

Resources

Exercises/Discussion questions (to reflect on or discuss with a colleague)

1. Explain the five main reasons why compassion must be the core value in health and social care services.
2. What are the main barriers to sustaining compassionate cultures in health and social care?
3. Why is compassion important in the integration of health and social care services locally and nationally?
4. How can compassion be more effectively developed among individuals in your organisation?
5. How compassionate and effective is your team? What do you need to do to develop compassionate and effective teamwork in your team?
6. What do you need to do to develop or contribute to compassionate and effective teamwork across the organisation?
7. How compassionate is your organisation? What do we need to do in order to develop a compassionate organisation? How can we begin and sustain that process into the long-term future?
8. How compassionate is the wider health and social care system? What do we need to address to develop a compassionate health and social care system? How can we begin and sustain that process into the long-term future?
9. How can we ensure the communities we serve, the voluntary sector, the entire public sector, families and patients are involved in the genuine co-design and co-ownership of a compassionate health and social care sector that is a model for the world?

Questionnaires

Measuring compassion at the organisational level involves assessing particularly the behaviour of leaders and managers, but also the behaviour of staff generally.

The Culture Assessment Tool (CAT) – a copyrighted instrument developed by AffinaOD (www.affinaod.com) in co-operation with The King's Fund assesses the extent to which the culture of an organisation is characterised (among other things) by compassion: between staff and patients, between staff, and between managers (or leaders) and staff.

The Culture Assessment Tool		Score (1-5)*
Support	<i>The following statements relate to levels of support provided by managers and leaders in your workplace. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</i>	
	1. Managers and leaders encourage warm, supportive relationships among staff	
	2. Managers and leaders recognise and celebrate good performance	
	3. Managers and leaders deal effectively with problems that get in the way of our work	
	4. My manager listens carefully to staff to find out how to support them effectively	
	5. My manager is very compassionate towards staff when they face problems	
	6. My manager is highly empathic in their dealings with members of staff	
Compassion	<i>The following statements relate to levels of compassion shown to and demonstrated by people in your workplace. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</i>	
	7. People here are very compassionate towards colleagues when they face problems	
	8. People here give good support to colleagues who are distressed	
	9. People here are very compassionate in the way they behave towards patients/service users	
	10. People here take effective action to help patients/service users in distress	

* Response scale:

Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Somewhat agree = 3,

Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5

Guidance on using this questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

Websites

1. The Center for Positive Organisations (CPO)

The CPO was established nearly 20 years ago, pioneering a new field of inquiry at Michigan Ross - Positive Organisational Scholarship - that sought to understand the characteristics, practices and principles that create a thriving organisation. It has helped create a global movement to promote effective workplaces where people thrive.

<https://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/about/>

2. Developing a positive culture in health and social care – practical open-source tools and resources from NHS England/Improvement and The King's Fund.

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20210107182025/>

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/culture-leadership/>

https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/Suzie_Bailey%20pres.pdf

Videos

This talk features Jane Dutton and Monica Worline, authors of *Awakening compassion at work: The quiet power that elevates people and organisations*. (23 mins 44 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8qfdwDUARs>

Compassion in health and care in Wales – a video from The Health Foundation (4 minutes 15 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVf0273iHus>

Barbara Fredrickson on the importance of positivity in work-life and organisations (8 mins 44 secs)

<https://www.thepositiveencourager.global/barbara-fredricksons-approach-to-doing-positive-work/>

A selection of videos on improving teamwork by Michael West can be found by using the search term 'teamwork Michael West' in an internet search engine.

Further resources: Recruiting and selecting for compassion

Compassion-based recruitment - recruiting and selecting for compassion - is a method of attracting and selecting staff whose personal values and behaviours align with the organisation's core value of compassion. It is an approach to recruitment and selection that ensures the values and behaviour of candidates indicate a strong orientation of compassion towards others. The recruitment process also communicates the commitment of the organisation to a core value of compassion at an early stage. Compassion-based recruitment therefore seeks to ensure that staff have not only the right skills, but the right value of compassion to deliver high-quality patient care and experience.

Assessing for compassion signals a core value of the organisation to applicants – compassion is an important competency here. This forms part of the socialisation process and is the first signal to the prospective staff before they enter the organisation. One way of doing this is to embed a psychometric scale into assessment and selection methods by using a multi-rater feedback methodology (asking the candidate to gather ratings from diverse perspectives). For new candidates, this may be difficult. You may wish to use a 'realistic job preview' as part of selection procedures and observe the behaviours of the prospective staff throughout, scoring them on a scale of 1 – 5.

Compassion can be measured using the questionnaire in chapter 1, based on four elements of compassion: attending, understanding, empathising and helping. These can be used by co-workers or could be adapted as a self-report measure.

During recruitment, those responsible for making decisions can explore compassion amongst potential recruits in several ways, such as:

- Pre-screening assessments
- Interviewing techniques such as structured interviews, role play or responses to scenarios
- Assessment centre approaches
- Psychometric instruments
- Situational judgement tests.

In practice, this might involve adding to the interview a number of questions such as those shown below.

Example of compassion-based interview questions

1. To test for support and compassion towards patients – tell us about a time when you worked with a patient in distress. How did you go about the process? (Criteria - attending, understanding, empathising and helping)
2. To test for support and compassion towards colleagues – tell us about a time when you worked with a colleague who was angry with you. How did you go about managing the situation effectively? (Criteria - attending, understanding, empathising and helping)
3. To test for commitment to compassion in teamworking and collaboration – tell us about how you feel you work particularly well with colleagues who are under pressure in teams and the way you make a contribution. (Criteria - building cohesion, support, optimism and efficacy)
4. To test for commitment to compassion in working with those in other professions – tell us about a time you worked with someone from another professional group and there was some tension or conflict. How did you deal with this? (Criteria - listening, understanding, empathising, helping, building cohesion and support)
5. Give an example of a time when you encouraged and enabled collaboration between your team and another team or department. (Criteria - working effectively across boundaries and prioritising patient care overall, not just within team performance).

- Compassion-based approaches to recruitment work best if implemented effectively and comprehensively. This means ensuring that much of the questioning in an interview, for example, is focused on compassion issues and plays a big role in determining selection.
- Organisations should provide training to enable leaders to conduct effective compassion-based recruitment. The more objective the approach to selection, the better, so where good psychometric measures of compassion exist, it makes sense to use them.
- Structured interviews are much more effective than unstructured interviews, as are work sample tests. Using scenarios to test for compassion is also helpful – 'How would you react in this situation?'

- Recruitment is just one part of the whole employment journey, so it must form part of an holistic approach that ensures compassion is embedded in all areas of employment practice, from supportive contracting, training and appraisals, through to organisational development.
- When interviewing/observing, it is important that more than one person is present in the interview to rule out any unconscious biases that may be influencing the way a person is being assessed.