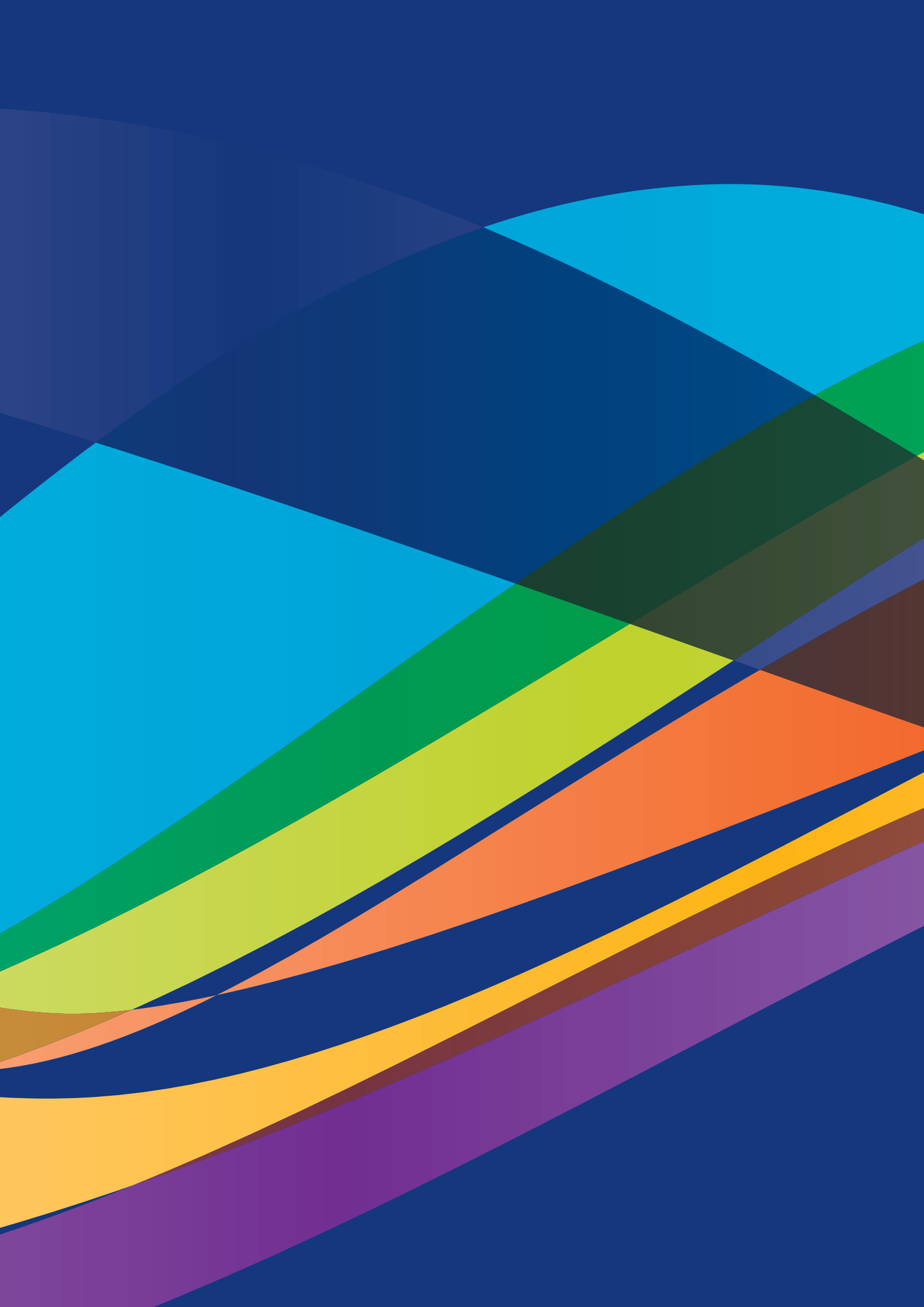


# Healthy workplace toolkit



Healthy workplace, healthy you



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# Introduction

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has developed a healthy workplace toolkit to support health care employers and RCN workplace representatives to implement healthy working environments with high quality employment practices.

This toolkit aims to help organisations achieve healthy working environments by creating the best working conditions for nursing staff, enabling them to deliver the highest standards of patient care.

As well as delivering improvements in patient outcomes, the creation of healthy working environments can also support the recruitment and retention of staff, reduce sickness absence costs and subsequent agency spend.

The RCN's Healthy workplaces: evidence and research publication provides a summary of relevant research with particular attention to research from the health and social care sector.

