

MIDLAND HEALTH BOARD

HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY 2000-2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Midland Health Board aims to be a first-class employer, enabling all of those who work with it to grow to their full potential through continual learning and participation in the planning and delivery of high quality services.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

Human resource management (HRM) is designed to ensure that an organisation has the right people, with the right competencies, in the right numbers and right places, doing the right jobs at the right time. It is an integrated approach to the management of people in work environments. Effective HRM requires coherence between a number of variables or aspects of organisational behaviour:



A human resource strategy includes, therefore, a *vision* for how work is to be experienced by employees, and a *blueprint for action* to achieve a balance between these different elements of people management.

The format of this document is two-part. **Part One** is an outline of the vision of the sort of organisation which the Midland Health Board is working towards, a vision which is intended to guide the development of people management and organisational development practices and initiatives over the next ten years. **Part Two** is a framework for action, covering the three year period 2000 to end-2003, which is based on the diagram above. A core tenet of the three-year action framework is the devolution of as much as possible of the day-to-day management of human resources.

In relation to each of these six action framework areas, there is a table outlining the roles and responsibilities of (i) the central HR (Personnel) department and (ii) the 'line', that is, everyone involved in service delivery. Where possible, an indication is also given as the prioritisation of the different proposals contained under each area.

The objective of this Strategy is to enhance the experience of people working with the Board and the capacity of the Board to deliver quality health care in the coming decade . This will be achieved by further developing good practice, in the context of a rapidly changing social and economic environment. For this reason, the action framework (2000 – 2003) will require regular revisiting and updating, within the context of overall organisation development, to take account of both internal and external changes over time.

This Strategy document is based on the findings of a process of consultation within the Midland Health Board and research into good practice (desk research and research of practice in other organisations/jurisdictions). Based on a comparison of what people said during this consultation and what is considered good practice, a SWOT analysis was also produced and has guided the preparation of this Strategy.

Part One – The Vision 2000 - 2010

This Part of the Strategy sets out the broad vision for the sort of organisation the Midland Health Board intends to become. This vision, including the **core values and key principles** which underpin it, is drawn from the descriptions of a good-practice employer which the people who work for the Board – its staff – described during the consultation process.

HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGY

The Midland Health Board aims to be a first-class employer, enabling all of those who work with it to grow to their full potential through continual learning and participation in the planning and delivery of high quality services.

The **core values** which will guide the Board in its management of its people include:

- **respect and esteem** for all people, both staff and patients/service users (regardless of status, gender, beliefs, age, or culture) and the development of adult-to-adult relationships and management styles amongst all those within the Board;
- **inclusivity and participation** in both the planning and delivery of services;
- **curiosity, innovation and a desire to continually improve** the experience of people (both staff and patients/service users) within the Board’s stewardship; and
- the promotion of a **‘healthful’ and supportive working environment**, as free as possible from risk or stress to anyone as in line with the Board’s CQI strategy.

In addition, there are a number of **key operating principles** which underpin this Human Resource Strategy:

- **Subsidiarity**, that is, decision-making and problem-solving at the lowest relevant/possible level in the organisation.
 - A focus on **competency, performance and continual improvement**/ organisational learning for the benefit of employees as well as patients/ service users.
 - **Clarity of authority, responsibility and accountability** and transparency of decision-making.
-

The Board aims to enable and support employees by:

- Providing people with the resources that are needed to achieve their work objectives.
- Regular reviews of performance to ensure recognition of good performance and to ensure that, when mistakes occur, the relevant part(s) of the organisation learn(s) from them and puts prevention measures in place, that organisational blockages/systemic 'faults' are identified and addressed in a non-threatening way, and that people (employees and patients or service users) receive appropriate care and support.
- Providing training and development to ensure that everyone in the Board has the right competencies to deliver on their work objectives.
- Including people in the decision-making about their service through regular information-sharing and two-way dialogue so that they can contribute their ideas and judgement to these decisions and so that they can anticipate and manage the implications of service changes for themselves.
- Providing an organisational context (mission, values, policies, performance management systems, management style) and job/work conditions (job design, work relationships, physical environment, objective-setting, training and development) which are conducive to physical, emotional and psychological wellness and which help employees to look after their own health.
- Mapping out generic career paths and providing regular feedback to people to allow them to participate in the management of their own career/personal development.
- Affording employees flexibility of employment and of working arrangements, limited only by the requirements of meeting service need and resourcing constraints (availability of staff, finance and time) and continually working to ensure that the rights of those who avail of flexible working options or who work only their required hours (e.g. 'normal working week', career breaks, job-sharing, etc.) are not adversely affected as a result of their choice.
- Providing all employees of the Board with access to a responsive and confidential employee assistance service which helps them to deal with personal problems and/or work-related problems which are impeding their effectiveness at work.
- Providing all line managers with the specialist HR support they need to enable them to act as effective front-line people managers and in accordance with the principles underlying this strategy.

