

Expanding Nationwide: NHS Retention Programme Curbs Staff Departures



Thousands fewer staff left the NHS last year in response to the implementation of a comprehensive retention programme. This programme is part of the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan ambition aiming to retain an additional 128,000 more staff across the next 15 years while simultaneously increasing the number of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals in training.

This NHS retention programme introduces several enhancements, including increased extra flexibility in working hours, the establishment of clinical 'support squads' to assist menopausal women at work, and HR 'stay advocates' tasked with finding strategies to keep staff from leaving. These features are all encompassed into the retention programme, benefitting as many as 42 additional NHS trusts.

Following the programme's expansion, data reveals a significant reduction, equivalent to 14,000 fewer staff leaving the NHS in the 12 months leading up to August 2023.

As part of the initiative, any staff member experiencing symptoms of menopause is offered an appointment with a specialised menopause doctor. They will be provided with recommendations for treatment, prescriptions, or onward referrals with the staff member's GP. Additionally, staff members are offered cognitive-behavioural therapy to manage the effects of menopause, along with advice and coping strategies.

The winter poses significant challenges for the NHS, and although the primary focus remains on delivering optimal patient care, there is a critical need to expand the reach of the successful retention programme. Doubling the number of trusts implementing this retention programme is of utmost importance to sustain and build upon these positive outcomes.

Professor Em Wilkinson-Brice, National Director for People at NHS England, said: "Joining the NHS was one of the best decisions I ever made – it is a hugely fulfilling and interesting place to work – but we cannot rely on this alone to keep staff happy".

"That is why as part of the National Retention Programme staff will benefit from tried and tested interventions which have already helped thousands of staff members stay, and importantly stay well in the NHS".

Source: [NHS](#)

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Published on : Fri, 8 Dec 2023