Outstanding Care,
Compassionate People,
Healthier Communities

NHS
Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

People Strategy 2025/29

Empowering and supporting our people to be the best they can be.

Improving ways of working and delivering care

Growing for the future

Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS

Looking after our People

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Welcome

Following successful delivery of our previous strategy, we have developed our People Strategy for 2025-2029 and supporting action plans for 2025/26. Our People Strategy embraces all our people including medical staff, nursing, allied health professionals, administrative and clerical, recognising the importance of each individual's contribution to delivering outstanding care to our patients. Our People are Important!!

This document will set the vision for the next 4 years and outline the ways we will empower and support our people to be the best they can be. Our People Strategy supports the Trust's vision of providing outstanding care delivered by compassionate people to promote healthier communities. It was built in line with the NHS People Plan and is underpinned by our Trust's CARE values.

We sometimes get asked what is meant by the term 'our people'. Put simply, this means all our colleagues at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

During Spring/Summer 2024 we engaged Trust-wide to gain feedback around what is important to our people. Your feedback has been collated into this strategy; designed by our people, for our people. Despite an ever-changing NHS landscape and increased demand for our services we are proud to say that 71% of our colleagues voted Sherwood as a great place to work.

Our people told us that feeling a sense of belonging in the NHS is still important, but you are also proud to work at Sherwood and feel a sense of belonging to our organisation.

Our people also told us that improving existing services and processes is equally as important as 'New ways of working'.

Small things can make a big impact on the efficient running of services. We have therefore reshaped our delivery pillars based on your feedback:

- Looking after our people
- Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS
- Growing for the future
- Improving ways of working and delivering care

I am confident that the People Directorate will continue to support divisions to provide high quality, safe care for patients and ensure Sherwood is a great place to work and belong. We know happy people provide better care. The People Directorate is made up of over 150 members of staff that provide our people with support across a wide range of services. Our services range from Recruitment, Rostering, Training & Development, through to Operational HR, Occupational Health, Wellbeing, plus many more. You can find a full list of teams on the Human Resources (People Directorate) intranet. If you are looking for support from the People Directorate, you can find contact details for each of our teams on the final page of this document.

I would like to thank you everyone Trust wide who has provided feedback and supported the development of our People Strategy and look forward to reporting back with progress updates along the way.

Rob

Rob Simcox
Director of People

Our key achievements 2022-2025

Violence prevention and sexual safety

The 'Expect Respect, Not Abuse' campaign was launched as part of several actions being made by the Trust's internal Violence and Aggression Working Group. This group was established to address growing concerns about staff safety, develop strategies and reduce workplace violence.

Growing for the future

For existing colleagues, we launched the Leadership Development Programme to support existing and aspiring leaders. As well as this, the trust appraisal process was improved to encourage engaging conversations and improve ease of use.

Occupational Health and wellbeing

The Occupational Health Team have conducted 33,458 staff appointments over 100 wellbeing sessions and over 5,000 staff members have received their flu jab.

Step into the NHS

We recently introduced 'Step into the NHS' events in partnership with West Notts Collage and Nottinghamshire Trent University. These events showcase the wide range of roles available across our sites.

Our key achievements 2022-2025

Re-launching the CARE values

In October 2023 we refreshed our CARE values to show our ongoing commitment to empower our people, to support one another and to deliver outstanding care to our patients.

Launch of the Armed Forces Network

Launching the network was a notable achievement showcasing our commitment to inclusivity, support, and community building. The network has enriched our workplace culture, bringing a unique set of skills, experiences, and perspectives into the fold.

Re-launching the staff networks

After listening to our members, Staff Networks were relaunched with more flexible and accessible structure. Bi-monthly safe space meetings where introduced, providing a secure environment for colleagues with lived experience to share concerns and receive peer support.

