

clever together

Be Collectively Brilliant

Because You Matter Conversation One
Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Report of findings

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The report-in-a-page

In October 2023 Mid Cheshire Hospitals launched the **Because You Matter conversation**, the first of two online engagements with the aim to re-connect everyone working at the Trust to its values, find out how people feel towards the culture we have, and understand the sort of culture everyone wants to create and uphold. Following the Board's consideration, a **second Because you Matter Conversation will take place** in January of next year to give staff the opportunity check and challenge the proposed draft behavioural framework, as well as any strategic and tactical actions, that results from this engagement.

The Because You Matter conversation captured over 6,000 ideas, comments, and votes from over 570 Mid Cheshire colleagues. We saw 9% of invited permanent, fixed-term, locum, and bank staff join the conversation, and slightly higher if we do not count the latter two harder to reach groups. Overall, the level of participation was in line with other NHS Trust engagements of similar size and duration. We found the conversation to be very representative at staff group, band, or organisational levels (with just a couple of exceptions) and are confident we have reached data saturation with regard to most of the key issues. The engagement was largely respectful, nuanced, and contained [many suggestions](#) on specific actions the Trust should take to improve its culture, as well as examples of behaviours colleagues wanted to see codified, embedded, and modelled across the organisation. Our previous experience has taught us to expect some critical issues to arise in all engagements with the NHS workforce but these were absent or far less prominent here. This leaves us to consider that while there are issues to be resolved, in many ways this Trust is already a good place to work for many of its staff. Similarly, impressions from our in-person interviews suggest that a key area of skills development for staff at the Trust is developing appreciative inquiry as a capability.

What we heard from the Mid Cheshire Hospitals workforce in Because You Matter conversation was:

- **THE BENEFIT OF COMMON EXPECTATIONS** | Staff shared their experience with colleagues engaging in unacceptable behaviours but had differences of opinion about the root cause or how these could be managed and addressed. A step in the direction to improving workplace culture and reconciling all groups would be drafting a concise list of behaviours to support the Trust's values and to frames the expectations for how all staff should conduct themselves. These could further be embedded into the employee life cycle, including recruitment, motiv8 and performance management, absence management, and exit processes.
- **AN EYE ON THE SAME FUTURE** | Participants shared concerns about lack of succession and skills planning for the future, difficulty in accessing innovation and promoting improvements, or feeling disconnected from the Trust's purpose, vision, and leadership teams. The leadership challenge, moving into the future, is to align staff priorities for the future, embed them into change processes, and encourage change and innovation throughout existing programmes, doing so in a visible, open, and transparent way.
- **ALL OF US TOGETHER** | Participants were complementary about the level of the inclusivity and diversity, but also saw a lot of division across behavioural characteristics - "rule followers" against "rule breakers"; "young staff and new starters" against "long-service and experienced colleagues"; "innovators" against "preservers". The challenge for the organisation would be the reconcile these groups and unite them under a common cause in the Trust's objectives.
- **A PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS CULTURE** | A physical environment can shape workplace culture as much as policies or a values framework, but if it does not provide interconnectedness between teams, remove obstacles, and support and improve staff wellbeing, this will in turn compromise any culture improvement work. The New Hospital Programme, and indeed the Clinical Digital Strategy and Improvement Matters programmes, should provide opportunity for the Trust to address some of the issues identified by a large share of staff ([here](#), [here](#)).

The key findings and suggestion actions should be shared with MCHFT leaders. The second conversation should be focused on validating behaviours underpinning the values and giving a further opportunity for staff to make their requests for the future of the Trust at its new premises and with new ways of working.



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Executive summary

What we are doing and why

Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust hold a solid track record in patient care and staff satisfaction and have fostered a culture where engagement is high and colleagues are motivated to make improvements. We have an opportunity to look forward towards the future to support our culture and prepare for the exciting potential of the **new hospital campus**, the **digital clinical strategy**, and the continued progress of **Improvement Matters**.

To achieve that, we will hold two online Conversations hosted on a purposefully designed website where everyone can anonymously share, read, rate and comment upon their ideas, experiences, and stories with the aim to:

- re-connect everyone working at the Trust to its values and listen to how they feel about working here,
- understand the sort of culture everyone wants to create and uphold, and whether our values are the right ones to get us there, and other action we need to take

The conversations will be open to everyone working at the Trust, psychologically safe and confidential – anonymous, facilitated, and independently analysed.

