

‘OUR COMMITMENTS TO CARE’

A STRATEGY FOR NURSES & ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Amendments	Amendments following comments received at the Nursing and AHP Strategy Consultation Event		
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TRUST STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is a provider of community health, mental health and learning disability services, employing 4,300 staff providing services to adults and children in community hospitals, mental health wards, GP surgeries, dedicated clinics and in patients' homes across the county.
- 1.2 Recent well publicised shortcomings in healthcare provision have caused concern across the health community. As an organisation we come into contact with a large number of patients, carers and relatives through the wide range of services we offer and we want to ensure that the care provided meets the standard that we would expect and demand for ourselves.
- 1.3 The Strategy for Nurses and Allied Health Professionals has been developed by a wide range of staff and sets out the vision for the Trust's nurses and allied health professionals.
- 1.4 The Strategy details the core values we expect from each other and provides a 3 year blueprint for the Trust. The Strategy identifies the importance of a supportive culture which needs to be nurtured to give nurses and allied health professionals the structural ideals for care.
- 1.5 The Trust Strategy reflects the key areas identified in the 6C's - **Compassion in Practice**:
 - **Care**
'Care is our core business and that of our organisation and the care we deliver helps the individual person and improves the health of the whole community. Caring defines us and our work. People receiving care expect it to be right for them consistently throughout every stage of their life.'
 - **Compassion**
'Compassion is how care is given through relationships based on empathy, respect and dignity. It can also be described as intelligent kindness and is central to how people perceive their care.'
 - **Competence**
'Competence means all those in caring roles must have the ability to understand an individual's health and social needs. It is also about having the expertise, clinical and technical knowledge to deliver effective care and treatments based on research and evidence.'
 - **Communication**
'Communication is central to successful caring relationships and to effective team working. Listening is as important as what we say and do. It is essential for "no decision about me without me".'

Communication is the key to a good workplace with benefits for those in our care and staff alike.'

- **Courage**
'Courage enables us to do the right thing for the people we care for, to speak up when we have concerns. It means we have the personal strength and vision to innovate and to embrace new ways of working.'
- **Commitment**
'Commitment to our patients and population is a cornerstone of what we do. We need to build on our commitment to improve the care and experience of our patients.'

1.6 Each nurse and allied health professional needs to ensure that their actions and behaviours make this a reality for the people of Somerset.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

2.1 The aims of this strategy are to:

- develop a culture that places the patient at the heart of everything we do;
- describe the ways that we, as individuals, will act and behave towards patients, carers, the public and each other;
- outline the organisational actions that will support individual professionals to achieve the vision

3. COMMITMENTS TO CARE

3.1 During the development of the Strategy for Nurses and Allied Health Professionals a series of focus groups and engagement events were held. The feedback from the staff who attended these events has been crystallised into ten Commitments to Care.

The Commitments to Care are a set of golden rules which provide the focus for staff providing care to patients and they are closely aligned to the Trust's Strategic Vision.

For ease of reference the word 'patient' is used throughout the document but 'service user' could also be used where more appropriate.

Our Commitments to Care

These are our commitments to patients, carers, families and the wider public.

1. We will always put our patients first.
2. We will treat our patients with dignity and respect.

3. We will recognise that every patient is an individual and will ensure care is tailored to the needs of that individual.
4. We will always care with kindness, compassion and professionalism.
5. We will do all we can to keep patients safe.
6. We will work collaboratively to provide care for the whole person.
7. We will support patients to make choices about their care.
8. We will listen to patients, carers and families and act if they are not happy with the care provided to try and remedy the situation.
9. We will provide a consistently high standard of care.
10. We will speak up if we are concerned.

