



Delivering on our promise to our staff – engage, empower and retain

The urgent crisis of workforce burnout and soaring vacancy rates is compounding the most challenging period in history for the NHS. Retention must be prioritised and tackled proactively to prevent even more staff leaving or moving to part-time shift work as a way of dealing with the unsustainable pressure. Our white paper takes a deep dive into the scale, nature and impact of the retention challenge, and provides a proposed "Framework for Workforce Retention", together with insights from third-party and partner organisations.

1 The scale of the challenge



- 32%** contemplate leaving their organisations
- 26%** feel staffing levels are sufficient and do their jobs well
- 50%** feel involved in deciding on changes that affect their work

NHS Staff Survey 2022

360,000

size of workforce gap by 2036/37



year-on-year increase in vacancies

NHS Long Term Workforce Plan 2023

2 The nature and impact of the challenge

Reasons for leaving



Feeling undervalued



Too much pressure



Feeling exhausted



Staffing levels too low

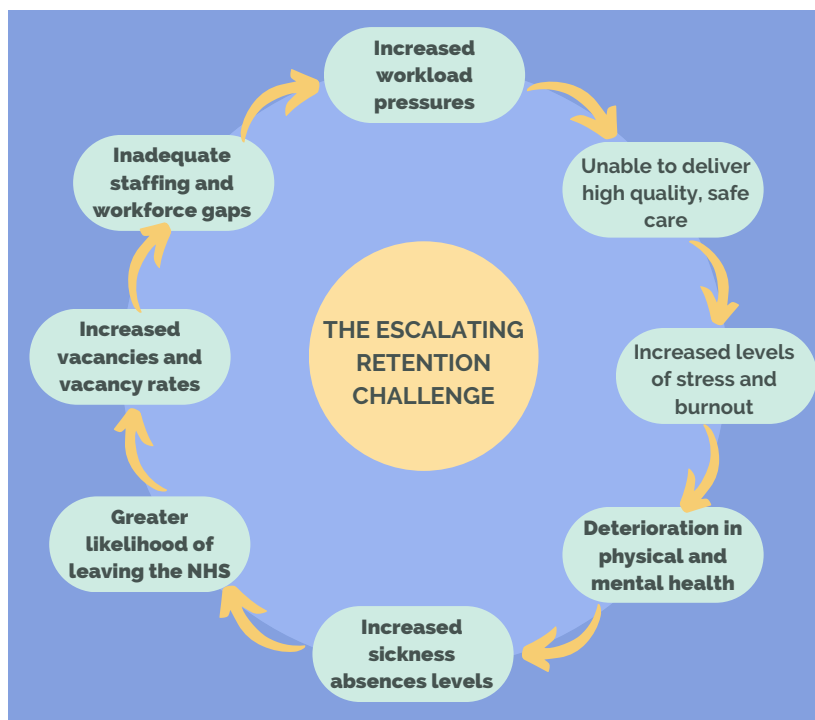


Pay too low



Can't give standard of care I would like

Royal College of Nursing, Employment Survey 2021 - Reasons for thinking about leaving



In 2020/21, NHS England spent £2.44 billion on agency staff

"Staff experience [is] associated with sickness absence rates, spend on agency staff and staffing levels, indicating that staff wellbeing is impacted negatively by a workforce that is overstretched and supplemented by temporary staff. Patient experience was also negatively associated with workforce factors."

"The risks to care quality and staff wellbeing of an NHS system under pressure"
The King's Fund

3 Tackling the challenge



A framework for improving retention

Eight levers that organisations should focus on in order to proactively tackle retention.

1. Delivering high quality care

- Safe staffing levels
- Adequate resources, funding, facilities, equipment
- Culture of Quality Improvement

2. Staff wellbeing and resilience

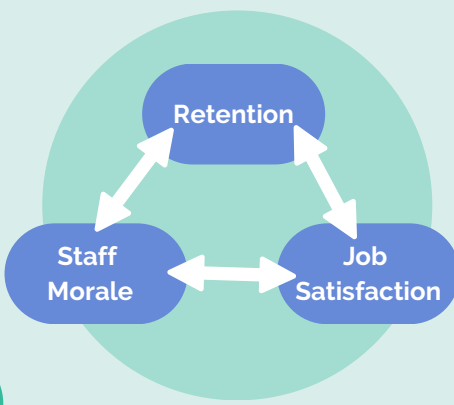
- Identify pressures and 'stressors'
- Reduce burnout
- Improve safety - physical and psychological
- Healthy work environment

3. Work-life balance

- Flexibility - hours, rotas, roles, location, career pathways
- Providing tailored support to the individual

4. Engagement and empowerment

- Giving staff a voice, listening, taking action
- Engagement - advocacy, involvement, motivation
- Autonomy, trust, agency



5. Reward and recognition

- Pay
- Employee value proposition / non-pay benefits
- Recognition and celebration

6. Sense of belonging

- Relationships and managerial support
- Workplace culture
- Camaraderie and teamwork

7. Bespoke career pathways

- Career progression opportunities
- Personal and professional development

8. Compassionate Leadership

- Connection to meaning and purpose
- Participative management
- Trust and respect

94% of ideas captured via the ImproveWell platform relate to at least one of the eight drivers in this framework

Over **80%** of ideas relate to 'delivering high quality care' and 'staff wellbeing and resilience'

*Analysis of a sample of nearly 3,500 ImproveWell customer ideas

Burns Service Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Within twelve months of implementing ImproveWell, the Burns Service saw a **60% improvement** in the number of staff who felt they can easily share ideas and a **26% increase** in those who felt their ideas were listened to.

Rosebrook Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit, Southern Health & Social Care Trust

100% of staff surveyed agree that **ImproveWell gives them a voice** and has positively changed their working environment. The unit has seen a **substantial reduction in staff turnover** - from 18 in 2021/22, before the introduction of ImproveWell, to two in 2022/23.

'Enjoying Work' Collaborative Royal College of Psychiatrists

"At a time when the prevailing rhetoric is about poor morale and burnout... 38 teams have shown we can improve joy and wellbeing, whilst reducing burnout, through a very simple, but powerful approach."

Dr Amar Shah, Chief Quality Officer, East London Foundation Trust, National Improvement Lead, Royal College of Psychiatrists