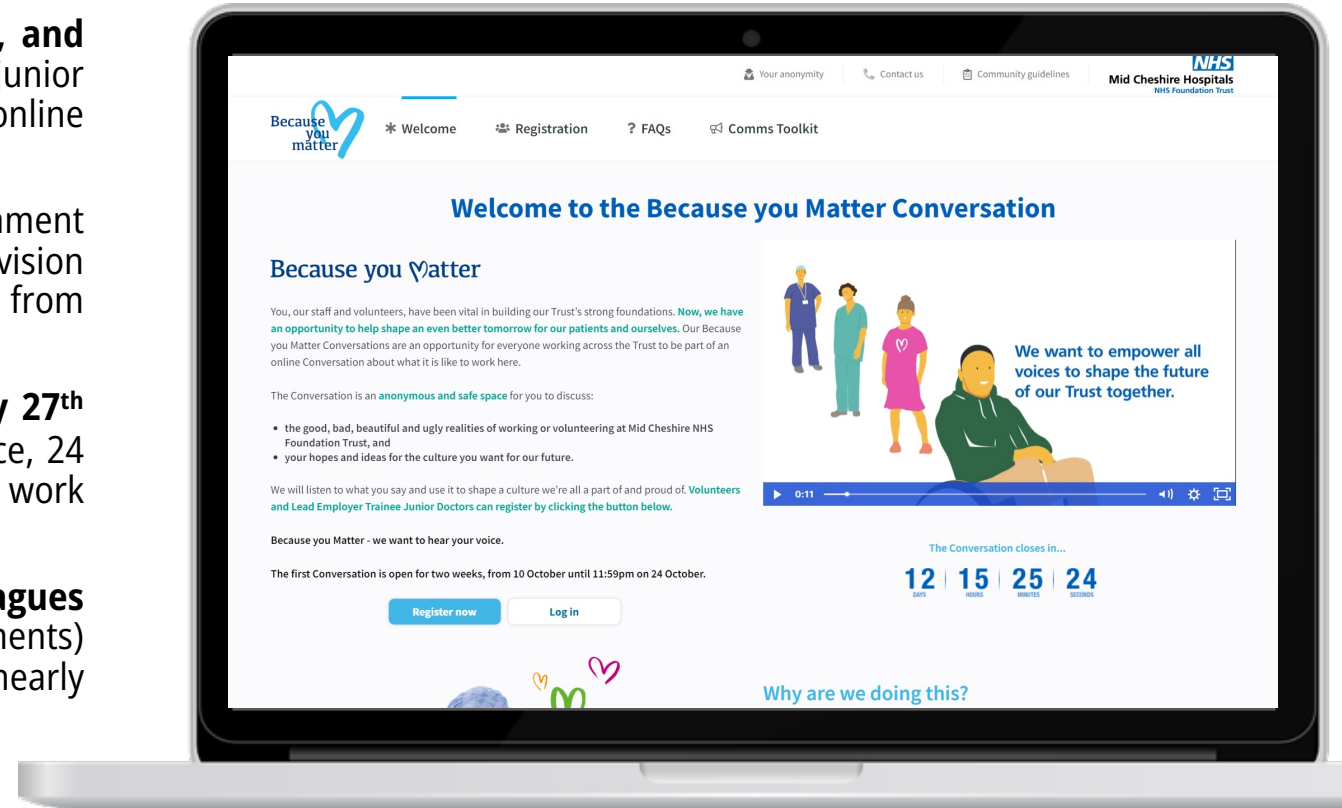
The focus of the first Because you Matter Conversation, subject of this report, is on:

- **The culture we have** - how people feel towards the culture we have;
- **The culture we want** – the behaviours people expect and those they are no longer willing to tolerate to make our Trust a place to inspire hope and provide unparalleled care for the people and communities of Cheshire, helping them to enjoy life to the fullest.

