Introduction

It has been a year since The Walton Centre brought its recruitment function in-house and it was critical that the organisation took this step. This is a specialist organisation where some of the services we offer to patients are dependent upon the skills and talents of individual consultants. This will always mean that succession planning is critical to the on-going success of the organisation and that we need to manage this internally. Further, there has been a growing skill shortage across the wider healthcare professions that now mean recruitment and retention is our number one priority.

Mike Gibney, Director of Workforce

The aim of this strategy is to provide a strong direction to all recruitment activity across our organisation and the wider health economy. Our approach needs to be as comprehensive as possible, given the challenging environment in which all healthcare providers are now recruiting from a shrinking pool of qualified professionals. Therefore, this strategy has a strong focus upon the retention and development of existing staff, the promotion of a positive image of the organisation across the system and local community, as well as attracting the most talented new staff.

Tracey Martin, Head of Business HR
Overview

The purpose of this recruitment strategy is to set out the desired future vision for the organisation’s recruitment activity and the main elements that will underpin successful delivery.

The Walton Centre has established an excellent reputation for patient care and quality. This is underpinned by our values based, organisational culture that has been established by all employees - making it a great place to work. Unlike many other health providers across Merseyside, we have enjoyed a period of significant expansion. This has seen the development of new services, delivering increased levels of patient care and the development of an expanded infrastructure. This has led to a substantial growth in the total workforce headcount.

This is obviously a positive and strong position to be in and a source of pride for the Walton Centre. However, it is not without its challenges, as we face efficiency savings and a labour market which is seeing increasing shortages in healthcare workers and this is particularly pressing in the nursing profession. It is widely recognised that the NHS is likely to have 47,500 fewer nurses than it needs by 2016 (source: Nursing Times/Kings Fund). This means that we will be in competition for every position we recruit to and ultimately, there is a need to redesign new and/or different types of roles.

The NHS also has a disproportionate number of older staff of which 30,000 retire each year. This ageing workforce means that we need to actively attract younger members of staff, build their skills and retain a high quality workforce for the future. Although many current members of staff will be working longer there is clearly an urgent need to bring the younger generation into the NHS, and this is underpinned by the fact that less than 2,500 of the 54,000 NHS employees across Merseyside and Cheshire are aged 25 or under. In addition, we need to further increase the resilience of our long term workforce through its mix in terms of age, gender and ethnicity.

One of the ways that this can be realised is the development of new roles. These roles need to be developed into career pathways which enable staff to join at a more junior level and progress through a series of clearly defined roles with the potential to enter professional training if they wish. This will lead to the development of more complex and fulfilling roles that are essential to creating meaningful and long term careers. Examples of this will include the development of new advanced practitioner roles where qualified staff (such as nurses, or therapists), develop enhanced roles that may have traditionally been undertaken by medical staff.

There is little point in investing in an improved recruitment process without ensuring that we maintain the best conditions possible within the Walton Centre to promote job satisfaction, development and retention. Given the broad range of options open to our employees there has never been a stronger business case for supporting our staff to fulfil their potential and promoting a positive, healthy workplace. Ensuring that we maintain our high performing culture does mean that poor behaviours will need to be challenged at an individual or team level.
This strategy recognises that people can now make decisions on the suitability of a workplace from a very wide range of sources not previously available and we therefore need to proactively manage the reputation and profile of the Walton Centre, mindful of its impact on recruitment.

Given the volatile nature of the current labour market and the changeable approach to workforce planning across the NHS, this is a two year strategy that will need to be regularly refreshed to keep pace with our changing healthcare environment.
The Walton Centre Strategic Plan
2014-2019

The strategic plan contains six themes with a series of underpinning objectives. This recruitment strategy supports all the themes to some degree or other but is especially concerned with theme 5 ‘Recruiting, retaining and developing our workforce’ with the following objectives:

- Embed a high performing culture that is based upon our Walton Way values and standards of behaviour
- Ensure that the Walton Centre is a great place to work, supported by first class human resources
- Recruit, retain and support an efficient, resilient and productive workforce delivering excellence in healthcare, education and training and research
- Promote excellence in education and training to ensure we deliver the highest calibre of health care staff for future NHS patients
- Ensure that The Walton Centre can adapt and respond to changes across the health economy through innovation, flexible working and collective leadership.
Embedding equality and diversity

The Trust is committed to creating an environment where all employees are equally valued and respected, with equal access to all employment opportunities. The Trust continues to recognise the role it plays in ensuring that health inequalities are identified and eliminated. Therefore equity and fairness must be a central value that is demonstrated throughout the organisation.

