



surveys, Raleigh *et al* (2009) found further associations between positive staff and patient results, suggesting that patients have better experiences when staff are happier.

Anxiety

Staff wellbeing is important, but relatively poorly studied in the NHS. Its staff are more likely to be absent through illness, and they more frequently report work-related illnesses caused by stress, anxiety and depression, than other workers in England.

Half the survey respondents to the Boorman review reported being more stressed than usual at the time of the survey (April-June 2009). High rates of presenteeism – being at work when not well – bullying and harassment were also reported.

Numerous studies indicate that staff wellbeing is affected by their immediate working relationships, staff members' behaviour towards each other, managerial support and whether they feel valued.

All these factors are likely to affect nurses' motivation, job satisfaction and intention to leave. As nurses are in closest contact with patients, communicating with and caring for them over a prolonged period, nurses' wellbeing is most likely to affect the quality of patients' experiences.

The intuitive view that 'happy staff mean happier patients', and vice versa, is appealing, but it is

The feelgood factor

Jill Maben examines the evidence for a link between staff wellbeing and the quality of patient care

Improving the care and experience of patients are prominent features of NHS health policy. The Boorman review of NHS staff health maintains there is a relationship between their wellbeing and patients' experience of care.

It says trusts willing to invest in staff health and wellbeing may see significant service improvements, with better outcomes and patient experience. It points to the higher rates of

patient satisfaction recorded in trusts where staff health and wellbeing are better in terms of injury rates, stress levels, job satisfaction and turnover.

The Boorman review reported a relationship between staff health and wellbeing and annual health check ratings. Good and excellent ratings in 2007/08 were evident in trusts where staff health and wellbeing were rated higher.

By cross-referencing and analysing annual staff and patient

NOTICE BOARD

Research The National Institute for Health Research is seeking professional and service user peer-reviewers for its advisory panels. Reviewers advise on commissioning quality research into areas of importance for the NHS. Panel and commissioning board members have a wide range of backgrounds, from NHS managers to professionals, researchers and service users. www.sdo.nihr.ac.uk/getinvolved.html

Best practice Nurses can now access the Map of Medicine pathways through NHS Evidence. The maps,



visual representations of best clinical practice algorithms, are available to clinicians via the web. The pathways can be adapted locally and shared across organisations. More than 50 healthcare communities are now using them to reduce costs, improve patient experience, reduce hospital admissions and lower waiting times. www.mapofmedicine.com/england or www.evidence.nhs.uk

Staff sickness The National Patient Safety Agency has published new guidelines to help clinicians with health problems get prompt help. Invisible Patients recommends



difficult to determine whether the links are causal and or due to other factors in the organisation. There is limited UK research exploring the links, which should be expected to be complex from both the organisational and interpersonal perspectives.

However, the National Nursing Research Unit at King's College London, is being funded by the National Institute for Health Research Service Delivery and Organisation programme to research in depth the links between patients' experiences and staff wellbeing in two large acute trusts and two community service providers. The project will report in spring 2011 **NS**

Jill Maben is senior research fellow and deputy director at the National Nursing Research Unit, King's College London

Reference

Raleigh VS *et al* (2009) Do associations between staff and inpatient feedback have the potential for improving patient experience? An analysis of surveys in NHS acute trusts in England. *Quality & Safety in Health Care*. 18, 5, 347-354.

RESOURCE FILE

- ▶ **NHS health and wellbeing – the Boorman review** www.nhshealthandwellbeing.org
- ▶ **Health and wellbeing at direct.gov** <http://tiny.cc/hwb649>
- ▶ **RCN public health nursing community** <http://tiny.cc/phn>

Challenging environment

Mike Jackson talks about his work as a St John Ambulance first aid volunteer

Nurses join St John Ambulance for many different reasons. Some want to do something new, while others want to expand their professional portfolio. Many wish to brush up their first aid skills.

St John Ambulance is a global network of volunteer first aid units. My unit leader role involves managing a team of 71 volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds.



Mike Jackson finds being a St John Ambulance volunteer rewarding

Challenges

I ensure volunteers are trained and standards maintained. I manage a budget, fundraise and run publicity initiatives, as well as providing first aid and medical resources at public events. The work is challenging and often encroaches on my personal time.

Qualities you need

- ▶ **Adaptable:** able to work in difficult environments.
- ▶ **Motivated:** willing to work only for satisfaction.
- ▶ **Confident and decisive.**
- ▶ **Willing to learn.**
- ▶ **Responsible:** nurses often take clinical lead at an event.

I have 23 years' experience as a volunteer, I have been trained in management and leadership, safety at mass gatherings, and have a teaching certificate.

St John Ambulance is a wonderful organisation to work for and there are endless volunteering opportunities. If you have time and motivation, join up **NS**

Mike Jackson is unit leader, Burnley Quadrilateral Unit, St John Ambulance Service

For more information on St John Ambulance go to www.sja.org.uk

that health workers should have preferred access to GPs and calls for specialist services to treat sick health professionals. The guidance says good health management should be included in professional training curricula and all professions should consider how they can adopt a consistent approach to health and fitness to practise. www.npsa.nhs.uk

Guideline development The Scottish Intercollegiate Guideline Network (Sign) is updating several of its guidelines. Development groups will review the most recent evidence



and make necessary changes. Professionals interested in critically appraising scientific papers on colorectal cancer, dyspepsia, epilepsy, respiratory tract infection, postnatal depression and obstructive sleep apnoea can contact Sign via its website. www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/published/join.html

Literacy and numeracy Skills for Health has launched healthcare-specific assessment tools for testing literacy and numeracy skills. The free-to-use online tools include real-life healthcare scenarios and can be modified to suit users' ability. <http://tiny.cc/numeracy271>