

1.19.16 Workforce Engagement

Please supply details of how you will ensure workforce engagement and involvement in service development including how you ensure that the views of staff members with protected characteristics are valued.

(Maximum Word Count 750)

Words used = 750

1.19.16.1-Key roles

Vocare's ethos is that everybody has a role in developing/maintaining our culture and values. Our Director of HR is the lead for workforce engagement in line with our people strategy. Visible leadership is demonstrated by our CEO, promoting and leading a values-based culture, and down through divisional/regional/area management to the contract leads for GP-OOH in Staffordshire.

Our People Committee is where workforce feedback is reviewed, interpreted and actioned. Our HR Business Partners work closely with our leadership teams to drive engagement initiatives.

Our ongoing cultural change programme at Group level oversees overall cultural engagement initiatives.

1.19.16.2-Engaging/involving staff in service development

To engage staff we use:

- Intranet.
- 1:1 meetings.
- Appraisals.
- Staff surveys (including pulse checks via the intranet).
- Touch point-surveys.
- Area newsletters that share successes, communicating changes in process/best practice and information sharing.
- Team meetings.
- Handover huddles/shift change.
- Management briefings.
- Group communications.
- Visible leadership – site visits and listening events.

We use focus groups to enable staff to share improvement ideas/suggestions including service development.

a)-Staff survey

We aim for at least 70% response rate to ensure any resulting initiatives for staff are meaningful. Our staff responses also link in with the creation of the People Committee.

As a result of the last survey, we are driving a continuous-improvement culture via a values-based approach. We are embedding our values into all our policies, procedures and toolkits to build a culture of excellence that includes:

- An overarching multidisciplinary framework for recruitment, retention, career management and development to be an employer of choice and attract top talent.
- Our network of mental-health first aiders.
- Improved terms and conditions across the group.
- Develop our Wellbeing policies to create a management toolkit to upskill line managers to support our employees.
- Inclusion of an equality impact assessment statement so we continually monitoring the impact of our policies in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Integrating our values into the performance-review process and reviewing our policies and management toolkits/PDR forms to ensure staff feel PDRs are valuable and meaningful to them.
- Reviewing our management and leadership standards and competency frameworks to mirror our values and improve communication and equip managers to support staff well.
- Create a visible leadership plan/schedule and communications with senior management teams across the group to ensure staff feel supported.
- Listening and action groups to involve staff in more decisions, including service development.
- Review our performance-management system to ensure staff receive regular and meaningful feedback and have opportunity to discuss development and create scope for innovative thinking and improvement suggestions.

b)-Challenges of engaging with remote workforces

Challenges with a remote workforce include keeping staff engaged, motivated, up to date, communicated with and on-task. To bond our teams we use:

- 1:1 virtual meetings.
- Area newsletters shared via email.
- Virtual team meetings and management briefings.
- Group communications sent via email.

c)-Involving staff in service development

Using the above workforce-engagement methods, we gather feedback from staff. We involved GP-OOH staff in service development after listening to concerns regarding equipment used on home visits. The ambi-bags, which were in all vehicles, varied across the fleet (i.e. some bags were adult/paediatric only whereas others were adult/paediatric/infant). Our Lead Driver brought this variation to the attention of our Clinical Service Manager, who then reviewed the service requirements and usage over the previous year, and the skill set of the staff using this equipment with our drivers.

This review identified some soft gel airways that were not needed and NG airways within the bags that could be removed. The bags are now updated with standardised equipment across the remote service. The improvement included cost benefits of not having unrequired equipment, and patient safety from eliminating risk from variation in equipment.

1.19.16.3-Valuing views of staff with protected characteristics

We demonstrate the value we place on the views of staff with protected characteristics through accommodating their needs via reasonable adjustments to the workplace and ways of working and through listening to what they need.

We engage with staff during pre-employment to initially accommodate any protected characteristics or reasonable adjustments. Adjustments could include use of sanitary bins in male toilets to support a transgender member of staff or someone using e.g. stoma bags or incontinence pads. Where staff do not declare any requirement for adjustments, we reinforce our availability for open conversations with line managers or HR to meet their needs and value their views (e.g., pronoun use, providing the right type of phone for employees who use hearing aids). We also seek specialist support through our occupational health provision and Access to Work schemes.