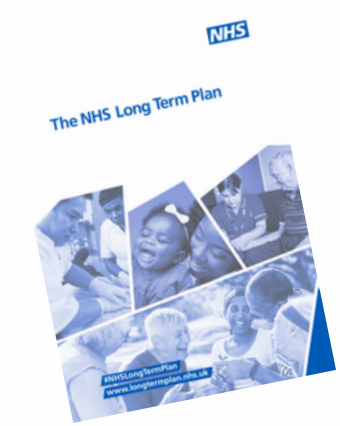
Making flexible working more accessible

From 01 October 2024 we have asked colleagues to submit new flexible working requests through ESR. Support was provided through training videos and the Trust is able to track requests and produce detailed reports.

National and local context

National

The People Promise
This is a promise we must all make to each other – to work together to improve the experience of working in the NHS for everyone.



NHS Long Term Workforce Plan
The first comprehensive workforce plan for the NHS, putting staffing on a sustainable footing and improving patient care. It focuses on retaining existing talent and making the best use of new technology alongside the biggest recruitment drive in health service history.

System and Partners

Sherwood Forest Hospitals has a long history of working in partnership for the benefit of our communities. These include:

- Integrated Care System
- Vision West Nottinghamshire College
- Allocate
- Vivup
- NHS Employers, Department for Work & Pensions.

Our Strategies

Improving Lives - Our Trust Strategy 2024-2029

The People Strategy

Finance Strategy

Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals Strategy

Green plan 2021 - 2026

Digital Strategy

Estates Strategy

Clinical Services Strategy

Scan the QR code for the full Trust Strategy

C Communicating and working together

A Aspiring and improving

R Respectful, inclusive and caring

E Effective and safe

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is at the core of what we do here at Sherwood Forest Hospitals and is a golden thread within the Trust's People Strategy.

Diversity is a fact at our organisation. Our people are from different: ages, cultures, religions, abilities, races, genders, and sexualities. This is something that we are exceptionally proud of. With this comes a responsibility to embed Equality and Inclusion into everything that we do, ensuring we achieve a true sense of belonging for all our people.

We also have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent discrimination and take steps to protect our people from unlawful discrimination based on nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Sherwood strives to be a place where people can bring their whole selves to work. A place where people are seen, accepted, respected, and celebrated for who they are.

Consequently, we will know that our people will feel supported, safe, and happy at Sherwood, enabling us to retain and develop motivated colleagues and teams, dedicated to delivering excellent patient care.

To ensure a culture of belonging, the People Directorate are committed to delivering on the nationally mandated EDI requirements for NHS organisations. This includes embedding the 6 High Impact Actions included in the NHS EDI Improvement Plan, submitting our annual Workforce Race Equality Standard Report, Workforce Disability Equality Standard Report, and our Gender Pay Gap Report. These reports are essential in enabling us take appropriate and impactful actions, which will ensure equity of opportunity and experience for all our people.

As a People Directorate we are dedicated to embedding equity throughout the entirety of the employment journey; from promoting inclusive recruitment and onboarding processes, to ensuring equity of opportunity to develop our talented people.

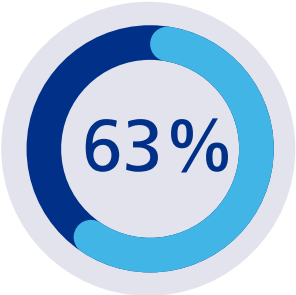
Our people come from around the world. Our One World, One Team SFH Global Flag Wall, now contains well over 100 flags, all representing the countries of birth of our people. The People Directorate are committed to supporting internationally recruited colleagues throughout their career journey here at Sherwood.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Continued...

Through our EDI training programme, offering various learning opportunities for all, we seek to empower our people and leaders to embed a culture of belonging, bringing essential cultural awareness to all.

Recognition of key EDI events throughout the year, including the annual REACH OUT! event, International Women's Day, PRIDE, Carers Weeks, Disability History Month, and NHS Overseas Workers Day, provides an opportunity for us to celebrate diversity in all its forms, raise awareness, and encourage conversations about EDI.

Our 7 Staff Networks underpin EDI at Sherwood. Our networks curate safe spaces for people to come and share their lived experiences, gaining peer-to-peer support from colleagues with similar lived experience. Our networks are dedicated space to hear and elevate the voices of our people. Through our Staff Networks we can better understand and respond to our people's needs.



