Body, Brain and Tissue Donation Pack

Information on donating your body, brain or tissue for anatomical examination, research or education and training

Human Tissue Authority

People Strategy 2017
Introduction

I am pleased to introduce the new and updated version of the HTA’s People Strategy, a key document for the HTA which sets out our commitment to you, and how through this commitment we can achieve success.

Since the People Strategy was first published, we have made excellent progress on a number of the changes we promised to make and have provided you and the Authority with regular updates on our progress. We have also recently completed an internal audit that focussed on the delivery of the Strategy. One of the key findings from the audit was that while you see that changes relating to people issues have been made, you do not always associate these with the delivery of the Strategy. Over the coming year we will do more to draw attention to where activities fit within the deliverables set out in this document.

The Authority has agreed that we do not, at this stage, need to undertake a fundamental review of the People Strategy; we will do this in time for the start of the 2018/19 business year. This document therefore is not fundamentally changed. It sets out the key features of HTA life in the eight segments of the Employment Lifecycle Wheel, explains why these are important, describes what we offer to you and what we expect in return. What has changed are a number of the actions and initiatives we intend to take over the next twelve months. These have been informed by your views from the staff survey and more informally through your discussions with line managers and in team meetings. In particular, over the next year, we will focus on improving the discussions we have and support we provide for personal and professional development. We will also bring a renewed focus to internal communications to ensure that each of you is informed about issues that affect you, and have the opportunity to have your voice heard.

I’d like to thank you for your continued dedication and hard work, and look forward to working with you to ensure this Strategy delivers positive outcomes for each of you and for the benefit of the HTA and ultimately for the public whose interests we serve.

Best wishes,

Allan Marriott-Smith
Aim of this strategy

The HTA's overall strategic goal is to maintain and further enhance public confidence in the removal, storage and use of human tissue and organs by ensuring that it is undertaken safely and ethically, and with proper consent. We recognise that our people are our most important asset and are instrumental to our ability to achieve this goal. The strategy sets out how we will lead and manage people and support their professional and personal development to ensure we have skilled and motivated people who we retain for longer, are proud to work at the HTA and are committed to achieving our organisational objectives.

A roadmap will set alongside this strategy and will provide the detail and a timeline of the actions we will deliver before March 2018. Actions and their relative priorities are subject to staff views and will be reviewed and adjusted as part of business planning. This is to ensure the actions remain relevant to our people and aligned with our organisational objectives.

Objectives

This strategy proposes four high level objectives that match the HTA’s strategic aims and are aligned with the annual business plan:

- To attract and retain the right people with the right skills.
- To maintain the HTA's positive working environment and culture, and uphold the values of the organisation.
- To lead, motivate, involve and support colleagues to deliver excellent work.
- To improve expertise and support delivery through high quality learning and development.

Employment Lifecycle Wheel

As part of this strategy, an employment lifecycle wheel has been developed to identify each feature of organisational life that you will experience during your time with the HTA. We believe our people, our ability to work as a team and our values are integral to everything we do and as such they form the core of our wheel, bringing together each of the categories.

We have aligned each of these categories with our high level business objectives with the intention of ensuring that the actions we take to deliver this strategy will enhance our people’s experience and contribute to the delivery of our shared goals.
Recruitment, Selection, Induction and Embedding

Why it matters

To achieve our goals, we need people who have the right skills and who are able to demonstrate the HTA’s values. This combined with an effective induction process that results in people feeling a part of our organisation and invested in achieving our goals, means we would be more likely to provide a higher level of expertise and achieve excellent results for our external stakeholders.

What we do already

The HTA has policies in place that underpin our recruitment, selection and induction processes. Our high performing workforce suggests that these processes are working well and we often receive positive feedback from candidates regarding the interview process. In addition, our induction and probation evaluation process indicates new starters are receiving an effective induction and overall are having a positive experience upon joining the HTA.

We have introduced a pay framework and job evaluation process that offers fair and competitive pay relative to similar organisations in the public sector and provides staff with clarity on how starting and promotion pay is determined. In addition, all new starters are advised of the public sector salary restrictions at the time a job offer is made to ensure they can make a fully informed decision about joining the HTA.