## What is a healthy workplace?

The RCN defines healthy workplaces as those which offer fair pay and rewards and have high quality employment practices and procedures which promote a good work-life balance; dignity at work; protect and promote employees' health and safety at work; design jobs which provide employees with a degree of autonomy and control and provide equitable access to training and learning and development opportunities for all employees.

## What is the toolkit for?

This toolkit is divided into five domains:

- work-life balance
- dignity at work
- health and safety

- job design
- learning and development.

Under each category there are a set of indicators which can be used to do a health check of your organisations and to identify areas for improvement. There are a set of signposts to further resources to support the implementation of improvements. This toolkit is underpinned by a set of underlying principles to support implementation.

The RCN's *Healthy workplace toolkit* can be used to complement and support the implementation of established workplace standards and guidelines such as the Healthy Workplaces Charter, Scottish PINS guidance, NICE workplace health guidance and the NHS Staff Council's workplace health and safety standards.

## Principles of implementation

When using this toolkit, the RCN assumes organisations are following a set of core principles. These principles include:

- recognition of the positive impact of safe, secure and healthy working environments on both nursing staff and patient outcomes
- recognition that staff also have their part to play, in both taking care of themselves and following policies and procedures correctly
- commitment to working in partnership with employees and RCN trade union representatives to promote healthy workplaces
- valuing the contribution staff make to patient care and meeting service needs
- commitment to consult and communicate with employees on matters relating to healthy working environments and employment practice

- commitment to raising managers' awareness of the importance of healthy working environments and providing them with support, time and resources to deliver policies and practices in a fair and consistent manner
- commitment to continuously improve the working environment by monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives on working conditions.

## Who can use the toolkit?

The toolkit is aimed at all health and social care employers across the UK, whether small or large, whether in the public or independent sector.

As highlighted in the underlying principles, the toolkit is best used in partnership between employers and RCN trade union representatives. However, we encourage all health care organisations to use the toolkit even where there is no local RCN representation.

## How to use it

The indicators under the five domains within the toolkit can be used to carry out a health check of your organisation and identify areas for improvement. The toolkit also provides organisations with a range of signposts to sources of help to support making improvements.

## Pledge or celebrate...

Where opportunities for improvement are identified, we are encouraging organisations to take a pledge and act on an area of employment practice that can be improved. We also welcome organisations to share good practice with us so we can celebrate efforts made to improve working environments for nursing staff.

Further information on the pledge or on sharing good practice can be found on pages 19-21.



# Domain 1: Work-life balance

## What do we mean by work-life balance?

For many people, achieving a good quality of life is dependent on striking a balance between the demands of employment and their responsibilities outside work. Work-life balance can be defined as:

Having sufficient control and autonomy over where, when and how you work to fulfil your responsibilities within and outside paid work (Work Foundation 2006).

Some argue for the phrase “life-work” balance to be used instead as it seeks to address the imbalance between work and home demands. However, for this toolkit we will use the well-known “work-life” balance phrase, whilst acknowledging that, for many, the pressures of work are so great that the balance can seem impossible to achieve.

Whilst much of the focus has been on family friendly working for parents, many nursing staff will be caring for older relatives or other dependants or have domestic responsibilities and commitments. The RCN believes that all staff can benefit from flexible working opportunities regardless of gender or age or whether or not they have caring responsibilities.



## Why does it matter to employers?

Flexible working opportunities and family-friendly working practices have been shown to improve productivity and performance, reduce unplanned absence and support recruitment and retention of staff (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2014).

Good employers respect the needs of all staff to balance work and life outside work and go above and beyond the legal minimum in terms of meeting the requirements of regulations. They understand that equal access to modern working arrangements leads to a committed and motivated workforce and a healthy and safe working environment in which teamwork flourishes. In turn this creates an organisation able to attract and retain staff and reduce turnover, absenteeism and other costs associated with work-related stress.

## Health check: does my organisation protect and promote the work-life balance of staff?

Do a health check of your organisation against the following indicators to ensure that you:

- ☐ have effective policies on flexible working for all staff, including carer leave/parental leave, in place and uptake is monitored to ensure equity of access
- ☐ comply with the requirements of the Working Time Regulations 1998
- ☐ enable staff to take their at work breaks and don't regularly work over their scheduled hours
- ☐ agree any changes to working patterns and shifts in partnership with staff and their representatives

- ☐ provide adequate notice of changes to shift patterns
- ☐ identify and act on cases of presenteeism
- ☐ encourage a culture of openness about time constraints and work pressures
- ☐ have jobs which are manageable within the time contracted to work
- ☐ monitor sickness absence for hot spots and trends
- ☐ allow staff appropriate control over setting shift patterns and off duties
- ☐ respect employees' time off
- ☐ encourage applications for job share from all staff at all levels
- ☐ enable and encourage senior managers to model appropriate time management and adherence to working hours
- ☐ have adequate provision for staff who need to attend to take time off at short notice due to their domestic responsibilities.