The engagement rate among Trust colleagues remains above the national average response rate of 49%.

The majority of staff (79%) agree that care of patients remains the organisation's top priority.

74% of colleagues would feel secure raising concerns about unsafe clinical practice.

The majority of colleagues (63%) agreed that the organisation would act on concerns raised.

Staff Stories

We work with our people around the Trust to develop 'Staff Story' videos three times per year. The purpose of this is to seek open and honest feedback from our people around their working lives here at Sherwood Forest Hospitals.

You can find our latest Staff Story videos on the Sherwood Forest Hospitals YouTube channel: link here

Below are a select few quotes from our most recent 'Staff Story' videos.

> I'm really excited to be completing my apprenticeship soon and using that as a way of developing my career.

> I enjoy working at Sherwood because there's been a great sense of community here. You also get the support you need, when you need it.

> As Chair of the Ethnic Minority Staff Network I feel empowered and supported by the Trust, that gives me a sense of inclusion and belonging.

> Studying for my A-levels and degree gave me flexibility to work and learn about the NHS. After graduating, I joined the Information Team progressing from Information Officer to my current role. Now, I manage a small team, helping them grow.

Feedback from our partners

"We work together in partnership to ensure the Trust Care Values are supported and embedded in everything we do as staff side leads. Through partnership working we endeavour to assure that everyone within the Trust is treated fairly with respect, inclusivity, and dignity. We're constantly reviewing the Care Values and Trust strategies of today to make them relevant for the workforces and patients of tomorrow."
Roz Norman, Staff Side Lead (Chair).

"The Trust is a valued Integrated Care System partner, supporting the development and delivery of a People and Workforce strategy in the system space. Alignment of our People Plans in the future supports the full delivery of our systems ambitions maximising on our role not only as employers, but also as partners and anchor institutions."
Rosa Waddingham, Chief Nurse, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB.

"We are a proud partner with SFHFT, helping nurses secure careers and supporting T Level learners in applying their skills safely in the hospital. The hospitals support in planning and delivering specialist courses has been invaluable. Our interns have thrived, with some securing permanent roles. This partnership continues to grow, offering A Level students work placements and creating real projects for our creative students as we shape the future workforce together."
Andrew Cropley, Principle and Chief Executive West Notts College.

"Our partnership with Sherwood has been a great example of how collaboration can create real, positive change. By working together, we've been able to develop tailored support up unpaid carers, recognising their unique needs and offering solutions that benefit both the Trust and it's employees. Through our partnership, we've not only improved the wellbeing and work life balance of carers but also empowered them to be more present and productive at work. The Trusts approach has allowed them to realise the true potential of their employees, offering flexible solutions, understanding, and resources that promote long-term retention and satisfaction."
Jayne Davies, Employer Engagement Lead, Nottingham Carers Association.

Our strategic delivery pillars

Looking after our people

Our vision - What does this mean in practice?

- Our people are healthy and psychologically safe, allowing them to deliver safe, high-quality care.

Our priorities - How will we deliver this?

- We will follow a person-centred approach, supporting our people based on their individual needs. We acknowledge there is an overlap professionally and personally and will support our people's wellbeing at all times but particularly at times of change. We will provide the practical and emotional support our people need to do their jobs.

Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS

Our vision - What does this mean in practice?

- We have a culture of kindness, civility and respect within the organisation, where our EDI, CARE values and People Promise are at the heart of everything we do.

Our priorities - How will we deliver this?

- We will create an inclusive culture and take action to reduce our people's experience of violence, bullying and discrimination. We will encourage our people to have a voice through Freedom to Speak Up, Staff Networks, National Staff Survey plus Quarterly Pulse Surveys. We will recognise and reward our people through key celebration events.

We will provide governance on the above two pillars through our People Wellbeing and Belonging Sub-Cabinet.

Our strategic delivery pillars

Growing for the future

Our vision - What does this mean in practice?