How we engaged

An anonymous, safe, and inclusive online conversation open to everyone

- In October 2023, over **6,500 Mid Cheshire full-time, locum, and bank staff**, as well as volunteers and lead employer trainee junior doctors, were invited to join a safe, anonymous, and inclusive online conversation at <https://becauseyoumatter.clevertogogether.com/>
- People were encouraged to share their ideas, read, vote and comment on the ideas of others, discuss what matters to them today, their vision for the future of the organisation, or what behaviours they expect from themselves and their colleagues.
- The conversation ran for just over two weeks, through to **Friday 27th October**, and was accessible from any computer or mobile device, 24 hours a day, so everyone could participate no matter what their work pattern was.
- Over the course of the engagement, more than **570 MCHFT colleagues** took part, posting **450+ written contributions** (ideas and comments) in response to the challenge questions we posed, and casting nearly **3,150 votes**.



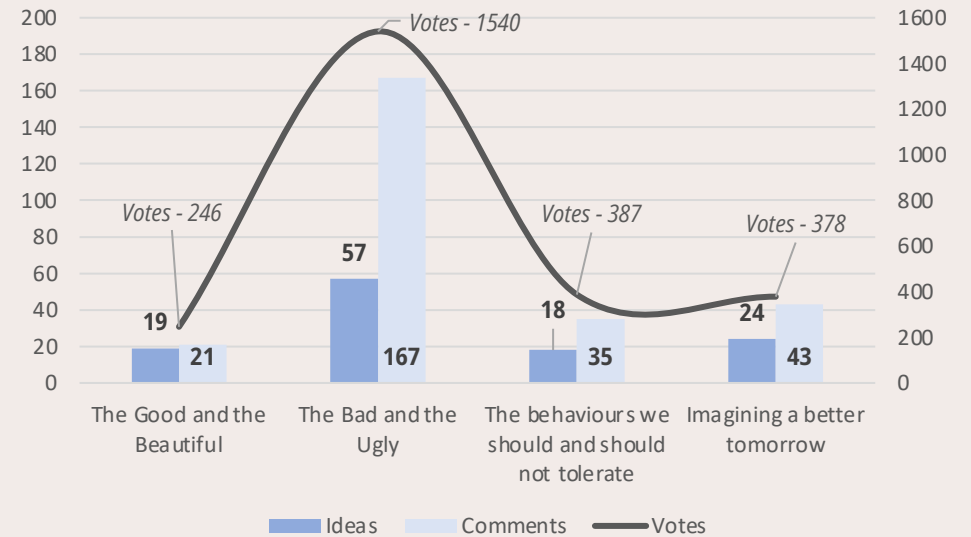
What we asked

We posed four challenge questions to MCHFT staff, with the aim to direct and structure the conversation.

What we asked:

- **The Good and the Beautiful** - What are the good and the beautiful experiences of working and volunteering at MCHFT?
- **The Bad and the Ugly** - What are the bad and ugly experiences of working and volunteering at MCHFT?
- **The behaviours we should and should not tolerate** - As we work together, which behaviours should we uphold and which should we not tolerate?
- **Imagining a better tomorrow** - If we had a time machine and could take you to our future, what would we be doing to:
 - deliver the best care,
 - collaborate across boundaries,
 - empower and enable you to be the best you can be,
 - have a sustainable and innovative infrastructure?

Challenge questions by number* of ideas**, comments and votes



* Figures are up to date **as of, Tuesday, 24th October 11:00 AM**

** Includes seed ideas added to the conversation prior to its launch



Imagining a better tomorrow

What participants focused on in contributions under this challenge question

We asked staff to contribute ideas that would help them and the Trust deliver the best care, collaborate across boundaries, empower and enable you to be the best you can be, and have a sustainable and innovative infrastructure.

The Imagining a better tomorrow challenge question accounted for around 12% of the conversation by total number of contributions and engaged a quarter of all participants.

- **Physical environment and staff wellbeing** - a large share of the responses to the challenge question seemed inspired by the possibility of moving into a new, modern hospital, and came in the form of suggestions for enhancing the working environment and improving staff wellbeing. These included healthier and discounted food options, staff-only canteens, break and office rooms and hot desking spaces. Some also envisioned a sustainable hospital campus with renewable energy sources and eco-friendly, green practices.
- **Current day to day issues** - another group sought to address issues they saw with how the Trust currently operated – these listed need for up-to-date organisational charts and directories, reduction in locum staff, option for tailored appraisals, or reinstating live events for executive updates.
- **Future planning and digital infrastructure** - only a few people engaged with the more ambitious ideas of removing redundancies in digital infrastructure; succession planning to avoid staff and skills shortages; setting and following up on goals for the future among which integrated care; focus on local recruitment and apprenticeships, fully embracing the opportunities offered by a digital health agenda; or looking to educate service users and community members to improve prevention.

