**Workforce Retention, Support and Enhancement**

1. **Purpose**

This paper provides details of a funding opportunity which should be of interest to NHS organisations. Ensuring effective staff support is a critical success factor in organisations being able to attract, develop and retain their workforce. There is recognition that strengthening mechanisms and interventions for the development and retention of an organisation’s current workforce is a common immediate priority if organisations are to have sufficient capacity to meet future and current service demands. The investment proposed here can be used by organisations to help support this key priority.

1. **Context**

Health Education England (HEE) has a responsibility for attracting and ensuring a future workforce supply. As part of this responsibility HEE has published a range of strategies which are aimed at attracting and supporting the development of the future workforce. These strategies include the [Widening Participation](http://nw.hee.nhs.uk/files/2014/11/r-HEE-Widening-Participation-Strategy_Booklet_20141014.pdf) and [Talent for Care](http://eoe.hee.nhs.uk/files/2014/11/HEE_Talent-for-Care-A-National-Strategic-Framework-Nov-2014.pdf) strategies, [Modernising Scientific Careers strategy](http://www.nhsemployers.org/~/media/Employers/Publications/Healthcare%20Science%20Education%20and%20Training%20-%20explaining%20the%20facts.pdf). Both the [Shape of Training](http://www.shapeoftraining.co.uk/reviewsofar/1788.asp) and [Shape of Caring](http://hee.nhs.uk/work-programmes/shape-of-caring-review/)  reports, which sets out recommendations and changes in education and training, are likely to have a significant impact on the future preparation and progression of the medical and nursing workforce.

Recruitment and retention of healthcare staff is being reported as a significant challenge for many healthcare providers within the NHS, indeed this is identified as an international difficulty as recently highlighted by a report for the European Commission (European Commission 2015[[1]](#footnote-1)). Significant demands in healthcare needs, changes in labour market trends and staff expectations are influencing the ability of organisations to recruit and retain staff. More consistent and targeted interventions by healthcare employers in recruiting and supporting different staff groups are being recommended, recognising that while a structured framework with common elements is needed a ‘one size fits all’ approach will not be effective in all circumstances.

There is considerable interest in promoting the ability of organisations to develop and put in place a ‘Grow Your Own Workforce’ strategy. Responding to the challenge that increasing the size of the workforce is not sustainable given the current issues, workforce trends and financial issues facing the NHS, looking to maximise the development and flexibility of the current workforce is seen as essential. If ‘Grow your Own’ is to be successful key conditions need to be in place and include focused organisational motivation, partnership working between education providers and the wider community, well-structured development programmes and visible organisational leadership, commitment and engagement. Also related to this is the need to have a detailed understanding of the organisations workforce makeup, patterns and potential talent (Kings Fund 2006[[2]](#footnote-2), Kessler et al 2014, and [Centre for Workforce Intelligence](http://www.cfwi.org.uk/)). A healthy organisational culture is essential if an organisation is going to be effective and efficient in meeting its strategic goals and delivery of high quality services. With the recent reports such as the Mid Staffordshire Hospitals (Francis 2013) and A Promise to Learn (Berwick 2013[[3]](#footnote-3)) the importance for NHS organisations to review their organisational and workplace cultures has been identified as a key enabler for change to ensure patient safety and quality of care. A key feature of any healthy culture is a strong and visible commitment for the involved, sustained development and support of the workforce at all levels. This is particularly encouraged given the strong evidence which

indicates the higher the levels of organisational satisfaction and commitment that staff report, the higher the levels of satisfaction that patients report (Kings Fund 2015[[4]](#footnote-4)).

Support for the transition of newly qualified healthcare staff from student to competent healthcare practitioner has been identified as a key stage of development. Consequently, organisations have been encouraged and supported to put in place effective preceptorship programmes to meet the support needs of new staff. This also features as a key recommendation within the Shape of Caring report. Guidance on the key elements of an effective preceptorship programme has been described (Department of Health 2009[[5]](#footnote-5)). Although it is recognised that further evaluation of preceptorship is needed to affirm its effectiveness, it is considered that such structured approaches to support can lead to increased confidence and competence for newly qualified staff and is also a factor that aids their retention. Although preceptorship has predominantly been understood and applied within the context of nursing, HENW supports indications that such an approach should be used to enable the development of all newly qualified staff (DH 2011[[6]](#footnote-6), NHS Employers 2014[[7]](#footnote-7)). HENW provides funding of multiprofessional preceptorship.

