1. BACKGROUND

There is no question that the Trust is regarded as a centre for excellence delivering world class quality of patient care and moves forward from a position of strength in its ability to respond to the challenges presented by the changing NHS architecture.

However, an internal activity which requires further attention is the response to the recent NHS Staff Survey results for the Trust which reports a consistently low score for ‘staff satisfaction’. Further, in the 2011 staff survey an additional low score was the percentage of ‘staff feeling valued by colleagues’. Whilst the Trust staff engagement score is higher than the average compared with acute trusts, the Trust is not in the top 20 highest performing Trusts against these criteria. Given these highlights, the risk of not acknowledging and responding to such data is that it has the potential to undermine performance and staff retention.

One of the key enablers of staff engagement is that employees feel they have the information to do their jobs well, and are provided with feedback which builds confidence in performance; it also builds confidence and trust in the organisation. Staff feeling involved in decision making and having annual appraisal discussions can be significant in affecting this score. Research conducted by Professor Michael West, at Lancaster University in 2011, drawing on data from the NHS Staff Survey, reports that the higher the quality of care, the more satisfied patients, and lower patient mortality. He also reports that staff satisfaction and commitment predicts patient satisfaction, and that a positive organisational climate is associated with low and declining levels of patient mortality.

The Trust has a clear vision, set of strategic goals and values. It has also introduced core professional and leadership behaviours which act as a common thread underpinning the values, and which are being woven into many staff activities – recruitment and selection, appraisal and development. The values include the desire for continuous improvement in pursuit of excellence and pride in public service, yet there is currently no Trust wide formal recognition or celebration of the commitment and discretionary effort offered by staff who contribute to delivery of a high quality health care or support service.

The Trust has in place some staff recognition and reward schemes which are limited to specific staff groups as follows:

- NHS Consultants’ Clinical Excellence Awards Scheme
- Annual Nursing and Midwifery Practice Award – via Annual Trust Conference
- Long Service Award Scheme
This paper sets out a proposal for implementing a staff recognition scheme, available to all staff, to enable the Trust to recognise, celebrate and thank staff who are exemplars in delivering ‘healthcare at its very best – with a personal touch’ and in doing so enhance the patient experience.

A separate ‘volunteer’ award scheme proposal is also in development.

2. PROPOSAL

It is proposed to implement a staff recognition scheme which will identify and celebrate Trust staff who ‘make us proud’, and best represent the Trust values. The scheme will recognise and reward both individual staff and teams; all permanent Trust employees will be eligible to be nominated. Any member of permanent staff could be nominated who demonstrates consideration and commitment to placing patients at the heart of everything they do.

It is proposed the Scheme would be officially implemented from 1 January 2013; if agreed, this date allows a reasonable timescale to effectively plan and promote its launch across the Trust using appropriate printed materials and the intranet. The Scheme would be overseen by the HR Directorate.

It is proposed to call the scheme the ‘Personal Touch’ award and details of the proposed scheme are set out in appendix 1.

3. BENEFITS

Acknowledging the ‘austerity’ challenges and ongoing pay restraint, the introduction of such a scheme would send a very clear signal that the Trust is committed to acknowledging the contribution by its staff, and promoting that message. The scheme would be promoted as part of the ‘employment package’, help Trust recruitment and retention, and influence a cultural change.

The scheme would further enhance the patient experience, as patients, visitors and the public would be able to participate through submitting nominations.

4. PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION IN PRACTICE

- Winners:
  - Two individual winners to be identified each quarter i.e. January to March, April to June, July to September, October to December. The preferred outcome would be one high and one low (pay band), ideally one clinical and one non clinical.
  - 8 winners annually who will be put forward for the opportunity to be ‘Employee of the Year’.
  - One ‘Team’ to be identified for each quarter, i.e. January to March, April to June, July to September, October to December.
  - Annual Award Event – by special invitation to all winners to join with the Trust Board, Governors and others to announce and celebrate the ‘Employee of the Year’. Likely to take place in December.
Nominations process:
- Invited from colleagues, patients, visitors
- Electronic or paper submission via Trust intranet/internet or paper nomination form which may be submitted in Scheme postal boxes.
- Pre determined cut off date identified each month.
- The person nominating should identify a recent specific event or incident which illustrates why the staff member or team should be recognised. Full details of the incident or experience, and reasons why it was so exemplary and is such a great example of the individual/team demonstrating consideration for and commitment to placing patients at the heart of everything they do, and providing clinical care or support ‘at its very best – with a personal touch’, will be required as part of the nominations process.
- Individuals and teams may not nominate themselves
- Nominators will have the right to remain anonymous (not have their identity disclosed to their nominee)

Judging panel:
- All monthly submissions to be summarised onto an anonymised nominations spreadsheet, sorted by high and low banded staff, for the judging panel to review
- Monthly panel meeting at the beginning of each month to select winners. Nominations summary to be circulated in advance of meeting
- To be comprised of a cross section of staff – propose no more than 8 members including (1 x Executive Director, Nursing and Patient Services (Chair) 1 x doctor or nurse, 1 x Directorate Manager, 1 x ancillary or operations staff, 1 x staff side representative, 1 x patient representative, 1 x Governor). Panel members must commit to participate each month for a minimum period and respect confidentiality of process.
- Review all nominations to identify potential ‘winners’. Decision made by the judging panel will be final (subject to validation)
- Application of voting process for those shortlisted during the meeting using a weighted scoring system
- Following panel meeting, potential winners’ details will be validated by HR to ensure professional appropriateness and suitability (e.g. no performance issues)
- Winners and their line manager to be contacted directly by telephone and sent a congratulatory letter from the Chief Executive or member of the Executive Team setting out the date of a presentation.