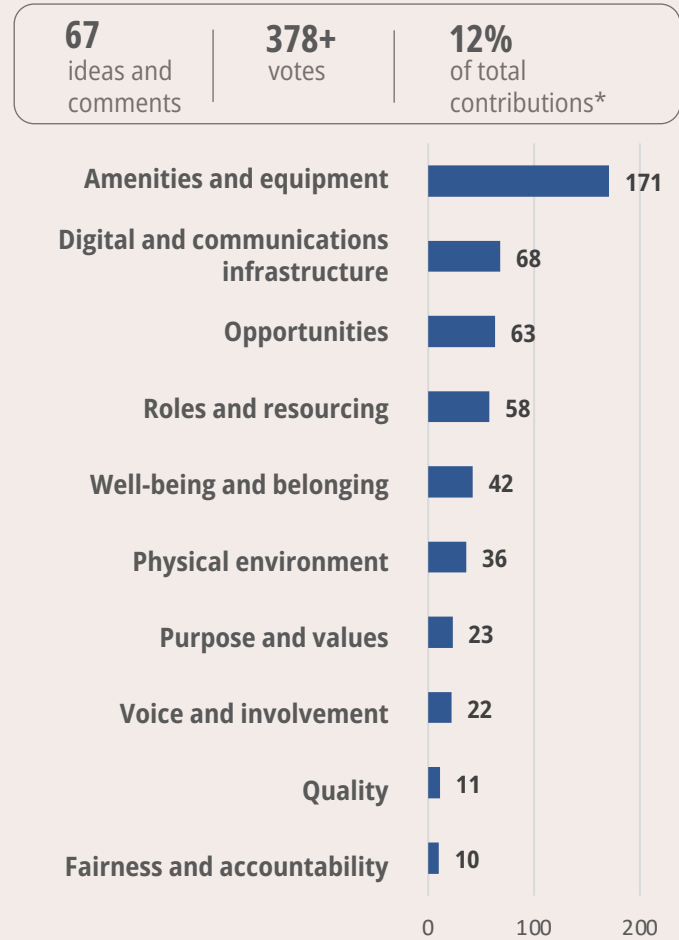
The results lead us to suggest that we should give staff another opportunity to suggest their ideas for the future of the trust.



Mid Cheshire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Imagining a better tomorrow

Breakdown by main topic, ranked by total contributions



*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes

Proposed draft behaviours framework

Read more about how the draft behaviours framework were selected and what we heard from the MCHFT crowd [\[here\]](#)

Trust Values	<p>WE PUT YOU FIRST</p> <p>...involving you in decisions which affect you and making time to learn from what you tell us to get it right for patients and staff every time.</p>	<p>WE STRIVE FOR MORE</p> <p>...setting ourselves high standards, encouraging innovation and sharing best practice to be the best we can be and deliver great quality, safe care.</p>	<p>WE RESPECT YOU</p> <p>...embracing diversity and treating everyone with understanding, dignity and compassion to support and care for the people we work with and for.</p>	<p>WE WORK TOGETHER</p> <p>...with colleagues and partners to go beyond traditional boundaries and deliver care which truly benefits our patients and meets their individual needs and wants.</p>
	Draft Behaviours	<p>We listen to understand, co-create with colleagues and patients, and act on feedback</p>	<p>We innovate and welcome change, removing obstacles to improvement, and building sustainable, fit for the future care</p>	<p>We approach everyone with kindness, compassion, and civility</p>
	<p>We value and recognise everyone's commitment and varied contributions to our goal of delivering great care</p>	<p>We continuously develop and grow, ensuring that we have the people and skills to do the best for our patients</p>	<p>We are fair and inclusive, celebrating and learning from the diverse culture we have nurtured</p>	<p>We hold ourselves and each other accountable, challenge unacceptable behaviour, and embrace openness and transparency</p>



