

# Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS FT

## Board of Directors

21<sup>st</sup> November 2012

### Roll Out of the Performance, Values and Behaviourally based Appraisal Process

#### **Background**

During 2011/12 a performance, values and behaviourally based appraisal process was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders across the Trust. In January it was agreed by TEG that this should be piloted with an initial group of senior leaders in the Trust i.e. members of the Trust Executive Group and their direct reports. The appraisal process was launched in April and a total of 96 staff have participated in the pilot to end of September 2012.

All participants were asked to complete a paper based evaluation and this was followed up by individual visits/attendance at the nurse directors meeting by Claire Fretwell, Debbie Taylor and Rhian Bishop where suggestions for improvement were also invited, particularly with regard to rolling out the appraisal throughout the whole organisation.

#### **Main Findings of the Evaluation**

It is important to remember that the most important thing about an appraisal is not the paperwork but the quality of the discussion between appraiser and appraisee.

Many participants felt that it had been useful to have the performance sections and PROUD behaviours in order to focus the discussion. However the results of the evaluation showed very clearly that the appraisers and appraisees did not find the paperwork user friendly, many found it confusing, did not want to use it with their own staff and felt it would be a barrier in the future. The overwhelming view was that it should be simplified.

Concern was expressed by the nurse directors and the general managers that unless the performance and behaviours appraisal process was simplified, introducing it would have a detrimental impact on appraisal rates across the trust given that many clinical staff with busy workloads have high numbers of staff to appraise.

Most staff did not feel that they were well prepared and would have preferred more training, particularly with regard to discussions around the behaviours.

#### **Revised Paperwork**

Following comments from senior leaders, the appraisal documentation has been aligned to the new Corporate Strategy "Making a Difference". In addition, the paperwork for leaders (i.e. AFC band 8a and above) has been simplified in line with the views of the majority of staff ( Appendix 1) and simplified further for other staff (Appendix 2) which will be supported by further guidance on the internet.

#### **Next Steps**

A training plan is attached (Appendix 3) which aims to roll out the new appraisal process throughout the Trust within approximately 2 years. It is important that in future years the senior leaders appraisals (members of the Trust Executive Group and their direct reports) are done as close as possible to the directorate performance objective setting round i.e. within the first 3 months of the financial year and within 6 months of the financial year for other leaders (AFC 8A and above). Staff below 8A can continue to have their appraisal at any time during the financial year but all staff must receive an annual appraisal (NB timescales may need to be reviewed for maternity leave, long term sickness etc.).

The evaluation of the pilot does show that appraisers require more training than the pilot group had, in order to feel prepared to carry out a good quality appraisal. The importance of being able to carry out a good quality appraisal has recently been reiterated in the recent King's Fund research\* which shows that 'what makes a difference to staff engagement is not an appraisal but a well structured appraisal.' It is therefore recommended that it should be mandatory for all appraisers to undertake training before carrying out appraisals

Currently 22 appraisal sessions a year are run by the Learning and Development department but this will have to be significantly increased to ensure more appraisers are trained in order to meet the timescales within the rollout plan. These sessions are currently provided by the leadership team who will also be providing additional training in 'Managing difficult conversations' (especially around behaviours which participants in the appraisal pilot have also identified a need for)

*\*Leadership and Engagement for Improvement in the NHS – Kings Fund Leadership review May 2012.*

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