

MEETING	PUBLIC BOARD MEETING 18 November 2020
Agenda Item Paper Number	8 CM/11/20/08
Agenda Title	People Pulse Survey, October 2020
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PURPOSE OF PAPER:

Actions required by Board:

- **Discuss** the results of the People Pulse Survey undertaken in October 2020.
- **Note** the proposals for our future approach to people surveys.

IMPACT:

Information for Board to be aware of:

- Impact on CQC - the survey results provide important insight into colleagues' experience of working at CQC to inform our people priorities and, in the ongoing context of Covid-19, provide feedback on how colleagues are feeling. Organisational level results have been shared with all colleagues and team level results are now being discussed locally.

1. Summary

With work continuing on our next strategy and how our organisation may look in the future, the second pulse survey of 2020 focused on how change is managed and experienced in CQC. Feedback was also sought on colleagues' experience of performance and recognition, to support forthcoming work in these areas. As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect us all, some specific questions on how colleagues are feeling and why were also included.

The survey was live 6 – 20 October. A total of 2,466 colleagues responded, a participation rate of 80% - the highest pulse survey participation to date. This paper sets out the headline results for discussion, and the next steps for continuing to make CQC a great place to work.

2. Discussion and implications

Headline Results

- Scores regarding individual wellbeing are spread, with the majority feeling 'average'. Having a sense of purpose/motivation was the greatest contributing factor to individual's wellbeing, regardless of how respondents were feeling.
- Seven of the eight statements that can be directly compared with November 2019 all saw significant increases, including one by 30 percentage points (pp) and five others by 10pp or more.
- Colleagues have responded more positively to the questions relating to change than previously. Understanding the reasons for change and feeling informed about the transformation programme score well. However, there continues to be less confidence around feeling involved in change, that contributions to conversations about change count, and feeling positive about the future.
- Following an unprecedented increase in the last pulse survey, the proportion that would 'recommend' CQC has decreased, but still shows progress against November 2019.

Individual Wellbeing

- The question “how have you been feeling over the last week?” generated the most spread response in the survey. 8% felt ‘very good’, 28% ‘good’, the majority (38%) felt ‘average’. 21% felt ‘poor’ and 6% ‘very poor’.
- Having a sense of purpose/motivation was the greatest contributing factor to individual's wellbeing, regardless of how respondents were feeling. ‘Ability to do work’ also has an impact across the spectrum of responses, whilst ‘something else’ featured more in those feeling ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ and the reasons provided will be explored further, particularly those that are work-related.
- The highest-ranking themes in the free text responses concerned workload, the nature of work undertaken (both positive and negative), and support received. Factors outside of immediate control – the pandemic and organisational change also were evident.

With almost everyone at CQC working at home and in unique and changing external circumstances, it remains important for leaders and managers to follow up on responses to individual wellbeing through 1:1 conversations to understand how people continue to feel. These conversations are supported by an ongoing package of tools and guidance for managers.

Change

The results suggest improvements are being felt in the way change is experienced and managed in the organisation – particularly in the key areas of communicating and involving people in change – with several important increases seen on the main People Survey in November 2019. These have been our areas of focus since then, and through the organisational response to Covid-19 we have demonstrated a difference in approach such as weekly all-colleague calls, regular virtual conversations with different levels of leaders and managers across the organisation, and a greater visibility of co-creation in change and decision-making. Indeed, the free text comments, where colleagues were asked what they have found most useful on the engagement on the future of CQC, suggest that we should continue to focus, and build on, these areas.

- The results demonstrate high levels of agreement regarding the understanding the rationale for change, feeling informed about what is happening, and having local conversations about the changes that are taking place (72% - 83% positive).
- However, when it comes to feeling involved and listened to, it is a much more mixed picture (46% - 47% positive).

- Whilst over half feel positive about our shared direction (53% positive), a large proportion are unsure (32% neither agree nor disagree), suggesting we have more to do around engaging colleagues on our direction of travel.
- As seen in previous surveys, belief that changes are effectively implemented in CQC remains low at 32%, but this figure has increased by 11pp since the last time it was asked.

Performance, Recognition, Colleague Engagement

- A high proportion (80%) of colleagues continue to have regular 1:1 performance and development discussions with their manager, a slight decrease since the last time this was asked. Two-thirds (66%) agree that feedback helps improve their performance. This is broadly as expected, and this data will provide an important baseline for the launch of the Success Profiles.
- Colleagues report that they feel more recognised at the local level (75% positive) rather than by the organisation (51% positive), although the latter has increased by 10pp. It will be important to build on this in our future approach to recognition.
- 62% of colleagues would recommend CQC as a good place to work – a key indicator for engagement. While this has decreased from the previous pulse survey in May 2020, it is worth noting that the May survey saw an unprecedented increase of 18pp. Compared to the main survey in November 2019, the latest feedback represents an increase of 6pp on the figure of 56% which is positive against a question that has remained static for many years.

3. Conclusion and Next Steps

Directorate and function level results are being discussed in teams from this week. Further analysis of the results and free text comments, including demographic analysis, will be carried out by the People Directorate and shared with key stakeholders including our Equality Networks.

The outputs of these results including the free text comments will feed into the 'Transforming Our Organisation' programme to ensure that the learning and positive changes are captured and embedded into our future ways of working.

For the past couple of years, we have been evaluating and adapting our approach to people surveys to identify the best way to facilitate feedback, action and dialogue on employee experience. The two pulse surveys conducted in 2020 have enabled us to gather feedback from colleagues on a range of important issues within a challenging and changing external environment.

As we continue to develop our people survey programme within a wider strategy of employee listening, this flexibility is key, and proposals are being shared internally to undertake shorter, more frequent surveys that enable a more continuous flow of data and more frequent and focused local conversations. These proposals include undertaking a main survey every two years, with seven pulse surveys in the intervening period. In 2021, pulse surveys are provisionally planned in February, May, and August, with a longer, 'main' survey in November. Further information, including a detailed communication and delivery plan will be shared with colleagues as this work progresses.