Report of findings

How we analysed the data

Best Place To Work and ground-up thematic analysis

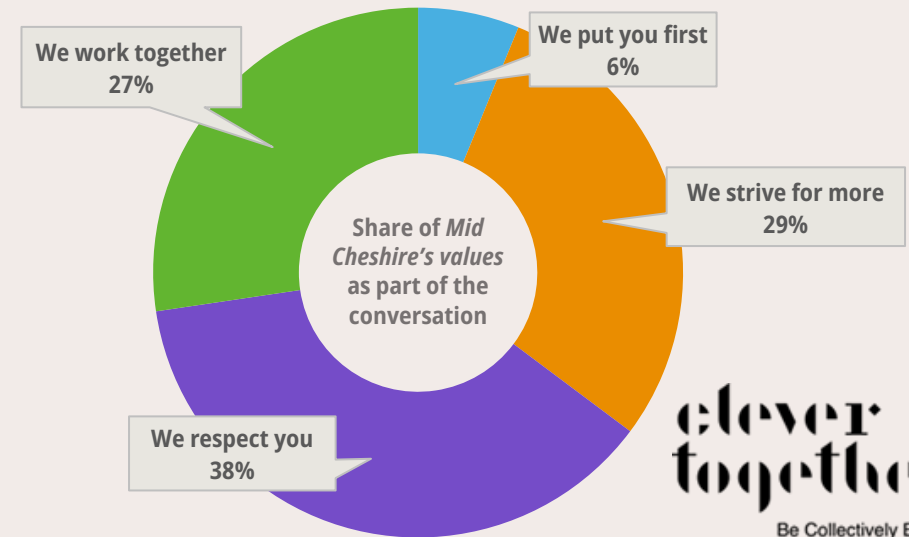
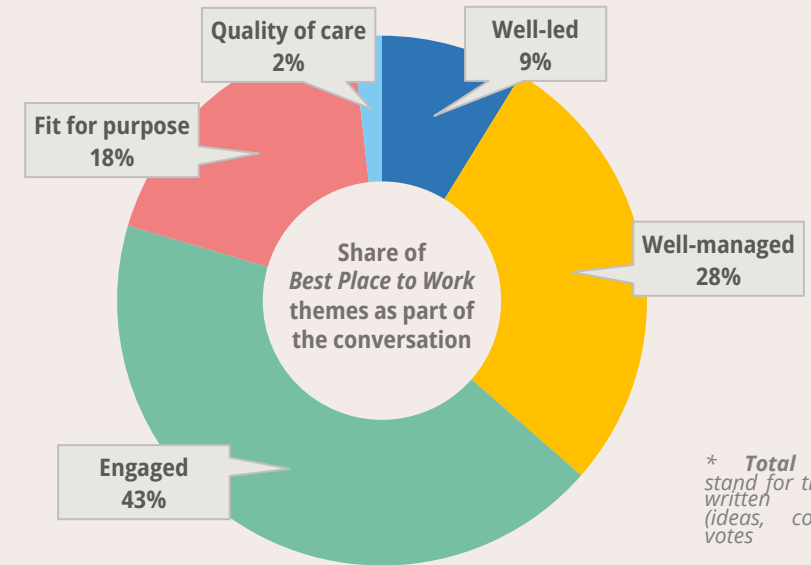
We read and analysed **over 450 written contributions** (ideas and comments), linking each to one or more codes (topics) in our analytical frameworks, to capture nuance. A total of **700+ coded segments** emerged. The **3,150+ votes** (agree and disagree) cast by participants were used to weigh the data and direct our analysis.

The conversation was analysed using two analytical frameworks, coding all written contributions against some granular **~70 topics**. The frameworks used were:

- Clever Together's **Best Place to Work organisational framework**, which offers topic analysis ([see details here](#)) around the themes of *Well-led*, *Well-managed*, *Engaged*, *Fit for Purpose*, and *Quality of Care*. As part of the analysis, we have noted specific suggestions made by the crowd and summarised these [here](#), organised by topic or theme.
- A **Values and Behaviours ground-up coding frame**, later ladderred-up and combined to fit under Mid Cheshire's existing values and form the basis for the proposed [Draft Behaviours framework](#);

Note that there is some overlap between the Values and Behaviours framework and the themes and topics of the Best Place to Work frame.