The Board aims to provide a healthful, inclusive and developmental place for people to work. This means that the Board aims to be an organisation:

- Which is as free as possible from preventable accident or risk;
- which is free from intimidation;
- which is as free as possible from ongoing work-induced stress; and

- where there is recognition of and support for the promotion of health and wellbeing by both the organisation and the people who work there;
- which is based on routine and regular consultation and partnership with stakeholders;
- where staff are encouraged to question existing practices and propose alternative solutions so that they may be innovative in their efforts to overcome problems;
- where there is ongoing effort to ensuring effective two-way consultation and communication, and
- where the criteria for and locus of decision-making are as transparent as possible;
- where there is a genuine effort to seek continual improvement in the quality of both results and processes through review, feedback, and dialogue at all levels and in all parts of the organisation;
- where people are encouraged and supported to undertake professional and personal development appropriate to their needs and to those of the organisation;
- where there is review of the relationship and interdependency between HR and corporate strategy, and
- where the HR Department, with the assistance of staff, seeks to add value to the Board by anticipating relevant trends and developments (internal and external) and assisting all managers to manage people, both operationally and strategically.

Part Two – The Action Framework 2000 - 2003

This Part of the Strategy covers six areas of people management and a number of actions/changes are proposed in each of these areas. The key changes are as follows:

Performance Management

- Strengthen the link between the management of people and the management of service delivery through ongoing performance-related reviews and feedback at unit and service level.
- Develop competency profiles for staff covering both the people and performance management competencies which are required at different levels.

Training and Development

- Appoint a Head of People Development to ensure that managers have the appropriate management style and competencies necessary to effectively manage people, performance and change, and to ensure that staff are also facilitated in their personal and professional development.
- Clarify the budget (and decentralised authority) for training and development and link investment in training and development to a process of identification of development needs.

Resourcing

- Develop a workforce profile for units, services and disciplines to enable better planning and management of resourcing.

- Introduce a mechanism (to be devised) to enable review and discussion of required staffing levels and skill mix.
- Devolve as much recruitment as possible to line managers and revise certain aspects of the current recruitment process.

Involvement and Communication

- Include staff in decision-making about their services through the design and implementation of a Code of Practice for all managers and staff covering involvement and communication.

Reward, Pay and Recognition

- Recognise staff (performance and potential) through involvement, feedback on performance and the introduction of a Merit Award scheme.
- Encourage individual managers to use to full effect those rewards that are within their/the Board's discretion to reflect good performance.
- Seek a review of Circular 10/71 where it restricts the Board's capacity to offer more attractive rewards to certain categories of people (such as those whose skills are in very high demand).

Organisational Development

- Decentralise as much HR management authority to line managers as possible, within broad Board-wide guidelines and with appropriate support and resources (including an HR specialist/team available to each Care Group).
- Bolster the current capacity of the Personnel department (Central HR) so that it can continue to provide its current level of service while simultaneously preparing the ground (support systems and management protocols in relation to the areas mentioned above) for devolution of HR management.
- Ensure (through ongoing monitoring) consistent application of people management principles and good practices and widen the scope of HR to include Organisational Development.
- Establish a full employee assistance and support a health promotion programme.

The detailed recommendations under each of these six areas are summarised in the following tables (overleaf).

Full copies of this Strategy document (Parts One and Two), including detailed discussion of the recommendations (and its three Appendices: (I) Consultation Outputs (II) Good Practice and (III) HR SWOT analysis) are available on the Board's website, in the Board's libraries, and from local managers and administrators).

