respondents had experienced bullying in the last 12 months, with many employees incredibly fearful about speaking out.

- 50% reported being treated in a coarse and/or disrespectful manner
- More than a third had experienced intimidation and reported having felt threatened
- Approximately 33% reported regularly being excluded and/or insulted and/or subject to gossip/rumours
- 25% had been subject to constant criticism and/or teased.

Respondents also cited micro-managing, personal development reviews which were poor or non-existent, poor communication and a culture of grievance/counter grievance. There were also reports of sexual harassment and grooming. Executives were largely invisible to staff, with many employees reported never having encountered members of the executive team in their workplace.

Bullying and harassment was felt to derive from managerial behaviour and managers' failure to address negative behaviour. Respondents advised that when reporting such behaviour, the response was "*that's just the way they are*". Employees also felt discouraged about reporting bullying and harassment, due to complaints failing to be taken seriously, with managers defaulting to support one another. Leadership was cited as being 'militaristic' and based on 'command and control'.

NHS Digital Academy

The NHS Digital Academy, a national programme of health informatics training, was [announced](#). Led by Harvard Medical School, the University of Edinburgh and Imperial College London, the academy will train and support more than 300 senior health managers and clinicians in order to provide them with the skills to drive digital innovation.

The academy forms part of the plans to digitise the NHS. This includes simplifying access to online care; ensuring that improvements in digital technology are embraced and developing the skills of staff so that new technology and systems can be easily adopted.