Overview of themes by share of total contributions*





Best Place to Work

Best Place To Work: Well-led

Summary of findings under the theme - find specific suggestions from the crowd [\[here\]](#)

1 PRESENCE

Ideas focused on staff concerns about the lack of leadership presence and visibility within the organisation. Participants highlighted the decreased visibility of the Executive Team since the opening of a new headquarters, the positive impact of a back-to-the-floor initiative in some departments, and finally issued a call for clinically trained managers to experience frontline challenges. Throughout this theme there was a strong emphasis on the need for leaders to be more visible, engaged, and understanding of the challenges faced by staff at various levels within the organisation.

2 PURPOSE AND VALUES

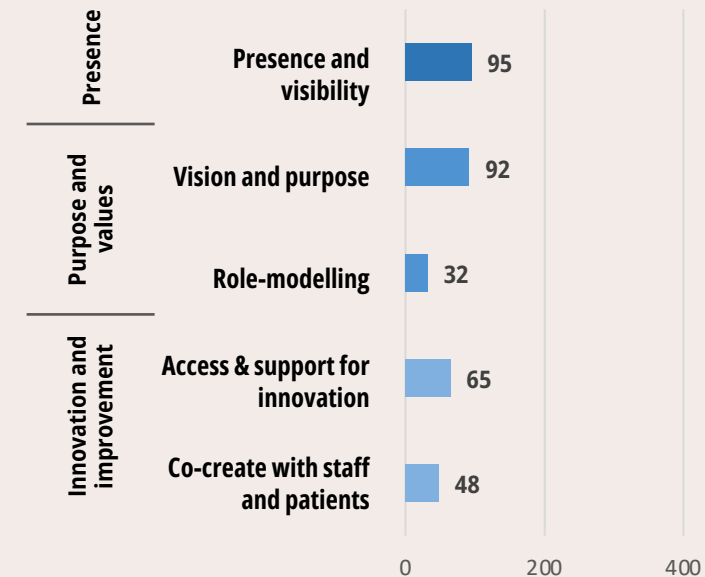
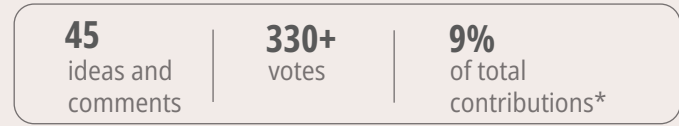
Contributions under this theme collectively emphasise the need for an improved organisational culture and leadership within the Trust. Participants made calls for things such as addressing the absence of defined behaviours, reinstating executive briefings, allocating sufficient time for action and improvement, overcoming a lack of strategic planning and leadership at the senior management level, ensuring alignment with organisational priorities, and tackling systemic issues of poor management in some areas of the organisation. Contributions further underscored the importance of leading by example, modelling organisational values, and being consistent in applying and following Trust policies. Overall, there was a call for a more cohesive and proactive approach to enhance Trust performance and staff well-being.

3 INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Ideas and comments under this theme relate to the challenges staff have experienced in trying to engage in improvement processes, among them resistance to change from colleagues and managers, lack of support and guidance, lack of staff involvement in decision-making and project design, and a need for efficient change facilitation. There's an emphasis on the need to align priorities, learn from experiences, and foster a culture that encourages innovation and improvement. As a whole, the Trust's community seeks a more collaborative and responsive approach from leadership, especially in the context of upcoming changes, future planning, opportunity to embrace new technologies as part of the NHS' digital health agenda, and, especially, the construction of the planned new hospital.

Best Place To Work: Well-led theme

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions



Maps out to the We strive for more value and behaviours

*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes

Best Place To Work: Well-managed

Summary of findings under the theme - find specific suggestions from the crowd [\[here\]](#)

1 FAIRNESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A large share of ideas and comments under the conversation (10% of all written contributions) highlight concerns about ineffective management of performance and conduct, lack of accountability, inconsistency in rule application, and challenges in addressing poor or bad behaviours. Some staff express frustration with what they consider toxic work environments, reluctance to confront wrongdoers, and a perceived culture of favouritism. We also heard calls for increased transparency in recruitment, accountability at all levels, and a cultural shift towards challenging poor performance and unacceptable conduct. Participants could not agree on the reasons for ineffective management response, though they listed union involvement, lack of training, poor HR processes, or lack of will to change the culture.

2 OPPORTUNITIES

While some staff praised the development opportunities they have received at the Trust (such as apprenticeships and secondments, as well as the very positively-received autism awareness training module), others complained about the inadequate support for career development, repetitive and ineffective appraisal processes, and the need for more personalised training and guidance. Participants had mixed opinions on the effectiveness, frequency, and format of Motiv8, with suggestions for improvement and need for more meaningful discussions.

