

The values agenda: Drivers for change

In recent years there has been an increasing focus on the quality of care provided by the NHS, alongside reports of the unacceptable treatment of patients in the media. A number of high-profile inquiries and publications have been conducted, each making recommendations to improve patients' experiences within the NHS. Not least of these inquiries was the publication of the [Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry \(Francis, 2013\)](#) which highlighted the vital role of the workforce in providing high quality, safe and compassionate healthcare. In particular, the report emphasised the importance of staff values and behaviours on the level of care and patient experience.

A selection of these reports, and their implications in relation to the values agenda are below:

Report	Context and outcomes
Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry (Francis, 2013)	"healthcare employers...should assess candidates' values, attitudes and behaviours..." (recommendation 191)
The Cavendish Review (2013)	An Independent Review into Healthcare Assistants and Support Workers in the NHS and social care settings "Employers should be supported to test values, attitudes and aptitude for caring at recruitment stage." (recommendation 6)
Berwick Review into Patient Safety (2013)	A promise to learn – a commitment to act: Improving the safety of patients in England "Place the quality of patient care, especially patient safety, above all other aims. Engage, empower, and hear patients and carers at all times. Foster whole-heartedly the growth and development of all staff, including their ability and support to improve the processes in which they work. Embrace transparency unequivocally and everywhere, in the service of accountability, trust and the growth of knowledge."
The Keogh Mortality Review (2013)	Looked at the quality of care and treatment provided by those NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts that were persistent outliers on mortality indicators.
Transforming Care: A National Response into Winterbourne View Hospital (2012)	The response looked at the unacceptable treatment of patients with learning disabilities at Winterbourne View private hospital.

It is in part due to these reports that values have become such a significant priority for the NHS in delivering excellent patient care and experience. It is important to ensure that we not only recruit people with the right values to work in the NHS, but also encourage an environment and culture which supports and enhances those values. This will help to ensure excellent trainee, staff and patient experience and most importantly patient care.