What you say

Feedback on our induction process continues to be very positive, new starters have told us that the information contained within the pre-commencement and first day induction booklets have helped them to feel more confident on their first day and has allowed them to settle into the HTA quickly. It has been suggested that a similar process could be introduced for those returning to the HTA after a period of absence such as maternity leave or a career break. Feedback from induction evaluations highlight a need to offer greater training on our IT systems, such as CRM and Skype. In addition, having a set process in place that encourages a more consistent approach to the delivery of our induction no matter which team or directorate you are joining would be beneficial.

By March 2018 we will

- Review the induction process used across each directorate to create a more consistent organisational wide approach
- Implement a ‘return to work’ induction process for those returning after a long absence
- HTA competency framework to be reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose
- Increase the level of exposure new starters have with each directorate as part of their induction
- Hold regular half-day refresher sessions with a range of speakers open to all staff

We expect you to

- Provide support and guidance to new starters.
- Actively participate in mentoring and induction initiatives where possible.
- Take a proactive approach to introducing yourself to new starters.
Recognition and Wellbeing

Why it matters
With respect being one of our values, we understand how important it is that our people feel respected and valued for their contribution towards our achievements and recognition is an important part of this. In addition we have a responsibility for the well-being of our staff and recognise that the HTA benefits greatly when people can establish and maintain an effective balance between their work and personal commitments.

What we do already
As an organisation within the public sector, we are constrained by the government’s announced intention to limit public sector pay increases to one per cent for the life of this strategy. As such, the HTA is unable to provide increases in pay beyond these limits. This includes a restriction on offering incremental increases within salary bands based on length of service, on-the-job experience or additional qualifications gained since commencement in the position. However, the HTA does offer a generous annual leave entitlement including the option to buy and sell leave on two occasions per year as well as varied non-cash benefits including learning and development opportunities, wellbeing initiatives and access to the NHS pension scheme.

We are committed to the wellbeing of our people and offer flexible working arrangements to create a greater work/life balance, an employee assistance helpline, exercise subsidies and optional health assessments and vaccinations.

What you say
Feedback suggests that while at times frustrated by the restrictions placed on salary increases, people recognise and understand that these restrictions affect employees across all public sector organisations and is not limited to the HTA. The annual leave entitlement and non-cash benefits on offer are received well and people feel that they are able to put forward suggestions for other non-cash benefits that the HTA could offer for consideration. Staff were consulted on the possibility of implementing a reward and recognition scheme; however, the staff forum advised that staff wished to see the available salary increase evenly distributed amongst eligible staff with no portion redirected to a recognition scheme.

By March 2018 we will
• Continue to promote and develop the non-pay benefits we offer
• Recognise long service within the HTA
• Continue to gain feedback from staff to understand the level of effectiveness of our current benefits and if improvements can be made
• Support the staff forum in implementing a peer to peer recognition initiative

We expect you to
• Seek clarification on any aspects of the HTA’s remuneration or benefits that you may be unsure of.
• Make suggestions for improvements to the available non-pay benefits options.
• Recognise your colleagues’ contributions and good work.
Why it matters
Everyone should expect to have a physical working environment, facilities and equipment that will allow each person to deliver their objectives effectively. The HTA also has agreed values which we believe will promote a culture and positive team working environment within the organisation, where everyone is shown respect and everyone’s contribution to our success is recognised. Having the right work environment and culture allows everyone to perform to the best of their abilities. work environment and culture allows everyone to perform to the best of their abilities.

What we do already
We have a set of core values that underpin the way in which we conduct ourselves, perform our roles and interact with each other and external stakeholders. In addition, we have policies in place that protect staff who wish to make a complaint or may be vulnerable. We recognise the growing pressure on office space in London, particularly as an organisation in the public sector and work with our people to find effective hot-desking based solutions to address this while maintaining modern offices and facilities which are maintained to a high standard. In addition, we invest in business technology which is regularly upgraded for greater functionality and provide opportunities for staff to work flexibly which feedback suggests offers an increased level of positive work/life balance.