There has been recent focus on the importance of promoting the resilience of the healthcare workforce. Where positive resilience fostering strategies are actively promoted, for example promoting employee mental health wellbeing, it can enable increased commitment and job satisfaction, staff retention, improved performance and productivity with reduced staff absenteeism (Department of Health 2009[[8]](#footnote-8), NICE 2009[[9]](#footnote-9)).

Organisations need to further explore, how the physical and mental well-being of the workforce, with particular reference to newly qualified staff, can be assured. Extensive evidence and information on how organisations can support resilience and wellbeing are available at

* [Workplace Health](http://www.nice.org.uk/advice/lgb2/chapter/Introduction) (NICE)
* [Health and well-being](http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/health-work-and-wellbeing) (NHS Employers)

Evidence also exists linking decreased feelings of stress and isolation and improved teamwork and interdisciplinary communication in health care setting that implement [Schwartz Rounds](http://www.pointofcarefoundation.org.uk/Home/). Such developments point to the need for supportive opportunities for reflection helping staff understand how they manage challenging situations.

Currently NHS Employers is supporting organisations to consider the implications of the Working Longer Review (WLR) ([NHS Employers](http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/need-to-know/working-longer-group)[[10]](#footnote-10)). The WLR has examined the implications and challenges for being able to support a workforce for longer working careers given changes in demographics and also future work pension reform. Key elements of the WLR includes how can organisations put in place flexible approaches to retain staff, continue to benefit from their talent but balance this with personal expectations that staff might have and enabling their ability to continue to work longer by ensuring their health and wellbeing. As the WLR notes, looking after the health, safety and wellbeing of staff from any early stage and throughout their employment is something that organisations will need to address.

1. **Investment Support**

HENW is making **£50,000** available **per** NHS Trust to support a local programme of work to address workforce retention, support and enhancement issues.

This funding can be used in the most effective and flexible way that the organisation considers will be most beneficial in supporting them to address the key workforce retention and support issues that they face. However we envisage that the funding could be used by organisations to;

* Source project management capacity to conduct a baseline assessment as to their current recruitment and retention strategies, with a particular focus on ensuring the effectiveness of retaining newly qualified staff and the transition from training into employment.
* Review how the organisation supports preceptorship, and other support developments such as clinical supervision, coaching and mentorship for its workforce, and how arrangements can be further standardised, enhanced and extended for the benefit of all newly qualified healthcare professionals.
* Plan and pilot any new interventions designed to support the retention of the workforce (through ‘life course’ from newly qualified to those seeking new opportunities to be able to work longer).
* Develop, enhance or expand any workforce retention, support and well-being strategies /initiatives which are already in place and which could improve workforce support/retention further.
* Support the development and availability of resources which can be used to aid workforce support.

Organisations should plan and consider carefully how they will best use the investment to sustain any developments supported.

To receive this investment organisations will need to;

* Develop and submit a brief outline of how the investment will be used to support achievement of the intended outcomes that they are specifically seeking to achieve (Suggested outline is given in Appendix 1).
* In relation to workforce retention, health and well-being and preceptorship, identify an organisational lead with whom HENW can link to ensure sharing of best practice and information on developments being supported by Health Education England.
* Commit to provide a case study by June 2016, for sharing across the North West, reflecting any key learning and outcomes achieved through the programme of work being supported with the investment provided here.

HENW will seek a periodic report against the following key performance indicators

* Number of newly qualified staff accessing and completing a preceptorship programme
* Number of newly qualified staff retained in post at 6 months from date of commencement
* Number of newly qualified staff in post at 12 months from date of commencement
* Number of preceptors who have completed a formal preparatory programme
  1. **Link with other Investment Funding**

Please note that the funding provided here is complementary to the other significant sources of investment and funding initiatives that HENW has already provided such as the Talent for Care, preceptorship support and calls such as the recently extended support for Pre degree Year of Care and Return to Practice. Organisations are encouraged to ensure they link and maximise the available investment.