- We are the employer of choice in the local area, with recruitment, development and promotion practices that are inclusive, fair and equitable. We attract and retain talent.

Our priorities - How will we deliver this?

- We will support our leaders to provide meaningful appraisals, manage talent and develop succession plans. We will enhance our training, apprenticeship and work experience offer. Our Step into the NHS programme and partnerships with local educational providers will be key to growing our future workforce.

Improving ways of working and delivering care

Our vision - What does this mean in practice?

- We are leaders in transformation, innovation and partnership working within the Sherwood and the Nottinghamshire system.

Our priorities - How will we deliver this?

- We will work more digitally and efficiently by simplifying people processes, where possible removing duplications, leading to improved productivity. We will utilise people information to create workforce plans that support services to fill roles with the right people at the right time.

We will provide governance on the above two pillars through our People Resourcing, Development & Transformation Sub-Cabinet.

Summary of people priorities

Looking after our people

- People health – We will support you to be healthy and well at work.
- People safety – We will create an environment which will keep you safe at work.
- People wellbeing - We will help you and your teams to meet wellbeing needs.
- Mental health – We will help you to access emotional support whilst at work.

Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS

- Compassionate culture - We will build a compassionate culture where the CARE values are at the heart of everything we do.
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion - We will support you and your teams to value diversity, creating a culture of inclusion.
- Celebration and recognition – We will celebrate and thank you for the work that you do.
- People practices – We will ensure our people practices are implemented in a fair and equitable way.

Growing for the future

- Talent management – We will support you to understand your potential career pathways and development opportunities.
- People development – We will develop and implement innovative training & development opportunities, to empower you to be the best you can be.
- Developing our leaders – We will develop our leaders to live the CARE values and practice compassionate leadership.
- Securing our future workforce – We will become the local employer of choice through community engagement innovative recruitment and retention.

Improving ways of working and delivering care

- Planning our future workforce – We will support you and your teams to develop workforce plans for the future.
- People improvement – We will support you and your service on your improvement journey.
- People systems – We will support you to fully utilise digital systems and data to inform decision making and deliver outstanding care.
- Transformation to Artificial Intelligence – We will support the transition from manual people processes to automated people systems driven by analytics and insights.

People priorities

Our 2026/27 action plan:

People health

- Embed NHS Employers Sickness Absence Toolkit guidance into local people management practice (training, early support, consistent recording).
- Expand the physiotherapy and musculoskeletal support service to explore virtual consultations and implement self-management tools, targeting early intervention and prevention of workplace injuries

People safety

- Introduce a clear, consistently applied post-incident response and support pathway for staff who experience violence, aggression and sexual misconduct in their role.
- Implement an "Active Bystander" training programme for all staff, empowering colleagues to safely intervene and report inappropriate or harmful behaviours, supporting a culture of civility and respect.

People wellbeing

- To grow the wellbeing champion network, training staff volunteers to signpost colleagues to support services and foster a supportive environment.
- Introduce a digital wellbeing hub, offering on-demand resources, self-assessment tools, and access to live webinars on topics such as sleep, stress management, and financial wellbeing.

Mental health

- Develop resources and training to equip line managers and supervisors with the skills and confidence to recognise emotional distress, have supportive conversations, and signpost staff to appropriate help.
- Use workforce analytics to identify high-stress areas and implement targeted wellbeing interventions, including stress risk assessments and resilience workshops.

Looking after our People

People priorities

Our 2026/27 action plan:

Compassionate culture

- Develop and launch a self-service Team Charter toolkit that enables leaders to deliver OD interventions which embed and sustain a compassionate culture.
- To strengthen the Trust's approach to the National Staff Survey by embedding timely, transparent and inclusive action planning at Trust, divisional and team levels, ensuring staff feedback directly informs measurable improvements.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- Deliver the 'No Hate Here' action plan to foster a culture of respect and inclusion across the Trust.
- Promote and maintain inclusive working practices, with leaders accountable for ensuring equitable access to person centred operational application of EDI and operational People Policies to foster a culture of belonging across the Trust.