## Follow up

Are there any areas and gaps that need improving? See below for resources and further information on the topic area.

Do you want to pledge to improve one area of practice? If so, go to page 20.

Are there any areas where we can celebrate good practice? If so, go to page 21.

## Further information and resources

### Flexible working

RCN (2015) *Spinning plates: How flexible working can support a healthy work-life balance* London: RCN.  
Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/publications](http://www.rcn.org.uk/publications)

Working families (for advice on flexible working/ parental leave etc)  
[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

Carers UK (for advice on carers leave)  
[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

Acas (2014) *Flexible working and work-life balance*. Available at [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

Labour Relations Agency Northern Ireland *Flexible Working: The Law and Good Practice* Available at [www.lra.org.uk](http://www.lra.org.uk) and search for 'law and good practice'

NHS Scotland Partnership Improvement Network (2005) *Supporting the work-life balance*. Available at [www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies](http://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies)

NHS Staff Council's Equality and Diversity group (2014) *Guidance on flexible working*. Available at [www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/pay-and-reward/national-negotiations/nhs-staff-council/equalities-and-diversity-group](http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/pay-and-reward/national-negotiations/nhs-staff-council/equalities-and-diversity-group)

### Shift work

RCN (2012) *A shift in the right direction – RCN guidance on the occupational health and safety of shift working in the nursing workforce*. London: RCN  
Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/publications](http://www.rcn.org.uk/publications)

Health and Safety Executive (2006) *Managing shift work: health and safety guidance* Bootle: HSE.  
Available at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

### Working time regulations

Acas  
[www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1373](http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1373)

Health and Safety Executive  
[www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/workingtimedirective.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/workingtimedirective.htm)



## Sickness absence

Acas (2015) Managing Staff Absence:  
A step by step guide

[www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4199](http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4199)

All Wales Sickness Absence Policy. Available at  
[www.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.wales.nhs.uk)

Health and Safety Executive

[www.hse.gov.uk/sicknessabsence](http://www.hse.gov.uk/sicknessabsence)

Labour Relations Agency Northern Ireland (2013)

Advice on Managing Sickness Absence

Available at [www.lra.org.uk](http://www.lra.org.uk) and search  
'managing sickness'

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence  
(2009) Managing long term sickness and incapacity  
for work.

Available at [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph19](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph19)

NHS Scotland Partnership Improvement Network  
(2003) Managing Health at Work (including  
promoting attendance).

Available at [www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/  
partnership/partnership-information-network/  
pin-policies](http://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies)

NHS Staff Council's Health Safety and Wellbeing  
Partnership Group (2013) Guidelines on Prevention  
and Management of Sickness Absence.

Available online. Search for NHS employers staff  
council equality and diversity.





## Domain 2: Dignity at work

### What do we mean by dignity at work?

Dignity is concerned with how people feel, think and behave in relation to the worth or value of themselves and others. To treat someone with dignity is to treat them as being of worth, in a way that is respectful to their diversity. Treating patients and clients with dignity is essential in nursing practice but, in order to do this effectively, nursing staff must also be treated with dignity by their employers, managers and colleagues.

The need to be treated with dignity applies equally to all people.

*When dignity is present people feel in control, valued, confident, comfortable and able to make decisions for themselves. When dignity is absent people feel devalued, lacking control and comfort. They may lack confidence and be unable to make decisions for themselves. They may feel humiliated, embarrassed or ashamed.*

**(RCN 2008)**

### Why does it matter to employers?

Adopting a workplace culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and everyone feels valued will reap the benefits of a more motivated, harmonious, willing and loyal workforce. Dignity at work is about promoting positive behaviours, encouraging staff to take responsibility for their actions, while ensuring that there are clear and effective procedures for dealing with the negative behaviours associated with bullying, discrimination and harassment.

Promoting dignity at work is likely to reduce stress-related health problems and absenteeism amongst those who are subject to bullying and those who witness bullying. It might also be expected to lead to greater willingness to accept

change, learn new skills, pursue high standards of quality through pride in work and promote better team working.

Encouraging and valuing diversity within the workforce is also shown to have positive effects for organisations. Inclusive, diverse workplaces are shown to retain productive and committed staff. They also attract staff from a wider pool of job applicants which can deliver a greater range of talent and experience. Inclusive workplaces are representative of the communities they service and are aware of the positive impact workforce diversity can bring to patient care and service delivery.

