

Board of Directors

Item 3.3

Subject: People Strategy Update
Date of Meeting: 29th April 2025
Prepared by: Rachael McDonald, Deputy Chief People Officer
Presented by: Jane Royds, Chief People Officer
Purpose of report: For Assurance

BAF Ref	Impact on BAF
BAF 4	To provide assurance on progress against the actions within the People strategy as reflected in the BAF risks.

Level of Assurance (please tick) To be used to provide the Board / Committee with a guide on the extent of assurance and evidence of assurance provided within the report		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Level of Assurance	Description	
High	There is a strong system of internal control which has been effectively designed to meet the system objectives, and that controls are consistently applied in all areas reviewed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substantial	There is a good system of internal control designed to meet the system objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Moderate	There is an adequate system of internal control, however, in some areas weakness in design and/or inconsistent application of controls puts the achievement and some aspects of the system objectives at risk.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limited	There is a compromised system of internal control as weaknesses in the design and / or inconsistent application of controls puts the achievement of the system objectives at risk.	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	There is an inadequate system of internal control as weaknesses in control, and/or consistent non-compliance with controls could/has resulted in failure to achieve the system objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Executive Summary

This paper provides an assurance update on the delivery of the LHCH People Strategy as we progress through Year 3 of implementation and Q4 2025. The last update in November 2024 offered a high-level summary of progress up to Q2/3 2024.

The four pillars underpinning the People Strategy are: -

- Recruitment & Retention
- Learning & Development
- Culture & Wellbeing
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging (EDIB)

To support delivery, we have operational action plans in place for core initiatives, including the EDIB (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging) and Culture & Wellbeing Strategy. Additionally, the Retention Plan focuses on mitigating staff turnover and enhancing workforce stability.

Progress and assurance updates are provided to the People Committee on a quarterly basis. The Board is asked to note the content of this report and the actions being taken.

The RAG-rated Action Plan is attached as **Appendix 1**

1. Key Updates and Progress

Delivery of the LHCH People Strategy has demonstrated significant progress over the last 12 months, with specific emphasis on wellbeing, belonging and retention.

1.1 Impact & Assurance

We are pleased to report continued and sustained progress in delivering our People Strategy, which is evidenced through: -

➤ *Workforce Stability and Retention*

The Trust has achieved a marked reduction in voluntary turnover, reflecting the impact of targeted retention initiatives and our focus on supporting staff wellbeing, career progression, and engagement. This improvement is a strong indicator of increasing workforce stability and staff satisfaction.

➤ *Outstanding Staff Survey Results*

This year's NHS Staff Survey results provide further assurance of our progress. LHCH has been rated the best in the country across all People Promise themes when benchmarked against specialist trusts. We are also pleased to have received the highest overall ratings for being a great place to work and to receive treatment, demonstrating our commitment to creating a compassionate and high-quality working environment.

In recognition of our progress, NHS England formally acknowledged our exceptional staff survey results, as outlined in **Appendix 2**.

➤ *WRES Progress*

Significant progress has also been made against the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) indicators. Improvements have been recorded across all four key indicators, with notable reductions in reported bullying and harassment. Furthermore, we have seen a narrowing of the gap in access to development and training opportunities for our ethnically diverse workforce, signalling the positive impact of L&D and EDIB strategy.

➤ *WDES Improvement*

We are equally encouraged by the progress made in our Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) outcomes. There has been a measurable improvement in the experience of our disabled workforce, with gaps closing in key areas related to staff engagement, workplace experience, and perceptions of fair treatment. This reflects our commitment to ensuring that our workplace is inclusive, supportive, and accessible to all.

The improvements noted across staff experience, equality metrics, and workforce retention offer strong assurance of the effective implementation and impact of our People Strategy. We remain committed to sustaining this momentum, continuing to listen and learn to ensure our Trust remains an exemplar employer and a leading place for care.

1.2 Progress Update

Since the November update, the senior leadership team has made good progress on key deliverables. Notable developments include:

- A Trust-wide Anti Racism campaign was launched to raise awareness, challenge discrimination, and promote a culture of anti-racism. This work reinforces our commitment to equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- In partnership with Broadgreen, we delivered a successful Live Well Work Well Event in January 2025. The event offered health MOTs, including blood pressure, cholesterol, and liver function checks, supporting early detection and proactive self-care.
- A comprehensive review of our corporate induction has been completed, focused on improving the new starter experience. The refreshed offer, launching in April 2025 will support stronger integration, engagement, and retention from day one.
- A new digital platform has been introduced to expand access to mentoring and coaching across the Trust. Early feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with staff valuing the flexibility and support for personal and professional growth.
- We have progressed the development of a simulation-based education programme to enhance experiential learning. This initiative supports skill development, teamworking, and patient safety through immersive, real-world training environments.
- We have taken Schwartz Rounds into departments to increase accessibility and participation. These in-situ reflective sessions provide valuable space for staff to connect, share experiences, and build emotional resilience within teams.
- We have started to implement RPA technology to streamline tasks, increase efficiency, and release capacity for staff

2. Strategic Planning and Engagement

During the Senior Team's Review Day in June 2024, we mapped out delivery in Year 3, with key actions socialised at the HR & L&D Team's Development Day in July. These collaborative planning sessions have ensured that the wider team remains engaged and aligned with our strategy, fully understanding the roles they have in reaching achievement.

As we are into the third year of delivery, the number of active actions has decreased, reflecting the natural transition towards completion. The reduction is a positive indicator of progress but also emphasises the need for focus as we complete the remaining critical actions.

The staff survey results will serve as a critical indicator to measure the impact of the People Strategy and identify any emerging gaps.

3. Next Steps – Future Focus

While we continue to make progress, it is crucial to begin to plan. The current People Strategy, although still relevant, will require a refresh to remain aligned with both the internal and external landscape, including national directives such as the NHS Long Term Plan and local system priorities. The senior team will discuss the strategic direction during our next development day in May/June 2025.

We must also acknowledge the growing system pressures and pay controls that could impact on the delivery of the People Strategy, with effects on recruitment, retention, training, and morale. We will need to monitor these financial risks closely and explore innovative solutions within these limitations. Ongoing engagement with employees and transparent communication will be key to mitigating these risks.

Key considerations for the future approach include:

➤ *Relevance of Existing Pillars*

The current pillars of the People Strategy remain applicable, but there is a need for continuous improvement and development. These pillars should evolve to reflect changes in the NHS landscape and through data insights.

➤ *Refresh vs. New Strategy*

Given the success of the current strategy, we anticipate that a full replacement is not necessary. Instead, we propose a strategic refresh that builds upon our existing work, integrating new priorities and addressing any areas of development highlighted through evaluation. The shift to a group model across Liverpool will certainly help to leverage opportunities for enhanced collaboration and growth across the group.

4. Recommendations

The Board of Directors is asked to note the content of this report.