Celebration and recognition

- Develop, implement and launch a self-service Team Charter toolkit that equips leaders to deliver practical OD interventions within their teams.
- Design and implement a single, integrated Trust-wide celebration and recognition event that brings together milestone awards, DAISY Awards, TULIP Awards and other recognition schemes into one inclusive celebration.

People practices

- Embed Wellbeing Support in All People Processes
- Ensure the Trust's people policies, employment contracts, HR processes and manager capability are fully updated and compliant with the new Employment Rights Act provisions as they come into force (from 2026), embedding legal changes into everyday people practice and employer obligations.

Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS

People priorities
Our 2026/27 action plan:

Talent management

- Embed consistent, high-quality talent conversations across the Trust to empower leaders to develop, retain, and progress our people.
- Refresh the Trust appraisal approach to ensure appraisals are meaningful, consistent, and focused on development, wellbeing, and future potential.

People development

- Design and implement a Trust-wide approach to continuous learning that prioritises the development of critical skills, leadership capability, and values-based behaviours.
- Co-design and continually improve learning and development opportunities to ensure they are inclusive, flexible, and accessible for all staff groups.

Developing our leaders

- Embed and continuously improve the Trust's leadership development offer, ensuring existing leaders complete the Established Leaders Programme as an essential requirement of their role to strengthen compassionate leadership behaviours, culture and organisational performance.
- Develop and implement Trust-wide resources and processes to support regular, high-quality one-to-one conversations between leaders and colleagues, strengthening wellbeing, performance, development and staff engagement.

Securing our future workforce

- To expand and strengthen the Trust's work experience and apprenticeship offer, embedding widening participation to deliver high-quality, inclusive and well-coordinated opportunities across clinical and non-clinical roles.
- To secure and grow the Trust's future workforce by strengthening strategic partnerships with education stakeholders across the Midlands.

Growing for the *future*

People priorities
Our 2026/27 action plan:

Planning our future workforce

- Empower clinical and non-clinical leaders to implement divisional workforce plans derived from 5-year workforce models, enabling services to right size their workforce and deliver safe, productive and affordable care.
- Operationalise and adapt development related workforce plans to support phased implementation, go-live and post-implementation optimisation (i.e. EPR)

People improvement

- Design and implement transformed workforce models that improve productivity, address recruitment challenges and support sustainable delivery of care.
- Embed workforce planning capability into business-as-usual processes to enable managers to lead service transformation and deliver sustainable productivity improvements.

People systems

- Align ESR with a focus for the implementation of the new ESR platform, ensuring operational readiness
- Embed workforce performance and planning intelligence into decision-making to proactively plan the future workforce, drive productivity, quality and improvement.

Transformation to Artificial Intelligence

- Explore and draft a proposal for the use of an AI-enabled chatbot or similar digital assistant to support staff access to people services, improving efficiency, consistency and staff experience.
- Implement automated people reporting and analytics into routine Trust and divisional governance to strengthen a data-driven culture and support workforce planning, productivity improvement and transformation.

Improving ways of working and delivering care

Success Measures

This is how we will measure our success:

Looking after our people

- 0.5% reduction in sickness absence by quarter 4 2026/27.
- We are safe and healthy NSS 2026 measure score will increase to 6.01by 4 2026/2027.
- A 5% reduction in reported workplace musculoskeletal injuries.
- NSS 2026 measure regarding staff engagement to increase to 6.9 by quarter 4.

Belonging in Sherwood and the NHS

- NSS 2026 measure regarding staff morale increase to 6.0 by quarter 4 2026/2027.
- Turnover equivalent to IPR standard on a quarterly basis throughout 2026/27.
- NSS 2026 measure regarding 'we are recognised and rewarded' to increase to 5.9 by quarter 4 2026/2027.
- NSS 2026 measure regarding 'we are compassionate and inclusive' to increase to 7.5 by quarter 4 2026/27.

