DIGNITY AT WORK IN THE NHS

Does Declaration of Policy Correlate to Organisational Performance in Dignity?

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Background

- Dignity is a sense of worth, value, respect, or esteem that is derived from one's humanity and individual social position, as well as being treated respectfully and fairly by others.
- Dignity or its antithesis incivility, correlates with recruitment, retention and health of the workforce. It impacts differentially on staff based on protected characteristics.
- Dignity/Incivility in the UK health service impacts on organisational safety, effectiveness and outcomes for patients[1-3] £2.281bn in direct costs per annum.[4]
- The NHS Staff survey provides a barometer for the organisational environment and most readily measured with Workforce Race Equality Standards data.

Hypothesis

- High and low performing NHS organisations (based on WRES indicators) differ in their publicly declared commitment to tackling incivility - by assessment of publicly available policies. This is best manifested by their performance for those with protected characteristics.

Methods

- We assumed that organisational commitment to tackle incivility should be publicly declared, that policies should be easily accessible and applicable to all employees and data on performance should be made publicly available.
- We analysed quantitative WRES data from all UK NHS Trusts between 2016 to 2021 split into the top and bottom deciles and compared the availability of policies, statements or data in their public facing websites.
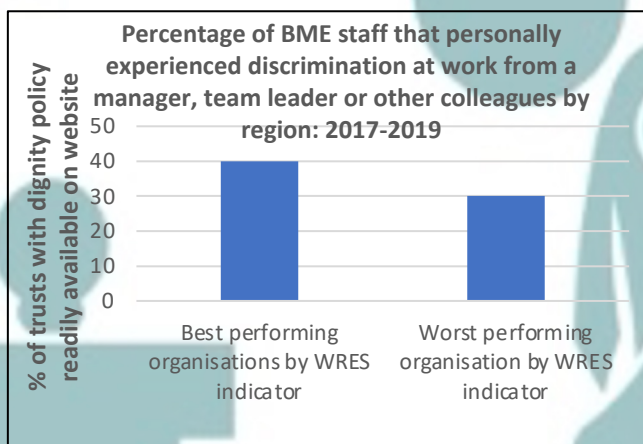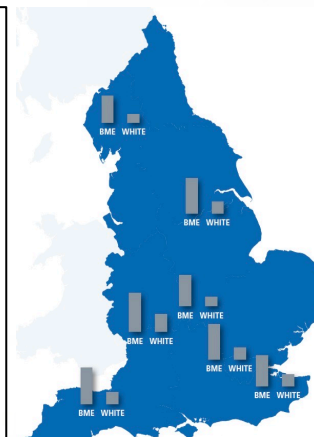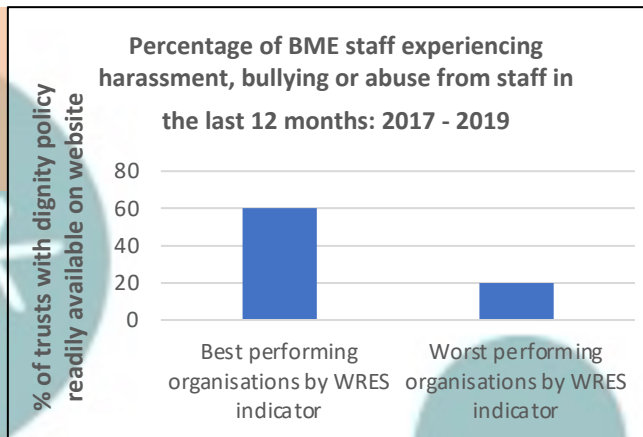
Results

- Our analysis supported our hypothesis that the better performers have more widely available policies, data or declared intent to promote dignity and tackle incivility.

Conclusion

- Public declaration of commitment to tackling incivility is an important determinant although it may not be the only factor contributing to these performances.

Further Proposed Plans

- A qualitative study involving interviewing heads of the highest and lowest performing organisations to find out how their leadership affects work cultures in their respective places and how they plan to improve on those fronts.

Percentage of BME staff experiencing harassment, bullying or abuse from staff in the last 12 months: 2017 - 2019

Percentage of BME staff that personally experienced discrimination at work from a manager, team leader or other colleagues by region: 2017-2019

Percentage of staff believing that their trust provides equal opportunities for career progression or promotion:2017-2019

References:

1. NHS England. (2020) *NHS Staff Survey 2020 National results briefing*. NHS England.

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4. Kline, R. & Lewis, D. (2019) The price of fear: Estimating the financial cost of bullying and harassment to the NHS in England. *Public Money & Management*. 39 (3), 166-174. 10.1080/09540962.2018.153503 Lewis, D. & Kline, R. (2019) Tackling bullying and harassment in the NHS: the critical roles played by managers. *British Journal of Healthcare Management*. 25 (1), 7-10.10.12968/bjhc.2019.25. 1.7
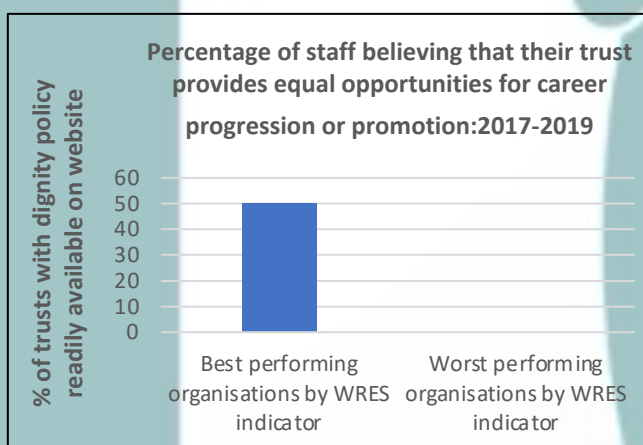
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