

BOARD MEETING**26TH FEBRUARY 2014****Title of Report: Policies for Approval**

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Committees previous consulted:	Essex CCGs Joint Staff Forum – 27th January 2014 Quality & Governance Committee – 14th February 2014
Executive Summary:	<p>In line with the Board-approved process for CCG policy development, seven new Human Resources (HR) policies and one new HR procedural guideline, listed below, are presented to the Board today for approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible Working Policy• Maternity Policy• Managing Performance Policy• Absence Management Policy• Disciplinary Policy• Grievance Policy• Dignity at Work Policy• Managing Investigations Guidelines <p>Members should note that the above policies have been developed by the HR Service of the Central Eastern Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) on behalf of all Essex CCGs. The Essex CCGs Joint Staff Forum (JSF) has approved all of them, as has the NHS Thurrock CCG Quality & Governance Committee.</p> <p>The policies will also require some re-formatting to comply with NHS Thurrock CCG's policy on the development of policies, which will be carried out prior to their publication and distribution to CCG staff.</p> <p>Key aspects of each policy and guideline are outlined below.</p>

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Flexible Working Policy

This policy aims to set out the ways in which flexible working can increase staff motivation, build better relationships between the CCG and its employees, increase the rate of retention of staff, reduce absence, attract new talent, promote work-life balance and reduce employee stress, and in doing so improve the CCG's efficiency, productivity and competitiveness. It provides a description of the issues involved, taking into account the possible benefits of each kind of flexible working to both employees and the CCG, but also raising possible drawbacks and areas of potential concern.

Maternity Policy

This policy sets out the rights of employees to statutory and occupational maternity leave and pay. The CCG recognises that, from time to time, employees may have questions or concerns relating to their maternity rights. It is the CCG's policy to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. As the maternity provisions are complex, if an employee becomes pregnant she should clarify the relevant procedures with their manager and the HR Department to ensure that they are followed correctly.

Managing Performance Policy

The CCG is committed to supporting and developing its employees in a fair and equitable manner to ensure that they are able to fulfil their roles and responsibilities to a high level competence standard. The primary aim of this policy is to provide a way of supporting staff in cases where an employee cannot achieve an acceptable level of competence due to lack of ability or skill rather than an act of misconduct.

This procedure runs parallel with the Disciplinary Policy. Poor performance is generally not to be treated as part of a formal

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conduct process; however where performance fails to reach the desired level despite support and performance management processes, an outcome may be sought via the formal Disciplinary policy, termed a Contractual Review meeting.

Absence Management Policy

The CCG aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work whilst recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work for short periods due to sickness. The Organisation recognises that most employees will occasionally have genuine and acceptable reasons to be absent from work through either ill health or an injury. Equally however, due regard must be given to the business needs. Sickness absence does have a major impact on the quality of the service we provide and places colleagues and managers under additional pressure. Ultimately, if there is no resolution to the sickness problem, formal disciplinary processes may be instigated and any resulting dismissal is likely to be based on the grounds of capability. The details of the procedure are covered under the Organisation's Disciplinary Policy.

Dignity at Work Policy

This policy aims to create a working environment that is free from free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The policy covers bullying and harassment of and by managers, employees, contractors, agency staff and anyone engaged to work at the CCG, whether by direct contact or otherwise;

If the complainant or alleged harasser is not employed by the organisation, e.g. if the worker's contract is with an agency, this policy will apply with any necessary modifications such as that the organisation could not dismiss the worker but would instead require the agency to remove the worker, if appropriate, after investigation and disciplinary proceedings;

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The policy covers bullying and harassment in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside of the workplace, e.g. business trips and work-related social events.

Disciplinary Policy

The Disciplinary Policy is in accordance with all legal requirements and ACAS guidance. The policy aims to encourage employees to achieve and maintain the required standards of conduct, performance and attendance.

It ensures fairness and consistency in the treatment of individuals. In cases where an employee fails to attain the required standard or level of conduct the disciplinary policy will be instigated and this may result in disciplinary action.

Grievance Policy

The organisation encourages open communication between employees and their managers to ensure that questions and problems arising during the course of employment can be aired and, where possible, resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of all concerned. The aim of this policy is to settle grievances as near to the point of origin as possible. It is also preferable that both employees and managers should try to resolve issues informally first, and to use the formal route where the informal route has been explored, but has been unsuccessful.

Managing Investigations Guidelines

This document provides guidance for all 'relevant managers' appointed to carry out internal investigations into matters relating to any member of staff within the organisation.

The guidance contained within this document must be used in accordance with the relevant Policy or Procedure, as determined by the nature of the investigation.

Recommendation to the Committee:	The CCG Board is invited to approve the seven new HR policies and one guideline document as listed above.
Financial Implications:	None of note
Fit with CCG strategy/objectives:	Yes – the above policies ensure that the CCG complies with various statutory and regulatory requirements, including the Employment Rights Act 1996 and the Equality Act 2010.
Risks identified:	None of note

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Resource Implications:	None of note
View of the Patients Carers or the Public and the extent of their involvement:	Not applicable

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