What you say
Feedback from the recent staff survey and staff forum suggests that there is a positive working environment at the HTA where people feel supported by their colleagues. People also feel that their colleague’s demonstrate the HTA’s values, but ways to ensure that the values remain alive and embedded within our culture should be explored. However, one area highlighted for improvement was increasing the number of staff events and/or social activities with the aim of providing more opportunities for staff to get to know each other and strengthen working relationships.

Although policies are in place, it is important that we are in a position where we are reassured that our people are aware of the avenues in which their concerns can be raised. To gain a greater level of confidence with this, we aim to implement a monitoring process around these policies. We believe this will be beneficial in achieving a more accurate assessment of the HTA work environment. In addition, we will continue to ensure that the values are embedded into our day to day operations and that they are recognised by all staff.

By March 2018 we will
• Continue to deliver upgrades to our equipment as part of the IT Strategy, offering enhanced connectivity to those working both in the office and remotely
• Continue to support our people to work flexibly and investigate options to make greater use of flexible working in the future
• Ensure visibility of our values and enable our people to feel comfortable in challenging behaviour which does not match these
• Enhance the promotion of our policies and ensure our people know how to access these
• Seek regular staff feedback on the effectiveness of our policies
• Dedicate time throughout the year for staff to socialise and come together
• Investigate opportunities for staff to contribute to charitable organisations and events

We expect you to
• Participate in training to make better use of business technology
• Demonstrate the HTA values through your work and interactions with each other and external stakeholders
• Challenge behaviour that does not match with our organisational values
• Be aware of the HTA policies and seek clarification to gain a better understanding where required
• Make suggestions for improvements where policies could be more effective
• Participate in the staff survey
• Provide ideas to the Events Committee with a commitment to attending events where possible
Involvement and Communication

Why it matters

To be successful we need everyone to be committed to our organisation’s values and goals and understand how they fit into achieving these. Everyone should expect to receive transparent information about decisions and developments relevant to their job and about relevant changes in the HTA’s wider environment.

What we do already

We have a wide variety of mechanisms for communicating information and receiving feedback. These include a weekly staff newsletter, team cascades, all staff meetings, Monday briefings, awaydays, line manager 1-2-1s, the staff survey, the staff forum, and the suggestions box. All staff are also given opportunities to attend decision making meetings as observers.

What you say

Feedback suggests that generally our people are positively involved with the HTA. In particular there is a sense of appreciation for the important purpose of the organisation. However, there has been some feedback around our interaction with Authority Members and how this may be increased to create a better understanding of the role Members carry out for the organisation and to further build relationships between Members and staff.

With an increased number of projects taking place across the organisation and an increase to the number of employees taking advantage of our flexible working arrangements, we are going to be faced with the challenge of ensuring we have transparent and effective communication practices in place across all directorates.

To address this challenge, our aim will be to implement initiatives that will assist HTA staff, including those staff that are frequently out of the office or tend to work in isolation, to have a clear picture of both operational work and projects across all teams within the organisation.

By March 2018 we will

- Continue to develop stronger links between Authority Members and HTA staff
- Continue to look for ways to improve our practice in cascading and sharing information
- Regularly promote involvement opportunities available to staff including opportunities to participate and contribute towards organisation wide projects
- Make better use of business technology to stay in touch when working flexibly
- Promote opportunities to observe SMT, HTAMG and Authority meetings
- Hold quarterly staff meetings and have protected time on each agenda for staff led items

We expect you to

- Participate in one or more cascade methods to stay in touch including reading the weekly newsletter where possible.
- Actively pursue the opportunities provided.
- Make suggestions for improvements where communication could be more effective.
Inspire and Motivate

Why it matters
Our line managers play an essential role in inspiring, motivating and providing clear direction for projects, teams and the organisation as a whole. This ensures that everyone working at the HTA understands our goals and contributes all they can to achieving them. Being able to communicate this consistently and being available to provide clarity when it is needed are critical to this. We know our people believe in the importance of the HTA’s work and the value we provide to our stakeholders. This is the most powerful motivator we have, so providing our people with well-designed roles, development opportunities and ensuring people’s expertise is considered and used in designing future plans is critical to us achieving excellence.