* 1. **Links with other developments being supported by HENW**

Organisations should note that HENW has supported a number of developments to help address workforce retention. This includes a review of preceptorship models and standards, and reduction of attrition. HENW will share details of these developments shortly and organisations should be able to draw upon outputs from these developments to support and advance plans.

1. **Submissions**

HENW will keep the allocated funding available open for all organisations until 23rd October 2015. Organisations are encouraged to submit their outline, on receipt and review arrangements will be made with finance to pay the investment via the RTP (Electronic) process.

All submissions should be sent electronically to Kirstie Simpson ([Kirstie.simpson@nw.hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Kirstie.simpson@nw.hee.nhs.uk)).

**NB: Please note it will be the organisations responsibility to receive in full and manage the investment provided.**

1. **Further Information**

If you need any further information about this development please contact the relevant geographical link-contact from the Education Transformation Team:

* Cheshire and Mersey Organisations: Sean Bradbury ([Sean.Bradbury@nw.hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Sean.Bradbury@nw.hee.nhs.uk))
* Cumbria and Lancashire Organisations: Laura Jukes ([Laura.Jukes@nw.hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Laura.Jukes@nw.hee.nhs.uk))
* Greater Manchester Organisations: Victoria Macmillan ([Vicky.Macmillan@nw.hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Vicky.Macmillan@nw.hee.nhs.uk))

**Appendix 1 Submission Template: Workforce Support and Retention**

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| Name of Organisation |
| Lead Contact:  Name  Role  Email: Telephone: |
| Priorities and Outcomes: With a specific focus on strengthening the organisations ability to support and retain its workforce, identify the specific local priorities and outcomes that your organisation would wish to achieve with the available funding. |
| Outline Key Activity: Briefly set out the activity you will undertake, including key timelines, to achieve the priorities and outcomes that you have identified. |
| Coordination: Identify the key personnel/roles within your organisation who will be involved in coordinating and supporting workforce support and retention and who can act as a point of future contact for sharing best practice. |
| Declaration: This declaration needs to be completed and signed by an accountable officer with appropriate organisational authorisation for agreeing to the submission of this proposal.   * We understand that the funding being made available through this submission is to only be used to support workforce retention and support strategies, plans and interventions. * We will provide a case study by June 30th,2016 outlining how we have progressed workforce support and retention and any key learning implications.   Name:  Role: |

1. [Recruitment and Retention of the Health Workforce in Europe](http://ec.europa.eu/health/workforce/docs/2015_healthworkforce_recruitment_retention_exsum_en.pdf) (European Commission 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Grow your Own](http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/files/kf/field/field_publication_file/grow-your-own-creating-conditions-sustainable-workforce-development-gita-malhotra-kings-fund-3-august-2006.pdf) (King’s Fund 2006) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [A promise to learn- a commitment to act](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/berwick-review-into-patient-safety) ( Berwick 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [Improving NHS Culture](http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/culture) (Kings Fund 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [Preceptorship for Nursing](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@abous/documents/digitalasset/dh_109794.pdf) (Department of Health 2009) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [Report to the National Allied Health Professional Advisory Board on the outcomes of the Modernising Allied Health Professional Careers Programme](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/215721/dh_124803.pdf) (Department of Health 2011) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. # [Preceptorships for newly qualified staff NHS Preceptorships for newly qualified staff](http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/plan/education-and-training/preceptorships-for-newly-qualified-staff) (NHS Employers 2014)

   [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [NHS health and well-being review](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http:/www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_108799) (Department of Health 2009) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [Promoting mental wellbeing at work](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph22/chapter/1-Recommendations#recommendation-1-strategic-and-coordinated-approach-to-promoting-employees-mental-wellbeing) (NICE 2009) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [Working Longer Review](http://www.nhsemployers.org/~/media/Employers/Documents/Pay%20and%20reward/WLR%20Preliminary%20findings%20and%20recommendations%20report.pdf) (NHS Employers 2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)