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

POINTS IN BOLD ITALICS FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN 2001

CENTRAL HR DEPARTMENT

- *Develop and circulate a template for managers to use in regular review meetings and in periodic service review meetings (including review of progress on service developments).*
- *Design (and delegate) a system which enables all staff to receive team and/or individual feedback on their performance from their line manager, their colleagues, and their own staff (where relevant), and which includes appropriate reporting on performance (to enable sharing of learning, recognition of good performance, accessing assistance with exceptional performance problems, etc.)*
- *Develop generic management and other competency templates and HRM performance standards, and reflect these in job descriptions, person specifications and Personal Development Planning.*
- *Ensure that managers are competent in giving feedback and in dealing with any conflict that may arise as a result of performance reviews.*

LOCAL / LINE MANAGERS and STAFF

- *Hold regular meetings with staff to review performance, and to identify and solve any problems relating to performance.*
- *Give regular feedback to staff and accept feedback from staff and others.*
- *Hold quarterly/annual service reviews and feed the outputs of these forward into the next service plan.*
- *Share outputs of performance process with colleagues, as appropriate.*
- *Ensure that persistent under-performance is addressed in a non-threatening manner (making full use of support, training and development as a means of upgrading performance) and ensuring that all staff are aware of the discipline and grievance procedures that are in operation.*
- *Identify any requirements for the development of competency (self and staff) relating to performance management, and draw up a plan for the development of this competency.*

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

POINTS IN BOLD ITALICS FOR PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION

CENTRAL HR DEPARTMENT

- *Appoint a Head of People Development, someone who has particular expertise in adult learning and performance management, who will be responsible for ensuring the readiness of line managers for people, change and performance management.*
- *Develop a modular management development programme (one which focuses on management style and which enables managers to develop the people, change and performance management competencies by opting in for those modules that match their needs) based on a combination of on- and off-the-job learning methods.*
- *Successfully roll out the implementation of Personal Development Planning for all staff, starting with those with people management responsibilities (based on the competencies/performance standards described above).*
- *Establish a Project Team to agree the criteria for approval and support of requests for training and development (these criteria should enable managers to prioritise their T&D expenditure in the event of there being insufficient funding).*

Clarify the current expenditure (direct and indirect) on Training and Development and prepare a budget for the coming year based on estimated requirements and/or benchmarks from other organisations.

- Devolve the management of that budget, in as far as is practicable, to local managers.
- Provide expert advice on adult learning, training and development to local managers and assist them in identifying development needs and in devising appropriate competency development initiatives for themselves and their staff.
- Co-ordinate all mandatory training and ensure the supply and distribution of updated MHB induction to all new staff.
- In conjunction with line managers, map out a number of career pathways for major 'job families' (e.g. clerical / administrative, nursing, therapists, service managers seeking to move into general management, etc.).
- Develop and co-ordinate relations with suppliers/vendors of relevant education, training and development (including sponsorship).
- In conjunction with the Health Promotion Service and the Occupational Health Service, ensure the provision and publications of regular workshops/events on health promotion and other 'work/life management' issues such as stress management, time management, assertiveness, preparation for retirement etc.
- That staff are equipped to promote the health of service users, (health promotion skills,

LOCAL / LINE MANAGERS / STAFF

- *Conduct local identification of development needs (IDNs) in conjunction with performance standards and reviews, generic grade competencies, and service planning process, and liaise with central HR to enable budgeting and co-ordination.*
- *Ensure all new staff (and any who may have 'slipped through the system') are inducted in a timely way to the Board and to the service.*
- Assist with the mapping and development of career pathways and with the identification of policies required to enable appropriate career progression.
- Conduct career management meetings with staff to ensure clarity of expectations and succession planning.
- *Ensure that all staff are clear about the criteria for approval, support and prioritisation of requests for training and development.*
- Ensure that there is transfer and sharing of knowledge/learning with other colleagues whenever possible.
- Ensure that all staff are mindful of their development.
- Act as a coach to staff and encourage them to coach each other.
- Work with central HR to seek to ensure that all training and development expenditure is delivered with the right balance between economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Work with central HR to ensure that relations are maintained with relevant professional bodies and institutions with regard to, for example, sponsorship of university places, design of new initiatives, etc.
- Ensure widespread awareness of regular health promotion events and 'work-life management' workshops and facilitate participation in as far as possible.