What we do already
We have a number of practices in place for developing and strengthening the relationships between our line managers and their teams including regular 1-2-1s, team meetings and the PDP process all of which offer opportunities to provide direction and celebrate success. In addition, we have recently launched a new learning and development framework that provides opportunities for those with leadership roles to undertake training and/or coaching to assist them in further developing their skills and techniques. Moving forward, we will be placing a greater emphasis on matrix management, which will allow us to better share resources across the wider organisation and in turn provide more opportunities for our people to be involved in projects and work that may be beyond the scope of their current role or directorate. We also recognise that not everyone has ambitions to be in a management role and will look for opportunities that allow people to further develop expertise in key areas of interest to them.

What you say
Feedback suggests that HTA line managers have built strong and positive working relationships with their teams and are viewed as approachable and willing to listen and provide support.

However, some concerns have been raised regarding the cascade of information to all levels of staff within the organisation regarding decisions made by management that affect the HTA as a whole. It is felt that this information is not always shared in an open, consistent and clear manner.

By March 2018 we will
• Maintain communication from, and visibility of, the Senior Management Team
• Introduce monthly ‘drop in’ session times for staff with our Staff Champion and HR
• Improve the potential of all staff events to act as leadership opportunities
• Ensure that information is communicated in a transparent, consistent and appropriate manner at all levels within the organisation
• Develop and share good practice amongst line managers

We expect you to
• Proactively engage with the support, tools and training made available to further develop leadership skills and techniques as well as greater expertise in areas of individual interest.
• Be committed to the PDP process and ensure that it is undertaken in a way that adds value to both you as a manager, your team and the HTA as a whole.
• Make suggestions for improvements where communication from all levels of the organisations management could be more effective.
• Proactively engage in initiatives aimed at increasing communication between staff and SMT.
**Managing for High Performance**

**Why it matters**

We believe that effective, regular dialogue between managers and their teams is one of the most critical elements in achieving excellence. All of our people, at every level within the organisation, should expect regular feedback on their performance, where they have been successful and where development is needed. It is through these discussions that our managers will assist their people to identify development and/or progression opportunities that allow them to grow both professionally and personally within their roles and the organisation. This includes working with our people to identify skills and experience that can be utilised across the organisation as well as within immediate teams and directorates.

**What we do already**

There are a number of policies and processes in place that ensure a consistent and fair approach to the management of our people. We acknowledge that everyone will have individual development needs that require different support and we work with our people to identify and manage these needs as part of the annual performance development plan (PDP) review, six monthly reviews of progress and regular 1-2-1 meetings. Based on the outcomes of these regular reviews, we offer a wide variety of learning and development opportunities.

**What you say**

The staff survey results demonstrate that overall people find the PDP, progress reviews and regular 1-2-1 meetings beneficial and that their work is valued by the HTA. Changes were made to the PDP template to more closely link individual objectives to the HTA’s business plan and has seen an increase in understanding by staff on how they personally contribute to the organisation overall. However, people do not always feel that the PDP process improves their individual performance. To address this, we will seek further feedback from staff as part of a full PDP process review following the annual review in March 2017.

While there are a variety of different learning and development opportunities, it has also been suggested that we could benefit from offering more talent management style training options to ensure we are equipping our managers with the tools they need to be able to identify skills, strengths and development opportunities as well as hold effective conversations with their teams about performance, workload planning and professional and personal growth opportunities.

**By March 2018 we will**

- Ensure that managers undertake regular 1-2-1’s with all members of their teams.
- Review and improve the annual PDP process, including downward cascade of objectives where appropriate.
- Investigate ways to effective manage talent in line with other public sector organisations
- Develop and share good line management practices with our managers
- Maintain a regular programme of management training and development opportunities.
- Assist managers to ensure their team is equipped with the tools and skills required to deliver required outcomes.

