

NATIONAL SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP FORUM (SPF) FACTSHEET



The National SPF brings together system leaders from NHS England, Health Education England, NHS Improvement, Department of Health and Social Care, NHS Employers and NHS trade unions. The forum enables partners to discuss and debate the development and implementation of policy where there are workforce implications; supporting a co-ordinated approach to service transformation, service delivery and a healthy NHS culture and good staff experience. We also promote the benefits of partnership working between employers and trade unions across the health sector.

Why work in partnership?

The NHS Constitution requires the NHS to commit to 'engage staff in decisions that affect them and the services they provide, individually, through representative organisations and through local partnership working arrangements.' The SPF recognises what a powerful tool partnership working between employers, policy makers and trade unions can be, and how it makes a real difference to patient care and influences employment practice in healthcare and beyond.

"Through the SPF, we are able to hear about policy that impacts on the health workforce and influence its development and implementation so that it delivers maximum benefits for patients. Being a member of the SPF gives NHS Employers an opportunity to build on our strong and constructive relationships with partners in the NHS trade unions and to work together to address issues and concerns. Partnership working also helps us to deliver products and services that better meet the needs of the NHS."

Danny Mortimer, employer chair of the SPF and chief executive, NHS Employers.

How we do partnership

In July 2016, the **SPF partnership agreement** was signed by all partner organisations. The agreement describes the aims of the SPF, partners' shared values and principles for effective joint working.

The **how we do partnership** hub on the SPF website contains tools and resources to support partnership working and details of the growing body of **academic evidence** on the benefits and importance of true partnership working.

"The basis of social partnership is our shared aim to support the NHS workforce to deliver high quality health care services for everyone. Partnership working between employers and trade unions provides a vehicle for genuine engagement whereby staff are consulted and involved in the decisions that affect them, and where they can work with the employer to address issues of concern and agree joint solutions."

Sara Gorton, staff side chair of the SPF and head of health, UNISON.

In 2015, an independent review of the SPF concluded that it **'remains one of the most advanced forms of industrial partnership in the British public sector in terms of the quality of the dialogue, the range of issues covered, and its impact on workforce policy.'**

See our website and sign up to our bulletin at:
www.socialpartnershipforum.org



What we do

Guidance for social partnership working in developing and implementing new care models and system transformation.

Published in September 2016 and available in the supporting system change web page in the 'priority area' section on the SPF website, this guidance aims to support the development of partnership arrangements at cross organisational/new care models and regional level to facilitate effective system change.

Creating positive cultures and tackling bullying in the NHS: a collective call to action

The call to action, signed by Minister and SPF co-chairs in December 2016, recommends a partnership approach in NHS organisations to tackle bullying. The call to action web page on the SPF website, features case studies and useful tools and resources to create positive workplace cultures and tackle bullying. The Care Quality Commission supports the call to action and they are taking into consideration, measures trusts are taking to build healthy workplace cultures and tackle bullying, in their inspections into whether organisations are well led.

HPMA partnership award

The SPF sponsors the Healthcare People Management Association (HPMA) award for partnership working between employers and trade unions, to identify good practice and share learning. A collection of case studies, podcasts and a video on previous winners and finalists are available via the HPMA partnership award web pages on the SPF website.

SPF Staff Transfer Guide

The online toolkit, developed in partnership is available in the priority areas section of the SPF website. It is an easy to use, practical guide to an individual's employment standards and rights, when they transfer to another provider of NHS funded services.

Staff engagement guidance

Developed by the SPF as part of the Government's response to the Mid Staffordshire NHS FT public enquiry, the guidance is available under the priority areas section of the SPF website.

SPF Learning for Life campaign

Many of the resources developed for the campaign, which promoted learning and development for NHS staff, are available via the Learning for Life web page in the 'priority areas' section of our website.

Partnership case studies

Case studies showing the positive outcomes that can be achieved through employers and trade unions working in partnership are available on the case studies web page on the SPF website.

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