RESOURCING

POINTS IN BOLD ITALICS FOR PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION

CENTRAL HR DEPARTMENT

- ***Ensure implementation of PPARS to its full capacity by clarifying the benefits to be derived from the system by both central HR and line managers, and by ensuring adequate resourcing.***
- ***Develop a profile of the workforce (numbers, age, exits) for the whole organisation with a view to anticipating future resourcing and succession requirements.***
- ***Environmental monitoring and analysis of trends and developments that may impact on resourcing (local, national and international).***
- ***Streamlining of the recruitment process (through dedicated task forces, where appropriate) and setting of performance objectives for recruitment, taking national agreements and regulations into account, and covering:***
 - ***review and recommendations regarding panel recruitment (economy and efficiency of central versus local panels, and short- and longer-term implications for mobility and flexibility of deployment of staff);***
 - ***Use of generic competency framework (job descriptions and person specifications – see above under Performance);***
 - ***Advertising of vacancies (local/national/international media mix and design of advertisements);***
 - ***Introduction of alternative resourcing methods such as ‘introduce-a-friend’ bonuses, use of recruitment agencies, international skills-hunting, etc.;***
 - ***Further development of web-based recruitment;***
 - ***Further devolution of recruitment to line managers (all temporary and basic grade staff (subject to LAC delegation)).***
- ***Seek revision of national regulations and agreements which limit the Board’s capacity to meet its resourcing requirements in a timely and efficient way.***
- ***Compile and analyse exits / transfers (numbers and motives) and work with managers to address underlying contributing factors.***
- Establish a Project Team to design and implement (in conjunction with line managers) a mechanism that enables assessment of resourcing requirements and allocation (based on benchmarks, and taking acuity/dependency into account) and ensuring that managers are aware of the budgetary implications of changes to resourcing levels.
- Ensuring an appropriate balance between full- and part-time employees and assisting managers to balance the needs of the service with the accommodation of flexible working hours.
- Work to ensure that regional/programme structures are adequately resourced to enable them to assume delegated recruitment and resourcing responsibilities.
- Investigate the potential for redeployment of retired people and of return-to-work initiatives.

LOCAL / LINE MANAGERS and STAFF

- ***Develop a profile of the workforce for each service.***
- ***In conjunction with service planning, conduct a review of skill mix in service/team/unit and, in time to enable on-time recruitment or redeployment, identify additional resourcing and competency requirements and any areas where there might be over-capacity in resourcing or competency.***
- Ensure that staff are aware of the budgetary implications of changes to resourcing levels.
- ***Environmental monitoring of resourcing trends in service specialties.***
- Feed forward on exits and transfers to central HR so that any contributing factors can be addressed.
- In conjunction with staff, ensuring regular review and discussion of local rostering and resource allocation and management, including the need to balance flexibility of work hours with service provision to the required standard.
- Ensuring required competency in interviewing and selection methods, including legal issues.
- Ensuring that job descriptions and person specifications are based on relevant competencies and that they are customised to reflect service needs and, in addition, ensuring their timely input into the recruitment process.

INVOLVEMENT and COMMUNICATION

POINTS IN BOLD ITALICS FOR PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION

CENTRAL HR DEPARTMENT

- ***Establish a Project Team to review internal communications and to design a Code of Practice (this Code may subsume the following two points).***
- Include in the design of the management competency framework (mentioned above under Performance Management) a minimum performance standard relating to a management style based on communication and involvement of staff in decision-making.
- Ensure that all managers are aware of the values and practices they are expected to uphold in their day-to-day dealings with staff/volunteers and with patients.
- Design a module (for inclusion in the management development programme described above under Training and Development) on conflict management.
- In conjunction with the Partnership Co-ordinator, clarify the process, ensure that all managers are fully aware of the Partnership process and that they are using local Partnership structures appropriately.
- With the Management Services Department, seek to further develop the MHB website/intranet so that it enhances the publication of relevant information on HR (for example, the competency framework, generic performance review templates, good practice relating to people management, knowledge sharing between managers, etc.) and that all managers have access to it.

LOCAL / LINE MANAGERS and STAFF

- ***Involve staff routinely in the planning and review of performance / service and in decision-making relating to future service.***
- ***Managers and their staff should uphold the agreed values in their day-to-day dealings with all colleagues/volunteers and service users/patients.***
- Ensure two-way communication with staff and face-to-face where possible.
- Staff members should make efforts to keep themselves apprised of information on the day-to-day business and on service implementation and developments.
- ***Ensure that there are sufficient local copies of Service Plans, newsletters and other relevant documents so that staff have ready and easy access to them.***
- Ensure that all staff are fully aware of the Partnership process and that they are using local Partnership structures appropriately.
- Involvement and trust will be difficult to maintain if there is a practice of blame or lack of support when problems arise or mistakes occur – in these events, the attention of should be focused on understanding the cause of the problem and ensuring it does not recur, rather than on allocating blame.