### Health check: does my organisation actively promote dignity at work?

Do a health check of your organisation against the following indicators to ensure that you:

- demonstrate and encourage respectful relationships between all staff, modelled by managers, executives and board members and supported by robust policies, including:
  - ☐ an effective bullying and harassment policy
  - ☐ a robust, consistent response to incidents of violence at work
  - ☐ a safe environment/culture for staff to raise concerns without fear of reprisal, and appropriate support for those who do
  - ☐ policies that promote dignity and diversity in all workplaces
  - ☐ a process to monitor employment policy and practice across all Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics (or equivalent in Northern Ireland) and take action on trends and hot spots

- ☐ publication of your equality action plan, ensuring it complies with appropriate equality duties (for example, the Public Sector Equality Duty and any other equality measurements that may apply)\*
- take a fair and transparent approach to employment issues by:
  - ☐ agreeing changes to employment practices in partnership with employees and their representatives
  - ☐ becoming a Living Wage Employer
  - ☐ not using zero hours contracts and monitoring agency/bank work with an aim to provide substantive roles wherever possible
  - ☐ using fair sickness absence/attendance policies, supporting staff to return to work wherever possible
  - ☐ providing support to those with long-term conditions and disabilities
  - ☐ ensuring staff confidentiality – such as in times of sickness
  - ☐ using fair and non-accusatory procedures when dealing with allegations of bullying and harassment
  - ☐ providing support to those who feel their dignity at work has been compromised.

## Follow up

Are there any areas and gaps that need improving? If so, see right for resources and further information on the topic area.

Do you want to pledge to improve one area of practice? If so, go to page 20.

Are there any areas where we can celebrate good practice? If so, go to page 21.

## Further information and resources

### Equality Act and discrimination

RCN online advice

[www.rcn.org.uk/direct](http://www.rcn.org.uk/direct)

RCN's *Is that discrimination?* campaign

[www.rcn.org.uk/isthatdiscrimination](http://www.rcn.org.uk/isthatdiscrimination)

NHS England Equalities and Health Inequalities

[www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/gov/equality-hub](http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/gov/equality-hub)

NHS Employers: Diversity

[www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/plan/building-a-diverse-workforce](http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/plan/building-a-diverse-workforce)

Equality Commission Northern Ireland

[www.equalityni.org/Home](http://www.equalityni.org/Home)

Equality and human rights commission

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

NHS Wales Working Differently, Working Together (2012). Available at [www.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.wales.nhs.uk)



\* From April 2015 NHS service contract holders in England must comply with both the Equality Delivery System and the Workforce Race Equality Scheme drawn up by NHS England. Further details available at: [www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/gov/equality-hub](http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/gov/equality-hub)

## Bullying and harassment

RCN (2015) *Bullying and harassment: a good practice guidance on preventing and addressing bullying and harassment in health and social care organisations*. London: RCN.  
Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/publications](http://www.rcn.org.uk/publications)

RCN(2015) *Working with care*. London: RCN.  
Available at [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

Acas (2014) *Bullying and harassment at work – a guide for managers and employers*. Available at [www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1864](http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1864)

Acas (2014) *Bullying and harassment at work – a guide for employees*. Available at [www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1864](http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1864)

Labour Relations Agency Northern Ireland (2006) *Harassment and bullying in the workplace*.  
Available at [www.lra.org.uk](http://www.lra.org.uk) and search for 'harassment'

NHS Scotland Dignity at Work Project  
[www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/improving-employee-experience/dignity-at-work-project/dignity-at-work-toolkit](http://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/improving-employee-experience/dignity-at-work-project/dignity-at-work-toolkit)

## Raising concerns

RCN (2015) *Raising concerns: a guide for RCN members*. Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/support/raising\\_concerns](http://www.rcn.org.uk/support/raising_concerns)

Health and social care whistleblowing helpline  
<http://wbhelpline.org.uk/resources/raising-concerns-at-work>

NHS Scotland Partnership Improvement Network (2011) *Implementing and reviewing whistleblowing arrangements in NHS Scotland*. Available at [www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies](http://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies)

Whistleblowing Helpline (2014) *Raising concerns at work*. Available at <http://wbhelpline.org.uk/resources/raising-concerns-at-work>

Social Partnership Forum 'Raising Concerns'  
[www.socialpartnershipforum.org/1337](http://www.socialpartnershipforum.org/1337)

All Wales Raising Concerns (whistleblowing) policy  
[www.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.wales.nhs.uk)

## Living wage

Living Wage Foundation  
[www.livingwage.org.uk/employers](http://www.livingwage.org.uk/employers)

RCN (2015) *Fair Pay in the Independent Sector*, London: RCN. Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/publications](http://www.rcn.org.uk/publications)

## Disability

NHS Staff Council's Equality and Diversity Group (2014) *Guidance related to disability for the NHS*. Available online. Search for 'NHS employers equality and diversity sub group'.



