

COMPASSION IN PRACTICE: TWO YEARS ON – EXPERIENCES MATTER

by **National Health Service (NHS) England** (2014, November)
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Read the full article at: www.england.nhs.uk/nursingvision

Compassion in Practice was launched by the National Health Service (NHS) England two years ago. It sets out a strategy for nurses and care staff to deliver tangible improvements to support high quality care. This report reflects improvements made through six action areas. These areas are closely linked to NHS's 6Cs – Care, Compassion, Competence, Communication, Courage and Commitment.

Action Area 1:

Helping people stay independent, maximising wellbeing and improving health outcomes

(Looks at how every person providing care and support can help clients better manage their health and wellbeing effectively. Individual needs are identified and appropriate support is put in place, including self-management of long-term health conditions when clients are able/want to do so.)

- A national model, *Framework for Personalised Care and Population Health*, which focuses on prevention and health promotion, was launched. It provides nurses and allied health professionals access to evidence-based research, guidance, standards, good practice interventions and outcome measures. The framework contains examples and ready-to-access information in high priority areas such as antimicrobial resistance, falls and dementia, amongst others.
- Every contact between a health/social care professional and a member of the public is seen as an opportunity to provide basic health promotion advice and links to support services, if required. In future, the NHS will work across sectors to help integrate health, care and support services, and leverage technology to support practices.

Action Area 2:

Working with people to provide positive care experiences

(Helps services get views from vulnerable users and use their responses to make improvements and enhance clients' care experiences.)

- The *Friends and Family Test* was rolled out. This test looks at reported/unreported patient/carer experiences which enable nurses to listen/act on these views. The test asks clients whether they would recommend the hospital wards and/or accident and emergency units to a friend/relative based on their experiences.
- A programme to develop a small core set of 'Always Events' was started. The purpose of 'Always Events' is to support consistency in personal interactions between staff, patients and carers. Nurses' feedback on what they think should always happen in practice has also been gathered.

Action Area 3:

Delivering high quality care and measuring impact

(Builds on evidence that organisations with a high reporting culture can be safer and deliver higher quality care consistently; it promotes the use of measurement and openness to understand/improve care.)



- Implemented the *Open and Honest Care: Driving Improvement* programme. It supports trusts to become more transparent and measurement-focused by publishing harm and experience information on their website. This is then used to improve the quality of care. Metrics and information used have been agreed upon by stakeholders and include pressure ulcers, healthcare-associated infections, falls and staff experience, amongst others.

Action Area 4:

Building and strengthening leadership

(Promotes effective frontline leadership and supports leaders with guidance and toolkits to measure culture in health and social care environments. It identifies the culture, environment and conditions required for reflective compassionate leadership to develop and flourish while recognising the impact of staff experience on care.)

- A *Care Cultural Barometer* is being developed and piloted to provide organisations with a tool to measure the culture of care in different parts of an organisation. This will help create right conversations between staff and managers to improve the staff's working environment and make it conducive for delivering compassionate, patient-centred care.

Action Area 5:

Ensuring the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place

(Provides guidance to ensure right staffing levels are in place across a range of care settings as well as tools and evidence to support decision-making in relation to safe and effective staffing. It also supports the development and implementation of workforce planning tools.)

- Some of the tools and guidance developed to create the right staff mix include: *Mental Health Inpatient Staffing Framework* and *How to Ensure the Right People, with the Right Skills, are in the Right Place at the Right Time – A Guide to Nursing, Midwifery and Care Staffing Capacity and Capability*.

Action Area 6:

Supporting positive staff experience

(Evidence has shown a strong link between staff experience and patients' quality outcomes. This area supports a positive staff experience by recognising excellence and best practice and showcasing examples of how trusts are engaging with their nursing workforce. It looks at improving the public/professional perception of nursing and showcases best practices in delivering compassionate care.)

- Supports nursing staff to raise concerns/speak up and makes sure staff understand the need under the 'duty of candour' to report/deal with concerns. Guidance called *What Makes a Good Placement* has been developed based on best practices in clinical placements, preceptorship and supervision. It has been found that promoting excellent nursing practice and a positive working culture among existing staff leads to providing high quality and enriching placement experience for student nurses.

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