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Employee ownership within the NHS

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The context…

- Engaging frontline NHS staff has been an explicit policy goal for over a decade
- Growing recognition of the limitations of trying to drive change from above
- Ministers now talk about creating a 'self improving service'
- Recent research shows that happy staff = happy patients (Raleigh et al, 2009)

What makes staff feel engaged?

How engaged do you feel in your job?

Institute of Employment Studies

- Research with over 10,000 NHS employees
- Engagement is “a sense of feeling valued and involved”
- Four elements:
  1. Involvement in decision making
  2. Ability to voice ideas, to which managers listen
  3. Opportunities to develop the job
  4. Concern for employees’ health and well-being

2008 NHS staff survey

Survey questi on	% agree or strongly agree
Senior managers here try to involve staff in important decisions	29%
Communicati on between senior managers and staff is eff ecti ve	27%
Senior managers encourage staff to suggest new ideas for improving services	36%
On the whole, the diff erent parts of the trust communicate eff ecti vely with each other	20%
I am involved in deciding on the changes introduced that will aff ect my work area/team/department	50%
I am sati sfi ed with the extent to which my trust values my work	33%
There are opportuniti es for me to progress in my job	39%

Do we need increase/intensify current approaches…

…or do we need to re-think the approach altogether?

NHS employees as owners?

- *NHS Mutual* (Ellins and Ham, 2009)…
  - Explores what is meant by employee ownership (EO)
  - Brings together the evidence for EO models; impact on…
    - Organisational productivity and performance
    - What matters to employees
    - User/customer experience and outcomes
  - Considers the potential applicability of EO models to the NHS

What did we find?

- EO is linked to a range of benefits: productivity, staff turnover, employee wellbeing, innovation
- EO and staff participation are mutually reinforcing
- Possible options for the NHS:
  - Greater voice and participation
  - Staff-led units/directorates
  - Employee owned services

NHS Mutual?

- Promotion of social enterprise and mutual models
- Central Surrey Health: first employee owned health service
- Possible challenges:
  - Political will
  - Practical (esp. financial) support
  - Pensions
  - Needs a different model of management

Any questions?

Ellins, J. and Ham, C. (2009) **NHS Mutual: Engaging staff and aligning incentives to achieve higher levels of performance**, London: Nuffield Trust.