



Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust take part in HPMA's 100 Conversations

The HR team at Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust met in October to discuss HPMA's [When we do harm](#) paper to reflect on the issues it raises and consider them in relation to the application of their own conduct policy and procedure. The meeting also introduced members of the team to the concept of 'avoidable employee harm'.



"Our team was already alert to the harm that employee investigations can cause. The ideas proposed in the paper aligned with other work we have undertaken to encourage and enable managers to make well-informed decisions. The focus was about using a



compassionate approach when dealing with conduct, where the aim should always be to resolve harm and provide restoration," says Ellie Valentine, Associate Director of Workforce and OD at the Trust.

"The focus on 'avoidable employee harm' and the way it was explained in the [animation video](#) was incredibly useful and has provided an additional perspective, as well as supporting changes to local processes and how they are applied.

"The parallel between employee harm and patient harm mirrors how we have aligned our approach to examining and understanding conduct issues and patient safety issues – the latter being an important issue, well understood by our decision-makers. It's less of a leap to encourage colleagues to consider conduct issues in the same way as clinical issues through a harm reduction approach."

Next steps

“The [When we do harm](#) paper sets out everything so clearly which enabled us to get on with discussing what we needed to do and the stakeholders we need to involve to make the required improvements.” The team identified next steps as taking the programme through to the organisation’s leadership team and trade union colleagues where Ellie sees the resources as key.

“People are extremely busy. These materials explain everything so concisely and in such a compelling way that we’re confident we can present the issue with impact,” she said.

Ellie and her team welcome the community that the HPMA is forming around the issue of employee harm, recognising that, while every organisation is different, this is something NHS people professionals are increasingly identifying and grappling with.

As a result, her HR team is joining HPMA’s upcoming [Avoiding Harm: Improving employee investigations](#) online seminar in February and Ellie has already fed back their initial discussion via the [100 Conversations survey](#).

Gathering data

We asked Ellie for her top tip for anyone starting the conversation in their organisation: “I’d recommend gathering data on your employee investigations so that you can begin to relate avoidable employee harm to your organisation from the get-go. That way, it’s not just a discussion, but an identifiable issue that needs addressing. I started by gathering data on the number of formal employee investigations and how many concluded with no case to answer, or informal resolutions and how many progressed into a formal hearing with the same outcomes.”

Len Richards, CEO of the Trust is already on board: “The line between avoidable employee harm and the quality of patient care that we deliver is a straight one,” he said. “The Avoiding Harm programme gives us the tools to look again at how we run our employee investigations and ensure we are not causing unnecessary harm to our people so that they can deliver at their best. I’m grateful to the HPMA for leading this work at a national level and providing such practical support on a local one.”



You too can take part in ‘100 Conversations’ – see the next page ...

You too can take part in '100 Conversations'

We are encouraging HPMA members to start a conversation in their organisations using the *When we do harm* discussion paper. Let us know who you had the conversation with (board, executive team, HR colleagues), how it went and what steps you are taking to improve employee investigations where you work?

Four quick steps to help you take part

1. Arrange a meeting with your HR team (or even consider an exec or board discussion, on how this work fits into a wider focus on culture).
2. Share the **When we do harm** as a focus for your conversation.
3. Use the questions in the paper and the video resources to plan your session.
4. Hold the meeting and capture your top three reflections and actions to share with us in this quick survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6TRZY3R>