4. EMPOWERING NURSES AND ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TO MAKE AND KEEP THE COMMITMENTS TO CARE

- 4.1 To be able to deliver the 'Commitments to Care' individual nurses and allied health professionals will need to develop key skills, new ways of working as well as demonstrating the behaviours identified in the 6C's.
- 4.2 However, individual nurses and allied health professionals cannot achieve these goals alone. The Trust is also committed to deliver the Strategy and has identified the organisational actions that need to be taken to make the Commitments to Care a reality and support individual nurses and AHPs to keep to those commitments.
- 4.3 There are six areas that have been identified as being critical to supporting the Strategy.
 - 4.3.1 To deliver the Commitments to Care we must have the right staff, in the right place, at the right time

Our vision is to have a workforce with the skills, knowledge and compassion to provide a high quality service to our patients



What can individual nurses and allied health professionals do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

We will work flexibly to provide high quality care

To do this we will:

- be clear about our own roles and responsibilities and share this information with our colleagues;
- work together collaboratively to ensure we support our colleagues;
- know what our core staffing levels should be for our work place;
- use dependency tools to identify changes in patient need and therefore staffing needs;
- work flexibly to meet patient needs and to meet the requirements of the service.

We will ensure that we maximise our own potential

To do this we will:

- ensure that we attend clinical supervision;
- be responsible for attending training;
- ensure we have an annual appraisal and agree a personal development plan;
- maintain competencies to care;
- keep up to date with clinical and professional developments for our role.

What can the organisation do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

The Trust will attract and retain staff who have the compassion and skills to provide a high quality service to our patients

To do this the organisation will:

- develop a marketing strategy to attract high calibre staff to the Trust;
- recruit for high quality, compassionate and motivated staff;
- review the use of temporary staff across the organisation to ensure the process is effective and efficient;
- support teams to regularly review local skill mix;
- proactively risk manage resources to provide adequate staffing levels;
- ensure the Board will only sign off any cost improvement plans with the potential to affect the quality of patient care after review by the Director of Nursing and Patient Safety and Medical Director.

The Trust will support our existing workforce

To do this the organisation will:

- reinvigorate the Productive Series to release time for staff to care;
- support the use of technology across the organisation to free up time to spend with patients;
- develop and support the use of escalation tools when dependency levels increase;
- support and regularly review the Early Warning Trigger Tool across all teams to identify potential problems early;
- support team leaders and managers in defining staff roles;
- support team leaders and managers in setting and maintaining standards of professional practice;
- support an environment where staff understand their personal roles and responsibilities;
- engage with unregistered staff to implement a Code of Conduct.

4.3.2 To deliver the Commitments to Care we must support and promote a positive staff experience

Our vision is to look after and care for our colleagues, to enable each other to provide our patients with the best care possible



What can individual nurses and allied health professionals do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

We will celebrate success when we provide a first class service to our patients

To do this we will:

- identify magic moments;
- acknowledge and praise colleagues when we see good practice;
- communicate good practice and success stories across the organisation.

We will support each other to develop and flourish

To do this we will:

- treat each other with courtesy and respect;
- support new members of staff;
- support students working in our teams through mentorship;
- respect and value the opinions of other team members.

What can the organisation do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

The Trust will listen to and acknowledge our staff, their views and opinions

To do this the Organisation will:

- create an environment where staff feel able and safe to air their views;
- allow staff the space and opportunity to share concerns and issues in their workplace and to develop local mechanisms for support and guidance;
- hold listening and engagement events to understand the culture within teams and within the organisation;
- introduce “You said – we did” feedback across the organisation;
- measure staff satisfaction by undertaking an annual staff survey and share feedback with staff in a timely manner;
- respond to the results of the staff satisfaction survey;
- develop additional methods of obtaining staff feedback;
- audit staff turnover and filter this information by band level, location and turn over to understand why staff choose to leave the Trust;
- modernise its approach to celebrating long and good service.

The Trust will provide opportunities for staff to develop

To do this the Organisation will:

- support staff who mentor students to provide high quality learning opportunities;
- support preceptors to attend an organisation wide preceptorship programme;
- develop a campaign to promote the Trust’s commitment to regular clinical supervision;
- support staff to attend regular clinical supervision (including restorative clinical supervision);
- develop clearly identified career pathways;
- develop and offer rotational and secondment schemes;
- develop succession planning in teams;
- develop a culture which values clinically based research and supports staff members to engage with research opportunities.