Rewards:
- Congratulatory letter from the Chief Executive or member of the Executive team. Copied to their line manager/Directorate Manager/Clinical Director
- Framed scheme certificate signed by the Chief Executive and Chairman
- Individual winner to receive £50.00 Landmark Voucher (as per Long Service Awards)
- Quarterly Team Award £150.00 to utilise in their service
- Annual Employee of the Year Award – to be confirmed.
• Presentation:
  o The winners will be advised that they may invite colleagues / friends / family to the presentation.
  o The person who nominated the ‘winning’ employee will be contacted to inform them of the outcome and to invite them to attend the presentation if they wish.
  o Quarterly presentation to take place at the employee’s place of work with an Executive Director presenting the award.
  o Winning employee to be provided with a framed, signed Award certificate, Scheme lapel pin/velcro badge – to wear ‘with pride’, and award voucher.

5. **COSTS**

The introduction of such a scheme would require funding - to provide administrative support and coordination, to ensure appropriate, high profile communication within the Trust and on the external website, and to fund the Award vouchers and supporting documentation.

It is acknowledged that in view of the Trust CIP additional funds will not be available to facilitate the introduction of such a Scheme. Therefore it is proposed to submit a request to the Charitable Trustees who, if they support the application for funds, would also be able to provide some communications support. The next ‘Newcastle Healthcare Charity’ meeting is scheduled for 28 September 2012.

Funding would be required for the following:

- Appointment of a Part-time ‘Scheme Coordinator’, capable of administering the Scheme, including the receipt and collation of all nominations, service the judging panel, notify the ‘winners’; issue the ‘congratulations’ letters, arrange the monthly and annual presentation, including invites to friends/family, update the Trust intranet and website. This would be anticipated to be a 0.4wte part-time, fixed term role, potentially Band 4.
- Promotion and communication materials including
  - Production and distribution of Nomination forms
  - Scheme logo, banner and promotion material
  - Winner certificates, frames and badges
  - Award vouchers
  - Photography
  - Maintenance and upkeep of Trust ‘Winners Gallery’; location to be determined
  - Production of ‘Annual Review’ brochure of winners and Annual Award event

Costs are currently being obtained to include in the submission to the Charitable Trustees.

6. **SUMMARY**

The Executive Team has agreed in principle the introduction of a Staff Recognition scheme. In addition, engagement and support would be welcomed from Governors.
7. **RECOMMENDATION**

- To receive this report and support the implementation of the proposed Staff Recognition Scheme from 1st January 2013. As this is a new development, which will require a significant time commitment from both Executive Team members and the judging panel, it is proposed to initially introduce the Scheme on the basis of quarterly awards. Participation in and impact of the Scheme may then be evaluated after a full year of operation.

- To support the communications and promotions process to publicise the scheme launch and its sustainability.

Dee Fawcett  
Director of HR  
7th September 2012
This award scheme is intended to recognise, celebrate and thank individual staff and teams who, through their contribution and effort, have been exemplars of the Trust values in delivering healthcare at its very best – with a personal touch, and in doing so enhance the patient experience.

Staff may be nominated for the award by colleagues, patients or visitors. The best two members of staff from the entries received will be named the ‘Personal Touch’ employee of the quarter. They will be automatically entered into an annual ‘Personal Touch’ employee of the year award, with the winner being announced at an Award celebration in December.

One ‘Team Award’ will be announced quarterly.

The person nominating should identify a recent specific event or incident which illustrates why the staff member or team should be recognised. Full details of the incident or experience, and reasons why it was so exemplary will be required as part of the nominations process.

How to nominate a member of staff or team:

You may nominate a member of staff or team for the award by completing the nomination form available on the intranet page, outlining the details why they are such a great example of demonstrating their consideration for and commitment to placing patients at the heart of everything they do, and providing clinical care or support ‘at its very best – with a personal touch’.

Alternatively, you should complete a ‘Personal Touch’ nomination form and post it into the comments/suggestions boxes on the wards/clinics and Reception Areas.

How nominations will be judged:

All nominations received will be reviewed by a panel of judges, comprised of both clinical and non clinical staff. Two individual winners and one winning team will be announced at the end of each quarter. The winners will be contacted directly by a member of the judging panel, and will be announced on the Newcastle Hospitals internet and intranet sites.