## Domain 3: Health and safety at work

### What do we mean by health and safety at work?

All workers are entitled to work in environments where risks to their health and safety are properly controlled. This includes the provision of adequate welfare facilities such as toilets, and access to drinking water and comfortable working environments, including thermal comfort and adequate ventilation.

Wellbeing is a term commonly used in relation to health at work. Organisations are increasingly aware that health, safety and wellbeing is more than just the absence of work-related disease or injury rather, an emphasis on achieving physical, mental and social contentment amongst staff.

### Why does it matter to employers?

There is a robust legal framework that employers must follow to ensure compliance with relevant health and safety laws. Health and social care workers are exposed to a number of work-related hazards and have a disproportionate number of work-related injuries and ill health related to slips, manual handling injuries and stress.

Work-related ill health and injury can present significant costs to an organisation in terms of sickness absence, loss of skilled workers and agency spend to replace those off work. Defending legal claims can also present a significant financial and administrative impact to an organisation.

As well as complying with the legal requirements of health and safety laws, good employers utilise the working environment as a place to promote health and wellbeing. For example, by providing access to healthy eating options and opportunities for staff to participate in exercise or weight management activities. The benefits of workplace health promotion include increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, improved staff morale and increased retention of staff (European Agency for Occupational Safety and Health 2015).

### Health check: does my organisation provide a safe and healthy working environment for staff?

Do a health check of your organisation against the following indicators to ensure that you:

- ☐ have access to competent health and safety advice
- ☐ identify and assess the health and safety risks to staff including :
  - ☐ exposure to chemicals (including cleaning agents)
  - ☐ exposure to violence
  - ☐ lone working
  - ☐ slips and trips
  - ☐ moving and handling
  - ☐ sharps injuries
  - ☐ exposure to biohazards
  - ☐ shift working
  - ☐ work with display screen equipment
  - ☐ driving at work/use of public transport

Continued opposite...



- ☐ have effective measures in place to eliminate, reduce and monitor the risk of harm to staff including:
  - ☐ a reporting system for accidents and near misses that also ensures that all incidents are responded to and investigated, where appropriate
  - ☐ monitoring and acting on staff health and safety concerns
  - ☐ monitoring hot spots of work-related ill health or accidents
  - ☐ monitoring and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of policies and procedures
  - ☐ providing safe staffing levels
  - ☐ providing access to moving and handling equipment that is regularly maintained
  - ☐ providing supervision, support and effective means of raising the alarm for lone working staff
  - ☐ providing effective statutory and mandatory training for staff on health and safety related issues
  - ☐ operating a safe shift system
  - ☐ providing health assessments for those who regularly working night shifts
- ☐ ensure adequate welfare facilities including:
  - ☐ easy access to fresh drinking water
  - ☐ access to affordable healthy eating options for all staff, including shift workers
  - ☐ suitable rest facilities for staff to take breaks and eat meals
  - ☐ secure lockers for storage when staff wear uniform for work
  - ☐ comfortable temperatures and adequate space to carry out procedures safely
- ☐ identify additional risks to new and expectant mothers and put measures in place to reduce the risk
- ☐ identify additional risks to young workers and put measures in place to reduce identified risks
- ☐ ensure that managers and employees are aware of their responsibilities under health and safety laws
- ☐ provide staff with opportunities at work to maintain and improve their health.

## Follow up

Are there any areas and gaps that need improving? If so, see below for resources and further information on the topic area.

Do you want to pledge to improve one area of practice? If so, go to page 20.

Are there any areas where we can celebrate good practice? If so, go to page 21.