Growing for the future

- Improvement in leadership and values-based behaviour metrics within the NSS 2026/27 (e.g. compassionate leadership, learning and development).
- Appraisals equivalent to IPR standard on a quarterly basis throughout 2026/27.
- A 10% increase in work experience placements and apprenticeships in 2026/27.
- Achieve and sustain a staff recommendation rate ('Would you recommend SFH as a place to work?') of at least 75% by Q4 2026/27, as measured by the NSS.

Improving ways of working and delivering care

- Vacancies at equivalent to IPR standard on a quarterly basis throughout 2026/27.
- Reduced agency and bank usage equivalent to IPR standard on a quarterly basis throughout 2026/27.
- Workforce Whole Time Equivalents tracked against plan for 2026/27
- Increase in ESR Assessment Score attributable to readiness for the new ESR solution.

Glossary

AI – This stands for Artificial Intelligence. Artificial intelligence is a field of science concerned with building computers and machines that can reason, learn, and act in such a way that would normally require human intelligence or that involves data whose scale exceeds what humans can analyse.

BAME – The acronym BAME refers to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups; it is commonly used in the NHS to refer to all ethnic groups except White British. Minority Ethnic groups include White minorities such as Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller groups. In our efforts to ensure equity of opportunity and experience at Sherwood, data from BAME groups can be compared to White British groups enabling us to identify where we have differences which our action plans seek to change.

EDI – This stands for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion can be defined as ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of an individual's protected characteristics. There are 9 protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010 which include: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

EPR - Electronic Patient Record Also known as EPR. This is a system where all your medical information can be viewed and accessed. Information included includes your medical history including results of investigations and medications. Having information in one place allows clinicians to use / see everything related to your care in real time which can speed up decision making and improving the quality-of-care patients receive.

ESR – The NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR) provides an integrated HR and payroll solution for NHS organisations. We use ESR to record your personal details, maintain your employment record, update your training record, and it is also the system we use to pay you.

Equity - Equity is different to Equality. Equality is where all people are treated the same regardless of any differences which may create disadvantages for some people. Equity is where we take a person-centred approach and make reasonable changes or adjustments to resources or opportunities to minimise the potential of any disadvantage.

Glossary

People Directorate – The People Directorate incorporates all services managed under the portfolio of the Director of People at Sherwood Forest Hospitals, traditionally known as Human Resources.
People Information – The services managed under the portfolio of the Associate Director of People (Transformation) at Sherwood Forest Hospitals, formerly known as Workforce Information. The People Information team manage the Trust's ESR system.

NSS - Each autumn NHS staff in England are invited to take part in the NHS Staff Survey. The survey offers a snapshot in time of how people experience their working lives, gathered at the same time each year. Its strength is in capturing a national picture alongside local detail, enabling a range of organisations to understand what it is like for staff across different parts of the NHS and work to make improvements. At Sherwood, there will be collective ownerships of the results and associated actions.

Strategic People Plan –
Talent management – Talent management means implementing processes to attract, identify, develop, engage and retain individuals that are valuable to an organisation. At Sherwood Forest Hospitals we have our own talent management approach which launched in 2024 and can be found on the staff intranet.

Workforce plans / Workforce planning – sometimes also referred to as workforce models.

WDES/WRES – This stands for Workforce Disability Equality Standard/Workforce Race Equality Standard. NHS England requires all NHS organisations to measure, demonstrate and publish their annual race and disability equality improvements for each of the WDES/WRES indicators.

Contact the people directorate

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know.

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People Operations
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People Information
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Rostering Services
sfh-tr.healthrostteam@nhs.net

Recruitment
sfh-tr.recruitmentqueries@nhs.net

Training Information (OLM)
sfh-tr.trainingattendants@nhs.net

Temporary Staffing
sfh-tr.temporary.staffingoffice@nhs.net

Wellbeing
sfh-tr.wellbeing@nhs.net

Work Experience
sfh-tr.sfhworkexperience@nhs.net

Other useful links:

Contact the Trust
Trust Website
Trust Facebook
Sherwood Forest Hospitals Careers Facebook

Follow us on X (Twitter) @SFH_PeopleHR