

TO: All Chief Executives in NHS Trusts in England All Chief Executives in NHS Foundation Trusts in England All Chief Executives in Primary Care Trusts in England CC: All Chairs of NHS organisations in England All Chief Executives in Strategic Health Authorities in England	<i>Richmond House 79 Whitehall London SW1A 2NS Tel: 020 7210 5142 Fax: 020 7210 5409 david.nicholson@dh.gsi.gov.uk</i> Gateway Number: 18018
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Dear Colleague,

2012 National NHS Staff Survey

I am sure you are all aware that the NHS Staff Survey Co-ordination Centre is preparing the 2012 National NHS staff survey.

Keeping our focus on improving quality at a time of change for the service means that more than ever before, we need fully engaged, satisfied and motivated staff. Increasingly, the evidence shows us a clear link between strong staff survey results and the quality of services we provide which means NHS leadership teams must stay connected to their workforce and respond quickly to any changes in morale or satisfaction.

This annual survey gives us an excellent opportunity not only to listen to what our staff are telling us, but also to see that we have responded to our staff and improved as an organisation during the past year.

Moving forward, we will be reviewing how the annual survey might be improved to support the service and remain relevant in the new health and care system.

The detail of the 2012 national staff survey has been published online at www.nhsstaffsurveys.com and further information, including the key dates of activity for your organisation, are covered in the attached Annex.

I hope that once again your organisation will strongly support the annual survey and that you will encourage all of your staff to respond as part of your ongoing engagement activity. The NHS is rising to the challenge of improving quality for our patients at a time of significant change and we must ensure that remains the case, by working with and listening to, all of our staff.

Yours sincerely,



**Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE
NHS Chief Executive**

2012 National NHS Staff Survey

As in previous years, the NHS Staff Survey Co-ordination Centre (www.nhsstaffsurveys.com) will make all the necessary documents available as well as detailed Guidance Notes which outline how participating organisations need to prepare for the launch of the survey in September. There are a number of key dates to which we would like to draw your attention:

- **1st September** – All staff employed by your organisation on this date are eligible for the Staff Survey

Your organisation will want to ensure that staff lists are accurate and up-to-date before sampling. Every year, large numbers of questionnaires are returned because staff members are no longer working for the organisation or are on maternity/sick leave. If questionnaires cannot be delivered to staff your response rate will be lower and the likelihood of complaints from staff members will be increased. The surveys also cost your organisation both time and money.

- **By 31st August** – to maximise the time available for staff to complete the survey, your organisation will want to appoint a survey contractor and decide on the survey content

Please note that this is the **latest** date by which we recommend appointing an independent survey contractor to administer the survey and finalise the content of the questionnaire. A list of survey contractors approved by the Department of Health can be found on the Co-ordination Centre website (www.nhsstaffsurveys.com).

We urge you to appoint your contractor promptly to avoid delaying the date that the survey is administered. As the closing date for data returns is fixed, delays in commencing the survey will limit the time period in which staff have to respond and may impact negatively on response rates.

In addition to the core questionnaire, organisations can choose to include optional and/or locally devised questions. We strongly advise that organisations decide on the content of the questionnaire, in discussion with their contractor, as early as possible. If you wish to include local questions, please contact your local R&D committee as you may require additional ethical approval.

- **By 28th September** – Organisations should post out all surveys

All participating organisations should have posted out all surveys by 28th September. Please note that you can choose to send out questionnaires as soon as a contractor is appointed.