## Further information and resources

### General health and safety issues

Health and Safety Executive  
[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland  
[www.hseni.gov.uk](http://www.hseni.gov.uk)

Work Boost Wales  
[www.workboostwales.com](http://www.workboostwales.com)

### Miscellaneous RCN guidance

RCN (2013) *Sharps safety – RCN guidance to support the implantation of the health and safety* (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare Regulations) 2013 London: RCN. Available at [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

RCN (2012) *Tools of the trade – RCN guidance for health care staff on glove use and the prevention of contact dermatitis* London: RCN. Available at [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

RCN (2012) *A shift in the right direction – RCN guidance on the occupational health and safety of shift working in the nursing workforce*. London: RCN. Available at [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

### Partnership working on health and safety

NHS Staff Council's Health Safety and Wellbeing Partnership Group (2014) *The importance of effective partnership working on health, safety and wellbeing*. Available at [www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/health-work-and-wellbeing/protecting-staff-and-preventing-ill-health/health-safety-wellbeing-partnership-group/hswpg-publications-advice-and-resources](http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/health-work-and-wellbeing/protecting-staff-and-preventing-ill-health/health-safety-wellbeing-partnership-group/hswpg-publications-advice-and-resources)

### Driving at work

HSE Work related road safety  
[www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety](http://www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety)

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents  
[www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers](http://www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers)

### Safe staffing

RCN (2010) *Guidance on safe staffing levels in the UK*. London: RCN.  
Available at [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

Safe Staffing Alliance  
[www.safestaffing.org.uk](http://www.safestaffing.org.uk)

### Health promotion/public health

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines (available at [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/settings/workplaces](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/settings/workplaces))

NHS Scotland *Promoting healthy lives*  
[www.healthyworkinglives.com/advice/workplace-health-promotion](http://www.healthyworkinglives.com/advice/workplace-health-promotion)

NICE (2008). *Promoting physical activity in the workplace* (PH13). London: NICE

NICE (2009). *Promoting mental wellbeing through productive and healthy working conditions* (PH22). London: NICE

NICE (2007). *Workplace interventions to promote smoking cessation* (PH5). London: NICE.

NHS Employers  
[www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/health-work-and-wellbeing](http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/health-work-and-wellbeing)

Northern Ireland  
[www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)

*Promoting healthy eating at work – a guide for employers*

*Promoting physical activity at work – a guide for employers*

*Health and wellbeing at work: a resource guide*

### Violence and lone working

RCN (2008) *Work-related violence – an RCN tool to manage risk and promote safer working practices in health care* London: RCN. Available at [www.rcn.org.uk](http://www.rcn.org.uk)

NHS Protect  
[www.nhsprotect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsprotect.nhs.uk)

NHS Scotland Partnership Improvement network (2003) *Managing health at work* (including violence) Available at [www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies](http://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies)

NHS Scotland Partnership Improvement network (2011) *Gender-based violence*. Available at [www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies](http://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies)



## Domain 4: Job design

### What do we mean by job design?

Job design is how tasks or jobs are organised within the work environment to ensure they are well-matched to employees. In other words fitting the job to the worker not the other way round. Poorly designed jobs can lead to psychological and physical ill health.

### Why does it matter to employers?

According to the European Agency for Occupational Safety and Health (2015), the way in which a job is designed has great impact on the attitude, beliefs and feelings of the employee. These include organisational commitment, work motivation, performance, job satisfaction, mental health, reduced turnover and sickness absence. Poor design impacts also on training and training costs as a poor design increases the time to learn the system and requires more skilled trainers and highly skilled employees.

### Health check – does my organisation implement well designed jobs?

Do a health check on your organisation against the following indicators to ensure that you:

- ☐ have a workplace policy on stress and/or mental wellbeing
- ☐ adopt the HSE's workplace management standards which cover areas on control, autonomy, demands and job role
- ☐ consider and minimise the impact of new equipment/new processes on staff health and wellbeing (such as through training or adjustments)
- ☐ consult with staff and their representatives prior to the introduction of new equipment or processes

- ☐ make appropriate workplace adjustments for staff with disabilities
- ☐ assess the impact of moving to new, unfamiliar areas of work on staff (such as training and skills to carry out role)
- ☐ provide support for home workers/remote workers to minimise their isolation and promote good work-life balance
- ☐ have robust and transparent job evaluation practices which are adhered to and ensure that the skills, competencies and knowledge required for the role are reflected in pay determination.

### Follow up

Are there any areas and gaps that need improving? If so, see overleaf for resources and further information on the topic area.

Do you want to pledge to improve one area of practice? If so, go to page 20.

Are there any areas where we can celebrate good practice? If so, go to page 21.