The Trust will support staff to achieve

To do this the Organisation will:

- review the uniforms worn by staff to ensure staff are clearly identifiable;
- develop a culture which recognises success and values the contributions made by individuals in different ways;
- positively promote nursing and allied health professionals both internally and externally;
- develop mechanisms to communicate effectively across teams and the organisation;
- review organisational and local induction procedures to ensure new staff are welcomed and given a good introduction to their new role.

4.3.3 To deliver the Commitments to Care we must deliver consistently high quality care and measure to ensure we have done this

Our vision is to ensure our patients receive high quality care and take action if standards are not met



What can individual members of staff do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

We will treat everyone we meet with compassion, dignity and kindness

To do this we will:

- listen to our patients;
- introduce 'See something, say something' campaign to all areas;
- sign up to our Commitments to Care;
- treat all patients and their carers with dignity, respect and professionalism.

We will ensure that we meet the essential needs of our patients

To do this we will:

- support the emotional needs of our patients;
- enable patients to meet their hygiene needs;
- support patients to have sufficient food and drinks;
- assess our patients physical pain and offer pain relief, where appropriate;
- help patients with toileting, where necessary;
- ensure the safeguarding needs of our patients are met;
- care for our patients holistically.

We will share both our successes and our shortcomings in providing high quality care with patients, carers, the public and staff

To do this we will:

- hold local forum events for patients and carers to share their experience of the care we provided;
- measure the quality of care we have provided;
- share local information about the quality of care provided in the most appropriate ways for our patients (this may be through newsletters, leaflets, display boards);
- discuss and agree local improvements targets;
- display 'How we are doing boards?', where appropriate;
- use patient stories to bring the care we provide to life;
- say sorry when we get it wrong;
- learn from our mistakes and share the learning across the organisation.

What can the organisation do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

The Trust will strive to continually develop and improve standards across all services

To do this the Organisation will:

- support the development and use of intentional rounding tools in inpatient setting;
- develop nursing metrics to measure that essential care is provided by nursing staff every day and in every service;
- support Allied Health Professionals to develop measures for high quality care;
- use the safety thermometer to drive quality improvement;
- release time to care by streamlining bureaucracy in clinical areas;
- support staff in collecting data and interpreting the information collected. This will enable staff to 'own' their local data and display key indicators such as days between;
- act on the results of locally gathered data to ensure learning takes place across the entire organisation to continually improve care quality;
- support best practice standards across services and, through the audit programme, check that we are using them;
- support the development of peer review forums.

The Trust will learn from mistakes and take action to improve care as a result

To do this the Organisation will:

- support positive reflective practice where staff are able to identify concerns and raise any issues with confidence and know that they will be listened to and treated fairly;
- embed a culture of openness across the organisation and share incidents that are reported. This will include fully investigating serious incidents and learning lessons;
- be open with patients/family/carers when things go wrong;
- look for and act on recurring themes that may indicate unresolved issues around patient care;
- be robust when made aware of concerns or poor practice.

4.3.4 To deliver the Commitments to Care we must build and strengthen leadership

Our vision is to improve the quality of care patients receive by having strong and effective leaders at all levels



What can individual members of staff do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

We commit to developing behaviours to enable us to lead others

To do this we will:

- lead with integrity by being a good role model;
- openly display empathy with patients;
- have the courage to speak out on what is best for patients and staff;
- support others to see a way forward;
- challenge others to think and question;
- invest in developing productive relationships;
- have positive energy and attitude.

We will get the basics of leadership right

To do this we will:

- take opportunities to develop as leaders through the supervision, appraisal, coaching and competency process;
- speak and act in the best interests of patients, of staff and of the organisation;
- demonstrate value and commitment;
- build resilience.

We will look for the leaders of tomorrow amongst our colleagues and nurture them

To do this we will:

- identify and recognise leadership qualities in colleagues at all levels;
- identify and give recognition to individuals who show compassion and courage;
- identify colleagues who have an aptitude for leadership.

