

STAFF INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Version 1.0

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Author(s)	Kate Mclachlan, Deputy Director of Human Resources
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STAFF INVOLVEMENT POLICY

“Staff involvement is about involving staff in all decisions that affect their working lives and the healthcare that they deliver”

1. Introduction

- The Trust recognises the vital role of staff involvement in ensuring that staff feel valued and motivated to deliver a high standard of patient care. It is about effective partnership working, good communication and real teamwork.
- This requires a leadership style, which promotes and values staff involvement. Ensuring staff are involved in all decisions that affect them should be the normal way of working for staff and managers
- This policy sets out the Trusts approach to staff involvement building on the best of our practices, linked to the objectives in the National HR Strategy ‘Working Together’ and the report of the NHS Taskforce on Staff Involvement.

2. Purpose

- The purpose of having this policy is to try and ensure that all staff have an opportunity to be involved in decisions that affect them by putting in place processes and procedures to develop a consistent approach to involving staff.

3. Policy Statement

- East London and the City Mental Health Trust is committed to ensuring the involvement of all staff in planning and delivering all aspects of healthcare. The Trust wishes to access the wealth of knowledge and experience of staff to:-
 - help inform decision making
 - enable staff at all levels to be involved in decisions which affect them
 - allow them to contribute to the success of the Trust
- Staff Involvement will work towards improving the quality of working life and work life balance in line with the Improving Working Lives initiative
- A commitment to staff involvement will also ensure that the Trust continues to develop relationships with Trade Unions and Staff Associations and strive for excellent staff relations.
- The Trust recognises that staff involvement is as much about culture and attitudes as it is about process, and that it takes time to achieve cultural change.
- This policy is part of the Trusts wider strategy for the greater involvement of the public, service users, carers and stakeholders in healthcare planning and delivery.

4. Standards

- In line with the Trust's values and principals our approach will be based on the seven standards set out in the National Health Service Executives (NHSE) Taskforce self assessment tool against which the Trust must measure its performance: -
 - Leaders (including clinical leaders, union leaders, etc.) are committed to and demonstrate an involving culture;
 - People at all levels across the organisation understand and have the opportunity to influence its overall vision and goals;
 - There are communication processes up, down and across the organisation, which everyone understands clearly and can assess readily;
 - There is a culture of openness in which staff feel free to contribute ideas and voice concerns without fear and victimisation;
 - Responsibility is devolved to individuals and teams who can influence decisions about their work and working lives;
 - Staff and Trade unions are effectively encouraged at the earliest possible stage in influencing decisions and in joint information sharing, learning and problem solving with management;
 - All staff feel valued and are involved and supported in developing their knowledge, skills and potential.

5. Key Principles

- ELCMHT will invest in developing leadership and teamworking skills across the Trust which will support more development of open, participative working styles and greater empowerment of teams
- ELCMHT will foster good working relationships with staff and trade unions.
- ELCMHT will work to continually improve communication systems and to provide a culture of openness within the Trust.
- ELCMHT will regularly monitor and evaluate its progress in terms of partnership working and staff involvement, including reporting it to the Board.

6. Implementing Staff Involvement

The following sections set out in detail how ELCMHT is working towards delivering its commitment to staff involvement.

- Staff Involvement and Participation in Planning and Decision Making

ELCMHT is committed to ensuring the effective involvement of staff and their representatives in the planning and decisions making process of the Trust and that staff are involved in all plans for service change and development. These enable staff to contribute to specific topics where they have an interest or expertise. The following are some of the key mechanisms we have within the Trust: -

- Joint Staff Committee
- Clinical and Professional Advisory Groups
- Ad Hoc Project Groups
- Specialist Committees
- IWL Steering Group
- Health and Safety Committee

□ Joint Working between Managers and Trade Unions

ELCMHT has built, and continues to develop, a robust and effective relationship between managers and staff side, which ensures Trade Unions have an active role to play in the life of the organisation. This is underpinned by: -

- A Trust wide Joint Staff Committee structure
- A well established Recognition and Procedural Agreement Policy

□ Managers will ensure that staff at all levels are encouraged to become involved in strategic and operational issues and will create a climate of openness, inclusion, confidence and Trust.

□ The Board will ensure that staff, their representatives and all other Trust stakeholders are encouraged to become involved in identifying, developing and participating in staff involvement measures and processes to ensure ownership of outcomes, and recognise that staff need time away from their duties to become involved.

□ Trade Unions/Staff Organisations will encourage their members to participate as union members, and will encourage them to become union/staff representatives in order to demonstrate their commitment to involvement.

□ The Trust will seek to develop other initiatives to improve partnership working, including joint management/Trade Union training.

□ Staff Rights and Responsibilities

□ A Staff Charter was drawn up in September 2004 which reflects the Trust's aim for all staff to feel valued by being motivated, supported and given appropriate development in the work environment.

