

Regional ICS': What is their role?

An Integrated Care System (ICS) brings organisations together in an area to plan and deliver health and care services and address health inequalities.

They have a workforce and a service role.

They develop system wide workforce strategies and interventions including engaging with local employment and skills bodies such as colleges, Job Centre Plus and employment support agencies.

There is often no single national approach - networks, operations and initiatives will vary region to region.

Questions to ask:

Is the mental health support workforce included in regional workforce plans?

Is the ICS cognisant what benefits the mental health support workforce bring to mental health services and know how to build on this?

Is there recognition of the key issues and barriers the mental health support workforce face and plans on how to overcome them?

Does the ICS have recruitment links from the local community (especially those who are from marginalised groups) that mental health support workforce vacancies can be advertised to? This is potentially an accessible role that can help to build better reflection of patient population in staff – especially if obtainable career pathways are also in place.

Are there any training packages offered by regional organisations that can be accessed by the mental health support workforce? Is there opportunity to collaborate and offer something across the region?

Are there opportunities for job swapping/rotation/secondments for the mental health support workforce across the region?

Regional People Boards (HEE/NHSEI)

HEE and NHS England have established Regional People Boards (ICS People Board representatives will be linked to)

The NHS Interim People Plan (2019) set out the following regional workforce roles:

- there is a need for a co-ordination and/or assurance role in delivering national priorities such as international recruitment
- planning is needed over a medium-term time frame, e.g., over five years
- there is demand for improvement support on a large scale
- there is a need to help foster capacity and capability in local health systems
- decisions need to be made across a regional labour market.

Questions to ask:

What regional strategies are relevant to mental health support workforce (e.g., on staff retention etc)?

Regional Expertise

There may be additional individuals or networks in your region such as:

- HEE Talent for Care Relationship Managers (including apprenticeship leads)
- HEE nursing workforce teams
- Regional apprenticeship networks

Questions to ask:

What information, advice and guidance can you give to provide more opportunities and reduce barriers for the mental health support workforce?

HRDs are likely to be collectively developing local "People Plans" to meet the aspirations of the national People Plans and NHS Long Term Plan in respect of workforce.

Question:

Are we including the mental health support workforce in people plans?

HR Directors (HRDs)
Directors of Nursing

Managers of the mental health support workforce

Look on your staff intranet / Contact your HR team directly

L&D/Apprenticeship Lead may sit within your HR Teams

Understand what is on offer regionally via the networks your senior team may be connected to

Questions to ask the Trust's Apprenticeships Lead

What are the apprenticeship opportunities available I can offer to the mental health support workforce?

What is the Trust policy in respect of apprenticeship levy spending and the rules associated with delivering apprenticeships?

Questions to ask the L&D/OD Team

What is the Trust's Policy for study leave, attendance at training, financing etc?

What training is available for the mental health support workforce?

What functional skills support does the Trust offer?

What links do we have with educational providers and what is on offer?

What shadowing/mentoring/coaching opportunities can I offer the mental health support workforce?

What opportunities are available for the mental health support workforce to obtain the Care Certificate?

Questions to ask the HR team

How can you help with job design and job descriptions to ensure there is consistency locally, regionally, and nationally for the mental health support workforce?

Are there any initiatives in place regarding recruiting under-represented groups (called "widening participation")?

What workforce planning is in place to secure future workforce to meet growing demands? How does the mental health support workforce play in to this?

These networks are present across all England regions. There may be more that exist in your region such as those from the third sector, **Strategic Clinical Networks** or professional specific such as **Psychological Professions Network**; we recommend you use the prompts here to have similar discussions with them.