The Trust has adopted the Equality Delivery System (EDS2) to support its work around equality; EDS2 provides a framework for continual review of the Trust’s equality performance and helps to identify future priorities and actions. EDS2 also helps to support the Trust in meeting the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty, as well as meeting the Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) ‘Essential Standards of Quality and Safety’ and supporting the NHS Outcomes Framework, the NHS Constitution. On an annual basis the Trust collates and analyses the equality profile of all staff employed by the Walton Centre, this includes analysis of recruitment and development opportunities to ensure fairness and equity across the Trust.

As a values’ driven organisation, we will ensure that the equality and diversity agenda is integrated into the development of the organisation’s systems and processes. This is particularly important in any service transformation, role redesign or cost improvement activity. The Equality Act applies to 9 protected characteristics and the Trust will ensure that its approach to organisational development is sensitive to the needs of all of the characteristics, ensuring impact assessments are carried out as appropriate.
The vision for recruitment

The aims of the recruitment strategy will be achieved by focusing upon the four key themes below, with the Walton Way values at the heart of everything we do.
The Walton Centre aspires to develop and embed a high performing organisational culture by recruiting and retaining a workforce based on its value set – the Walton Way.

To achieve this The Walton Centre will:

- Enhance and embed a values based model of recruitment
- Need to develop a localised model of talent management - to reflect Walton Way values
- Urgent need to establish succession planning particularly for key clinical roles across the organisation including targeted consultant posts
- Develop and implement a systematic approach to workforce planning and the redesign of business critical roles to address staffing shortfalls
- Integrate Equality and Diversity into our approach to recruitment to ensure that our workforce is representative of the communities we serve
- Ensure that we have a recognition and reward strategy that is open, fair and enables us to retain our talent
- Supporting managers to recruit and retain the best people and to enhance our middle management capability
- Develop and promote rewarding career pathways and opportunities for progression through strong partnership working with universities and other education providers
Systems and processes create the organisational conditions for performance and they reinforce our drive for continuous improvement.

To achieve this The Walton Centre will:

- Continue to develop the dedicated in-house recruitment service to ensure it is responsive and meets the specialist needs of the organisation at all levels.

- Develop and implement a recruitment strategy that promotes business continuity and organisational resilience underpinned by enabling policies.

- Continue to monitor international recruitment activity and actively engage in collaborative working to promote Merseyside as a location of choice.

- Develop a systematic approach to temporary staffing by the exploration of an internal bank and appropriate use of flexible contracts.

- Develop a suite of recruitment and retention key performance indicators to enable both organisation wide reporting and at a local level.

- Maximise usage of NHS Jobs/Electronic Staff Record (ESR) to ensure most time efficient process for service users delivering value for money.

- Exploit all relevant social media outlets for recruitment and prioritise areas of skills shortage.

- Support and enable managers through timely training, role design, banding of roles and agreement of starting salaries.

- Enhance the existing external audit programme through a schedule of internal review and audit activities.
An aim of the Walton Centre is to become a ‘beacon’ site in the development of the good corporate citizenship agenda.

To achieve this The Walton Centre will:

- Develop and embed an in-house process for Volunteer recruitment that is transparent, rewarding and safe
- Continue to promote and offer a raft of work placements across the widest age profile possible
- Develop a systematic approach to identifying appropriate roles for Internships and Apprenticeships
- Strive to provide a positive working experience for medical and all other students, clinical observers and placements to enhance the organisation’s reputation
- Continue to support partnership working to showcase the organisation as an employer of choice and maximise recruitment potential forging genuine links with our local schools, universities and communities
- Maximise the recruitment opportunities for our local labour market, including skills for health placements and developing partnerships with organisations outside of the NHS e.g. the armed forces
Ensure the Walton Centre remains a great place to work by supporting the whole career journey of our employees

To achieve this The Walton Centre will:

- Develop a comprehensive on-boarding model that is timely, streamlined and role specific

- Consciously 'grow our own' through stronger talent management, succession planning and internal recruitment

- Lead organisational change and transformation to ensure employee engagement, robust/legal processes and minimise impact to workforce morale

- Continue to promote best practice in staff support particularly through times of difficulty such as redeployment on grounds of ill health and capability, secondment and through flexible working arrangements

- Continue to promote, enhance and develop the role of Practice Educators to support a positive learning environment around patient care from preceptorship and throughout the whole career pathway

- Establish a career transition and outplacement model to maximise the potential of individuals to reinforce a high performing culture