REWARD AND RECOGNITION

POINTS IN BOLD ITALICS FOR PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION

CENTRAL HR DEPARTMENT

- Ensure that the performance review system (see above under Performance) is weighted in the appropriate proportion to recognising good performance as well as identifying problems.
 - Work with other national players/stakeholders to seek a revision of those aspects of DoHC Circular 10/71 which mitigate against local discretion regarding pay, particularly the ability of the Board to recruit and retain people with skills or competencies which are scarce or have a high 'market valuation'.
 - Undertake, in conjunction with staff, a review of those grades (for example, clerical/administrative and attendants) where specialisation may be warranted and, if so, revise the pay structure to reflect within-grade specialisation.
- Map the various perks and allowances which pertain across all areas in the Board with a view to levelling them out and assessing their impact on morale/flexibility.
- ***In conjunction with other relevant Departments, ensure the timely payment of salaries to all staff. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, inform relevant staff of the likely payment date.***
- ***Examine the potential for the introduction and fair implementation of a Merit Award scheme to recognise exceptionally good team/individual performance.***

LOCAL / LINE MANAGERS and STAFF

- ***Recognise – through regular performance review meetings and feedback to staff – good performance and the “drivers” of good performance.***
- ***Ensure that there is recognition at senior management (General Manager/Director) level for exceptional performance.***
- Managers should ensure that they have the competency and/or support required to deal with any conflict or dispute arising in relation to reward or recognition.
- Where the delivery of service occurs in collaboration with voluntary agencies, the contribution of these agencies/volunteers should be publicly acknowledged and rewarded where possible.
- Line managers should use all of the rewards that are within their discretion to recognise good performers (e.g. time off, flexible hours, job enrichment, etc.)

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

POINTS IN BOLD ITALICS FOR PRIORITY IMPLEMENTATION

CENTRAL HR/OD DEPARTMENT

- ***Provide advice, guidance and advance input to the Board on the Human Resource implications of the Board's strategy and operations with a view to ensuring the right balance between looking after the people and achieving the business objectives.***
- Further develop the Occupational Health services to include, for example, the introduction of a well-publicised confidential employee assistance service, available to all staff, to enable people to cope at work with (personal or work-related) stress, and expand the critical incident debriefing and counselling service.
- ***In conjunction with General Managers, seek to ensure the appointment of an HR professional in each programme to work with the General Managers and line managers to monitor the roll-out of the HR strategy and to act as a local advice/support service.***
- Design an employee attitude survey and pilot it in one or more areas. Work with line managers to make sense of the survey findings and to ensure appropriate action.
- ***Continue to build and foster relationships with local and national stakeholders (other Health Boards, trades unions, OHM, etc.) to enable best practice within the Board relating to human resource management.***
- In conjunction with line managers, in areas which are acknowledged to be "black spots" within the Board, consider the possibility of introducing a staff for development.
- Assume Organisational Development responsibility in relation to the coordination and overseeing of all initiatives and changes which have wide organisational implications.

LOCAL / LINE MANAGERS and STAFF

- ***Provide clarity to all line managers and staff about the respective levels of authority, responsibility and accountability for decisions within the line structure.***
- Identify areas where working conditions are not adequate and work with relevant parts of the Board to upgrade these conditions.
- Ensure, at local level, the continuing promotion of employee health and wellbeing, and of understanding of working with diversity, and encourage/facilitate staff to attain a health balance between work and life (see also Section 2 – Training and Development).
- Act on the findings of attitude surveys and exit/transfer surveys to ensure, in as far as possible, that "hygiene factors" (e.g. terms and conditions of work, relations with colleagues/manager, lack of child-care facilities, excessive bureaucracy/control) are not mitigating against people maximising their potential or looking after their health.
- Ensure the investigation of all incidents of harassment or intimidation and, with staff and other relevant Departments within the Board, regularly reviewing systems and procedures to ensure as safe a working environment as possible.