What can the organisation do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

The Trust will encourage and support a leadership programme

To do this the Organisation will:

- seek the views of staff, patients and carers on the culture of our organisation to develop and support the cultural changes necessary for leadership to thrive at all levels;
- consult with the workforce in developing a Leadership Strategy for the Trust;
- devise and run team leadership programmes;
- support staff undertaking leadership development;
- host a series of master classes to learn from others in leadership positions and champion key leaders within our organisation;
- develop IT systems and the Intranet to enable peer support for developing leaders;
- proactively attract and recruit staff that have leadership potential;
- acknowledge and recognise leaders at all levels and in all roles and the important part they play in delivering high quality compassionate care;
- ensure constructive feedback is given to developing leaders;
- support teams to identify individuals with leadership qualities for succession planning;
- develop and support a network of coaches who are able and willing to nurture current and aspiring leaders;
- introduce a 360° appraisal for staff in leadership roles to allow effective and constructive feedback;
- introduce a Recognition Award for Leadership in Practice.

4.3.5 To deliver the Commitments to Care we must work with patients and carers to provide a positive experience

Our vision is that we will welcome and value everyone's voice



What can individual members of staff do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

We will listen to patients, their families, their carers and staff

To do this we will:

- ensure that the patient, their family and carers remain at the centre of everything we do;
- listen to what patients tell us, value their opinion and respond appropriately;
- find ways to listen to those who find it hard to communicate;
- ask if we have fulfilled Our Commitments to Care.

We will make a positive first impression

To do this we will:

- share 'Our Commitments to Care' at first contact with patients, their family or carers;
- introduce ourselves at every point of contact;
- wear name badges to ensure we are clearly identifiable;
- ensure our premises will be clean, bright and well lit;
- support Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment;
- strive to provide a positive first impression every single day.

We promise to care with kindness

To do this we will:

- consider our patients needs before our own and before our organisation;
- we will treat other people with respect, dignity and professionalism.

What can the organisation do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

The Trust will support and encourage feedback from our patients

To do this the Organisation will:

- display a poster showing 'Our Commitments to Care' in all patients accessible areas of Trust activity;
- ask all Trust staff to sign up to Our Commitments to Care, from first employment with the Trust, and to re affirm this every year at appraisal;
- implement the friends and family test across services and act on results;
- add an additional question asking users of our services: Have we fulfilled Our Commitments to Care?
- review the role of PALS service and the way complaints are handled;
- introduce the Triangle of Care across all inpatient services;
- encourage a culture which expects common courtesy. This will be achieved by ensuring customer care is a focus and reflects treating others with respect and dignity.

4.3.6 To deliver the Commitments to Care we must help people to stay independent, maximising well being and improving health outcomes

Our vision is that our first priority is to support individuals to stay well and independent



What can individual members of staff do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

We will promote well being

To do this we will:

- be clear about what maintaining independence, maximising well being and improving health means to each of us in our professional role;
- take the opportunity to promote healthy living and life style choices at every contact;
- ensure potential problems are identified and early intervention is considered;
- make 'every contact count';
- ensure that mental health needs are always considered (no health without mental health).

We will work with all individuals to reach a mutually agreed way forward for care

To do this we will:

- ensure every person who uses our services will have a personalised plan of care agreed with them and their carer/family (where appropriate) which details what they can do to maximise their well being and prevent problems occurring;
- engage people in their own well being and enablement so they are actively involved and empowered in shared decision-making, and committed to self management;
- promote independent living so that, where appropriate, people can be cared for in their own homes;
- support patients to manage their own conditions, where appropriate.

We have a responsibility to support our colleagues to stay well and be able to deliver care to our patients

To do this we will:

- promote healthy working environments;
- ensure we and our colleagues use Work and Wellbeing services;
- promote a healthy work life balance;
- work to build our own resilience.

What can the organisation do to deliver this aspect of the Commitments to Care?

The Trust will support and encourage feedback from our patients

To do this the Organisation will:

- support staff across all services in developing an early intervention philosophy and reinforces 'every contact counts';
- support the use of personalised plans of care (including family/carers, where appropriate) across all services;
- promote and develop services which are central to enabling individuals to stay as well as possible for as long as possible and to promote self care;
- actively promote the Dementia Challenge;
- ensure all staff are aware of Work & Wellbeing Services and are able to comment on the service to encourage continual quality improvement;
- promote a healthy work life balance;
- review and implement key initiatives from the National Public Health agenda.