## Further Information and resources

### Stress and mental health

RCN (2015) *Stress and you: a guide for nursing staff*

RCN (2009) *Work-related stress: a good practice guide for RCN representatives*. London: RCN.  
Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/publications](http://www.rcn.org.uk/publications)

NHS Staff Council (2014) *Guidance on the prevention and management of stress at work*.  
Available at [www.nhsemployers.org](http://www.nhsemployers.org) and search for 'management of stress'

HSE stress guidance  
[www.hse.gov.uk/stress](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)

MIND resources  
[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

NICE (2009). Promoting mental wellbeing through productive and healthy working conditions (PH22). London: NICE.  
Available at [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/settings/workplaces](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/settings/workplaces)

All Wales Mental Health promotion network  
[www.publicmentalhealth.org](http://www.publicmentalhealth.org)

Northern Ireland Promoting positive mental health at work: a guide for employers.  
Available online at [www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net) and search for 'promoting mental health'

### Job adjustments

Equality and human rights commission  
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com>

Fit for Work service  
<http://fitforwork.org/employer/supporting-an-employee-to-return-to-work>

Fit for Work Scotland  
<http://fitforworkscotland.scot/employers/supporting-an-employee-to-return-to-work>

HSE  
[www.hse.gov.uk/disability/law.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/disability/law.htm)

### Consultation with staff

HSE Consulting and involving your workers  
[www.hse.gov.uk/involvement](http://www.hse.gov.uk/involvement)

### Human Factors and job design

RCN  
[www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/patient\\_safety/human\\_factors\\_-\\_what\\_are\\_they](http://www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/patient_safety/human_factors_-_what_are_they)

HSE  
[www.hse.gov.uk/humanfactors/introduction.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/humanfactors/introduction.htm)

### Homeworking

Acas (2014) *Homeworking – a guide for employers and employees*.  
Available at [www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4853](http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4853)



# Domain 5: Learning and development in the workplace

## What do we mean by learning and development design?

Learning and development is a good 'catch all' term to describe the many learning activities that take place in the workplace. These include 'training' which is often described as mandatory or statutory and helps employees develop their understanding and skills on a particular issue relevant to their work. 'Education' or 'Continuing Professional Development (CPD)' are often used to describe the ongoing learning required for a particular profession such as nursing and can be linked to professional registration. Lifelong learning can be much broader than training, education and CPD and can include learning that isn't necessarily required for your role, but will can make a big difference to your work and your home life.

## Why does it matter to employers?

When we look at a healthy workplace, training, CPD and lifelong learning have an important part to play for the individual and the organisation's culture, specifically:

### Supporting a healthy and safe environment

There should be statutory/mandatory training in place in every organisation to ensure that all staff comply with health and safety regulations and can identify and address risk. The provision of mandatory or statutory training is important to employers as it can help demonstrate compliance with relevant legislation such as health and safety laws or safeguarding and can reduce costs in terms of accident reduction and claims.

### Supporting safe practice

There will be some statutory or mandatory training and CPD that is specific to a role and will ensure that staff practice safely.

### Supporting healthy working lives

**Learning to manage ill-health** – such as a manager supporting return to work following a period of sickness absence.

**Health and wellbeing workshops** – there is a strong link between learning and health and wellbeing. Learning events and workshops can focus on areas such as stress and mental health, smoking cessation and weight loss which will encourage staff to take ownership of their health and harness the support of their colleagues.

**Lifelong learning** – learning is also one of the 'big five' ways to manage stress. Learning a new hobby or skill can help someone to 'switch off' from stress and build confidence. Programmes like 'Learning at Work Week' can help to boost morale and hook people into learning and health and wellbeing events like yoga or nutrition are always popular topics.

Developing the numeracy, literacy and digital technology skills of employees can reap benefits for both the employee and employer by improving productivity, innovation and retention.



## Health check: does my organisation provide access to training and development opportunities for all staff?

Do a health check on your organisation against the following indicators to ensure that you:

- ☐ commit to being a learning organisation
- ☐ recognise the value of partnership working to promote and protect learning in the workplace
- ☐ understand the value of learning in creating and maintaining a healthy workplace
- ☐ are compliant with mandatory and statutory training requirements relating to health and safety in the workplace and the training is fit for purpose
- ☐ provide everyone with the opportunity to complete the training during paid work time and with access to IT if the training is online
- ☐ support staff who may have literacy, numeracy and IT skills that are preventing them from completing their mandatory training
- ☐ provide fair access to training and learning and development opportunities for all staff during working time so that they are able to practice safely
- ☐ provide work related training which is counted as working time and that staff are paid or given time off in lieu for completing
- ☐ mentor and supervise nursing staff effectively and provide nursing staff with the training to enable them to be effective supervisors
- ☐ support registered nursing staff to meet the standards for continued professional development as set out by the Nursing and Midwifery Council's revalidation requirements
- ☐ provide timely and effective appraisals for all staff and use the appraisal process to identify staff training and development needs.
- ☐ recognise the value of life-long learning and the benefits of learning that is not work related, but can support staff to lead healthy and happy working lives
- ☐ develop the numeracy, literacy and digital technology skills of employees.