□ The staff rights and responsibilities stated in the charter are as follows: -

To have a safe, secure and healthy workplace with policies which actively promote our health and well-being and working practices

We all have a right to:

- an environment that is safe and healthy both physically and psychologically
- adequate resources to carry out our responsibilities
- zero toleration of harassment, bullying, discrimination and violence, whatever the source, and the support of the Trust if it happens
- confidential advice, support and occupational health services
- be treated with care and consideration for our welfare when unfit for work

We all have a responsibility to:

- make our work environment safe and healthy for ourselves and others
- update our skills and knowledge in order to be able to practice/work safely
- not harass, bully, discriminate against or behave violently towards others

To promote fairness, dignity, respect, courtesy and consideration for all members of staff, service users and their carers, and staff from the Trust's partner organisations

We all have a right to:

- receive appropriate remuneration and reward
- be able to question and challenge in a constructive and proactive way
- have our efforts and achievements recognised by the Trust and its representatives
- be treated fairly in negotiations over issues that affect our pay and conditions, and be encouraged to join a recognised trade union or staff association for that purpose
- be treated with fairness in discipline or dispute and have a right of appeal
- have equality of opportunity for employment and advancement

- support, supervision and feedback from colleagues and managers

We all have a responsibility to:

- treat colleagues with respect, regardless of grade or position within the Trust, respecting different views and opinions
- treat everyone we meet in the course of our work as we would wish to be treated ourselves: fairly, equally and with dignity
- recognise and respect diversity of people and promote an environment which values these differences
- care and provide a cost effective, high quality service for patients and their relatives
- have open, equal and two way communication which gives us the information and opportunity we need to have a say in the decisions which affect our working lives

To have open, equal and two way communication which gives us the information and opportunity we need to have a say in the decisions which affect our working lives

We all have a right to:

- be treated as individuals and have our needs and wishes taken into account in all decisions
- contribute ideas and voice concerns without fear of victimisation
- be creative, share ideas and try out new things
- be involved in influencing decisions that affect us and to be able to understand the reasons behind them
- representation at Board level
- an opportunity to give our opinions through the staff survey

We all have a responsibility to:

- put forward suggestions for improving the services we provide in a constructive and positive way
- abide by and work with decisions once they have been made in order to ensure the best possible care for patients and clients

- treat confidential and personal information about colleagues with the same respect given to patients and their relatives

To support and encourage learning to enable us to provide the best possible service to clients and patients and develop ourselves to the level that we want

We all have a right to:

- receive the training and development we need in order to do our job effectively
- receive regular feedback and constructive appraisal of our performance
- a personal development plan and support to help meet current and future job requirements and career development plans
- regular information on work and personal learning opportunities

We all have a responsibility to:

- undertake the training and development necessary to meet the requirements of our work
- work flexibly and adapt skills and attitudes to meet the Trust's needs as they change and develop

To recognise our need to have an appropriate balance between home and work life and to balance this with the Trust's responsibility to provide a high quality service to its clients and patients

We all have a right to:

- a workload that is realistic and targets that are achievable
- expect regular review and development of policies and practices to support flexible working

We all have a responsibility to:

- respect other's rights to balance home and work life and to co-operate with arrangements to put this into action

□ Open Management and Communications

- ELCMHT is committed to fostering a culture of openness and transparency in its management of staff and services and to ensuring that other than personal patient and staff information, which is confidential, all information is shared with

staff (and their representatives) likely to be affected by future decisions. This commitment is underpinned by: -

- Open Trust Board meetings held in public
 - A systematic team briefing process which ensures that information is cascaded throughout the organisation and feedback is encouraged
- ELCMHT will continue to develop genuine, regular and consistent two-way communication processes which may be spoken, written or electronic and may take place in a variety of ways including: -
- staff meetings
 - team briefings
 - newsletters
 - bulletin boards
 - working groups
 - roadshows
 - focus groups
 - encouraging ideas from staff – staff suggestion scheme
- The Trust will review its communication processes on an annual basis, in discussion with Trade Unions and staff, to ensure that they are effective.
- The Trust will continue to use Staff Attitude Surveys on an annual basis to obtain the views of the staff, and will ensure that any concerns raised are dealt with in an effective manner.
- Monitoring and Review
- The Trust is committed to ensuring that the principals and practice of staff involvement are embedded in the culture of the organisation and directly improve both the working lives of staff and the quality of service to users. Monitoring and reviewing progress in this area is, therefore, key to demonstrating success.
- The effectiveness of this Policy in achieving staff involvement will be monitored as follows: -
- Through the Staff Involvement Group
 - Evaluating the effectiveness of the Trusts Communication Strategy and communication initiatives
 - Monitoring the action plan agreed following the results of the annual staff survey
 - Measuring performances against the standards set out in the NHSE Taskforce self-assessment tool

7 Accountability

- The Director of Human Resources will be responsible at Trust Board level for the successful development and operation of this policy reporting directly to the Board and the JSC.

8 Review Date

- The Staff Involvement Group will review this policy and the progress of staff involvement on an annual basis.