

Staff Rights

3a. Staff – your rights and NHS pledges to you

It is the commitment, professionalism and dedication of staff working for the benefit of the people the NHS serves which really make the difference. High quality care requires high quality workplaces, with commissioners and providers aiming to be employers of choice.

All staff should have rewarding and worthwhile jobs, with the freedom and confidence to act in the interest of patients. To do this, they need to be trusted and actively listened to. They must be treated with respect at work, have the tools, training and support to deliver care, and opportunities to develop and progress.

The Constitution applies to all staff, doing clinical or non-clinical NHS work, and their employers. It covers staff wherever they are working, whether in public, private or third sector organisations.

Staff have extensive legal rights, embodied in general employment and discrimination law. These are summarised in the Handbook to the NHS Constitution. In addition, individual contracts of employment contain terms and conditions giving staff further rights.

The rights are there to help ensure that staff:

- Have a good working environment with flexible working opportunities, consistent with the needs of patients and with the way that people live their lives;
- Have a fair pay and contract framework;
- Can be involved and represented in the workplace;
- Have healthy and safe working conditions and an environment free from harassment, bullying or violence;
- Are treated fairly, equally and free from discrimination; and
- Can raise an internal grievance and if necessary seek redress, where it is felt that a right has not been upheld.

In addition to these legal rights, there are a number of **pledges**, which the NHS is committed to achieve. Pledges go above and beyond your legal rights. This means that they are not legally binding but represent a commitment by the NHS to provide high-quality working environments for staff.

The NHS commits:

- To provide all staff with clear roles and responsibilities and rewarding jobs for teams and individuals

- that make a difference to patients, their families and carers and communities (pledge);
- To provide all staff with personal development, access to appropriate training for their jobs and line management support to succeed (pledge);
 - To provide support and opportunities for staff to maintain their health, well-being and safety (pledge); and
 - To engage staff in decisions that affect them and the services they provide, individually, through representative organisations and through local partnership working arrangements. All staff will be empowered to put forward ways to deliver better and safer services for patients and their families (pledge).

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