## Follow up

Are there any areas and gaps that need improving? If so, see below for resources and further information on the topic area.

Do you want to pledge to improve one area of practice? If so, go to page 20.

Are there any areas where we want to celebrate good practice? If so, go to page 21.

## Further information and resources

### Statutory training

HSE (2012) *Health and safety training – a brief guide*. Available at [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg345.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg345.htm).

### General

RCN First Steps for Health Care Assistants  
<http://rcnhca.org.uk>

Campaign for learning  
[www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/cfl/index.asp](http://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/cfl/index.asp)

Health Education England Care Certificate  
<http://hee.nhs.uk/work-programmes/the-care-certificate-new>

NHS Wales Working Differently, Working Together (2012) Available at [www.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.wales.nhs.uk)

Skills for care  
[www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

Skills for health  
[www.skillsforhealth.org.uk](http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)

Social Partnership Forum Learning for Life campaign

[www.socialpartnershipforum.org/priority-areas/learning-for-life](http://www.socialpartnershipforum.org/priority-areas/learning-for-life)

### Appraisals

NHS Scotland Partnership Improvement Network (2011) Personal Development Planning and Review. Available at [www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies](http://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/partnership/partnership-information-network/pin-policies)

### CPD/revalidation

RCN revalidation

[www.rcn.org.uk/revalidation](http://www.rcn.org.uk/revalidation)

RCN online learning resources

[www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/cpd\\_online\\_learning](http://www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/cpd_online_learning)

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2015) *Revalidation guidance and resources*. Available at [www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation/revalidation-guidance-and-resources](http://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/revalidation/revalidation-guidance-and-resources)

### Union Learning Fund

[www.unionlearn.org.uk/about-unionlearn/union-learning-fund](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/about-unionlearn/union-learning-fund) The Union Learning Fund (ULF) has supported more than 50 unions in over 700 workplaces and remains a flagship mainstream government programme – regarded as pivotal by unions, the government, employers and partner organisations in the learning and skills world.

### Supervision and mentorship

Care quality commission (2013) *Supporting information and guidance: supporting effective clinical supervision*. Available at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

RCN (2015) *Apprentices, trainees and nursing students*. Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/618623/004-839.pdf](http://www.rcn.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/618623/004-839.pdf)



# Make a pledge

Once you've been through the health check and indicators you can make a pledge to address one or more of the issues highlighted under the domains. This may be something as simple as reviewing your bullying and harassment policy or reviewing risk assessments for lone working staff. For more significant pieces of work or to address gaps in policies and procedures we have developed a model action plan for you to use.

## Model action plan

Please write clearly in black ink.

Domain	Indicator	Objective	Tasks	Success Criteria	Timeframe	Resources

We have also brought together key resources and signposts to help you develop good practices policies and improvements in the areas highlighted.

Let us know about your pledge by visiting [www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace](http://www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace)

# Celebrate your achievements

We are keen to hear about improvements that have been made to the working environment after using this toolkit. Again, this can be something small such as installing a water dispenser for staff to use during working hours to implementing a major

initiative to improve workplace relationships and dignity.

You can complete the following form and tell us what you did. Alternatively, complete the online form at [www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace](http://www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace)

Please write clearly in black ink.

What was the issue?

How did you go about addressing it?

Who did you involve?

What was the outcome?

Can we share this on our website?

☐ Yes ☐ No

### Contact details

Your name:

Job title:

Place of work:

Daytime telephone number:

Email address:

### Return to:

Healthy Workplace Campaign  
Employment Relations Department  
Royal College of Nursing  
20 Cavendish Square  
London  
W1G 0RN





# References

RCN (2008) The RCN's definition of dignity  
[www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/dignity/rcns\\_definition\\_of\\_dignity](http://www.rcn.org.uk/development/practice/dignity/rcns_definition_of_dignity)

RCN (2015) *The case for healthy workplaces*  
Available at [www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace](http://www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace)

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2014) *Costs and benefits to business of adopting work life balance working practices a literature review*. London: DBIS

European Agency for Occupational Safety and Health (2015) Workplace Health Promotion.  
Available at [https://osha.europa.eu/en/topics/whp/index\\_html](https://osha.europa.eu/en/topics/whp/index_html)

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Available at: [http://oshwiki.eu/wiki/Definition\\_of\\_work/job\\_design](http://oshwiki.eu/wiki/Definition_of_work/job_design)

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To find out more about the RCN's healthy workplace campaign, visit [www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace](http://www.rcn.org.uk/healthyworkplace)