

In the NHS, the culture of the organisation and the culture of the team can have a huge impact on the quality of care patients receive, and the outcome of their treatment.

Within organisations, like GP practices, a better safety culture is associated with greater satisfaction and engagement from staff.

In the NHS, the safer the culture the better the care.

As part of their involvement with the West of England Patient Safety Collaborative, GP practices across the region have agreed to take part in a primary care culture survey. The aim of the survey is to measure and understand the culture that exists within organisations and teams.

This leaflet explains what the survey is, what it measures, and what it could mean for you, your practice, and the NHS.

How can I find out more?

You can find full details of what the primary care culture survey is, how it works and how you can get involved on our website at www.weahsn.net

About the West of England Academic Health Science Network

The West of England Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) is delivering positive healthcare outcomes locally and nationally by driving the development and adoption of new innovations and making a meaningful contribution to the economy.

We are one of 15 AHSNs across England, established by NHS England in 2013 to spread innovation at pace and scale.

As the only bodies that connect NHS and academic organisations, the third sector and industry, we are catalysts that create the right conditions to facilitate change across whole health and social care economies, with a clear focus on improving outcomes for patients.

The primary care collaborative has adopted and spread good practice developed by our colleagues in the Yorkshire and Humber, South West and Wessex Academic Health Science Networks and we acknowledge their support in the development of this programme.



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What is the Primary Care Collaborative?

The Primary Care Collaborative aims to promote a safety culture in the primary care setting through the developing a culture of people safety whilst promoting an open and honest culture.

It helps practices to undertake their own improvement journey, networking with other practices in the West of England region to share learning and collaborate together.

What is culture?

Culture simply means 'the way we are doing things around here'. It's a way of quantifying what it feels like to come to work. A good culture usually means that people enjoy coming to work and feel like a valued member of the team. It's not about what you do but the way in which you do it in terms of the interactions between people in a unit, team or department.

Why is it important to understand and improve culture?

Happier teams provide better care to patients. It is now accepted that good culture in the NHS is crucial to ensure that patients receive high quality care and better outcomes. As teams work to improve systems and processes, it is important that teams better understand their own culture to identify what works well and what can be improved.

What is the survey?

Through a series of short questions, the survey aims to assess aspects of the safety culture, including:

- Ability as a team to reflect and learn
- Aspects of leadership including feedback
- Team behaviours including communication
- Burnout and work-life balance

The primary care culture survey

- is done entirely online
- takes no more than 10 minutes
- is completely anonymous

Why are we doing it?

The primary care culture survey will provide you with a better understanding of your practice's team culture. The goal is for you to use these insights to provide better care for your patients.

This is feasible only through your candid and thoughtful participation. All results will be shared with you at an individual practice level, as part of a comprehensive debrief.

How does it work?

Once your practice has agreed to take part you will receive an email with information about taking the survey. The survey collects information anonymously.

We ask that everyone who fills out the survey is as open and honest as possible, because this is the only way that you will get a true picture of your practice culture. All results will be anonymised.

The survey is not a benchmarking exercise, and will not be used to measure individual or team performance. We will not share individual team results with other teams or organisations.

We will use aggregate information to identify shared areas of good practice and opportunities for improvement in the collaborative.

What will happen with the results?

The results of the survey will be fed back to you and your team, allowing you to clearly see the current culture that exists. This debriefing stage involves the analysis and feedback of your results.

After completing the survey and the debriefing, you will be able to identify which areas to target to improve your team culture.

After 12 months we will repeat the primary care culture survey in order to understand the impact of your improvement work and demonstrate the benefits for staff and patients .

"Our practice has the same ups and downs as all practices and there can be a tension between, on the one hand, everyone agreeing to disagree and doing things differently and 'group think' where people don't adequately think things through in their quest to agree. It is important to hear all views and concerns, but it is equally important to start with a problem solving and collaborative mind set, and then to all agree to implement in the same way. Using the primary care culture survey to explore the issues that feed into our quality improvement projects is vitally important in overcoming this."

Dr Hein Le Roux, GP & Primary Care Lead for Patient Safety for the West of England AHSN