**We expect you to**

- Actively participate and engage in your PDP, progress reviews and 1-2-1 meetings including identifying your own development needs and taking responsibility for achieving them.
- Provide feedback to your manager where you feel communication, workload management or procedures could be improved.
**Equality and Inclusion**

**Why it matters**
We believe that we will make better decisions and deliver better quality regulation if we have an organisation which can draw on different personal and professional backgrounds and perspectives. As an employer, we are committed to fostering a respectful and transparent culture that promotes equality and inclusion.

**What we do already**
We have a number of policies and procedures in place that ensure the ways in which we recruit, develop and manage our people are free from practices that may lead to discrimination. We are committed to monitoring our practices including undertaking an annual equal opportunities audit with results communicated to the organisation. We also ensure that all internal opportunities are communicated in an open and consistent manner.

**What you say**
We receive positive feedback from both employees and candidates throughout the recruitment process which suggests that the HTA offers an inclusive environment where people are treated equally, with respect and where each individual’s skills and experiences are valued.

**By March 2018 we will**
- Have in place policies that guide and monitor our practices to ensure equality and diversity within our organisation are promoted
- Produce an annual equal opportunities report to ensure our selection processes align with our commitment to equality and diversity
- Ensure staff are made aware of all vacancies within the HTA and are given the opportunity to express interest and apply
- Report diversity statistics annually as part of the Annual Report and Accounts
- Implement equality and diversity training and unconscious bias training

**We expect you to**
- Actively participate in creating an inclusive environment in which people feel both respected and valued.
- Comply with the HTA Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy including notifying managers, SMT or HR of any misconduct taking place within the organisation.
Learning and Development

Why it matters
Effective learning and development opportunities will assist in building the confidence that our people need to make key decisions and use initiative when delivering our statutory remit.

Providing access to learning and development opportunities will allow for continuous improvement of job specific skills and knowledge as well as personal development, both of which will support the ongoing growth, professional development and success of our people.

What we do already
We offer a wide variety of learning and development opportunities to our people as part of our learning and development framework, including job-specific training, mentoring, coaching and a career investment scheme which is aimed at providing our people with the opportunity to undertake training which will enhance their personal development. Our people are encouraged to provide input to the type of training we offer and engage with our training providers in developing course outlines. Our commitment to offering these opportunities has resulted in a strong track record of appointing and promoting from within our organisation when an opportunity has become available.

What you say
Our people often highlight our learning and development opportunities as a key benefit to working at the HTA. The quality and relevance of the training offered also continues to improve through increased involvement with our people and training providers. Recently, a structured training plan has been implemented and received positive feedback from staff. The training plan aligns with the training needs identified as part of the business planning process with approximately two external training opportunities offered to staff each month in addition to any personal training needs identified as part of the PDP process. We have also implemented a ‘learning and development opportunities’ email which has increased awareness and attendance of learning opportunities.

Staff can now access their individual training profile through Simply Personnel to track the different learning and development activities they have undertaken throughout their time at the HTA.

By March 2018 we will
• Improve professional development opportunities by offering a more structured approach to job specific development.
• Work closely with Directorates to ensure training is relevant, interesting and effective.
• Provide managers with increased support and knowledge to be able to assist their staff to actively manage their learning and development needs.
• Encourage professional development by supporting attendance at conferences and other professional body events where possible.
• Enhance our sector specific training to ensure staff working across all sectors are equipped with the information and knowledge they need to be successful

We expect you to
• Take ownership of your own personal and career development needs.
• Actively prepare for and participate in the PDP process.
• Provide feedback and input to the training and development opportunities delivered.
**Measuring Effectiveness**

As part of our commitment to our people and this strategy, it is important that we are able to track and demonstrate our progress towards achieving success.

**To do this we will:**

- Complete an internal audit that assesses the impact and effectiveness of this strategy and our people practices
- Seek to demonstrate the link between HR indicators of success and the achievement of our organisational objectives
- Share our People Strategy and measure our performance against other ALB’s to obtain best practice ideas for improving our people practices
- Gain feedback and report back to the Authority, SMT and staff on the initiatives delivered as part of this strategy