We heard calls for a greater emphasis on training and development opportunities outside the scope of one's role, investment in succession planning to avoid future skills and staff shortages, and 360-degree appraisals for all managers.

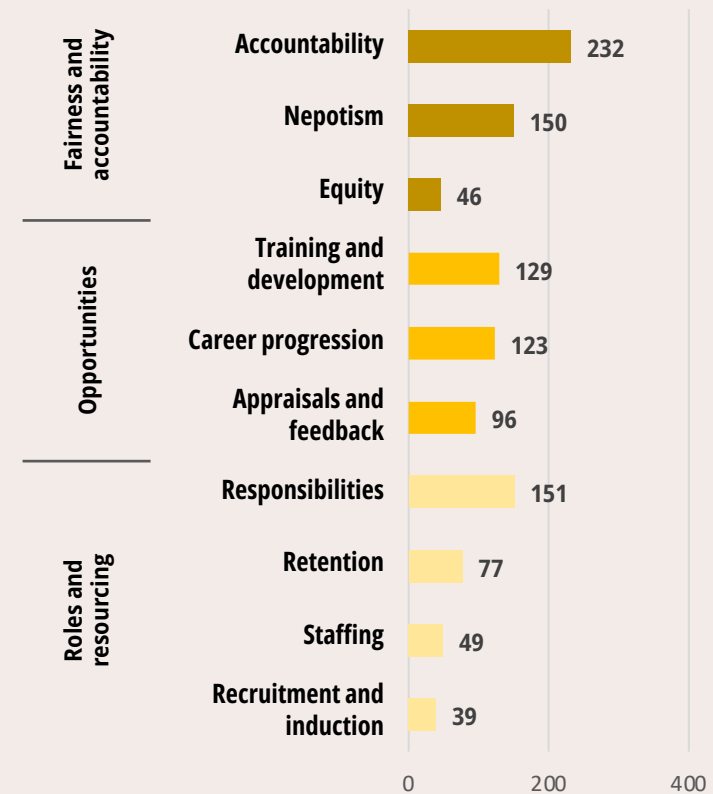
3 ROLES AND RESOURCING

Staff reiterated concerns about the Trust's challenges with regards to effective management of performance and conduct and the fair enforcement of rules, which are at least in part responsible for a high turnover rate in some teams. We heard calls for an increase in permanent staff (through recruitment or moving those on Locum to a permanent role), better handling of staffing issues, and engagement strategies for attracting young talent. Some called for a more open and transparent internal recruitment to combat perceptions of favouritism and nepotism.

Best Place To Work: Well-managed theme

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions

141 ideas and comments | 1,090+ votes | 28% of total contributions*



*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes



Maps out to the **We work together value and behaviours**



Maps out to the **We strive for more value and behaviours**

Best Place To Work: Engaged

Summary of findings under the theme - find specific suggestions from the crowd [\[here\]](#)

1 VOICE AND INVOLVEMENT

Ideas and comments under the theme focus on bullying, fear culture, and management issues within the healthcare trust. There is an overlap with the another topic: perceived lack of accountability for inappropriate behaviours, leading to what some staff describe as toxic work environments, demoralised teams, and hindered collaboration. Suggestions include the need for independent channels for reporting, emphasis on teamwork and respect, and the appointment of external guardians for the freedom to speak up, among others. Addressing these issues is seen as crucial for fostering a positive and inclusive work environment.

Maps out to the *We put you first value and behaviours*

Maps out to the *We work together value and behaviours*

2 WELL-BEING AND BELONGING

Participants expressed concerns about various issues, including bullying, incivility, lack of well-being support, and inconsistent application of rules or policies (e.g. flexible working). We heard calls for the development of defined behavioural framework to assist with improving organisational culture, more attention to staff well-being through things such as break rooms, and better, healthier food, and as well as the need for improved support for international staff emerge as common themes. The need for effective resolution of bullying incidents, addressing incivility, and continued promotion diversity and inclusion were highlighted as suggestions for a healthier work environment. Participants acknowledged that the organisation has already taken positive steps with regards to the latter.

Maps out to the *We respect you value and behaviours*

3 REWARD AND RECOGNITION

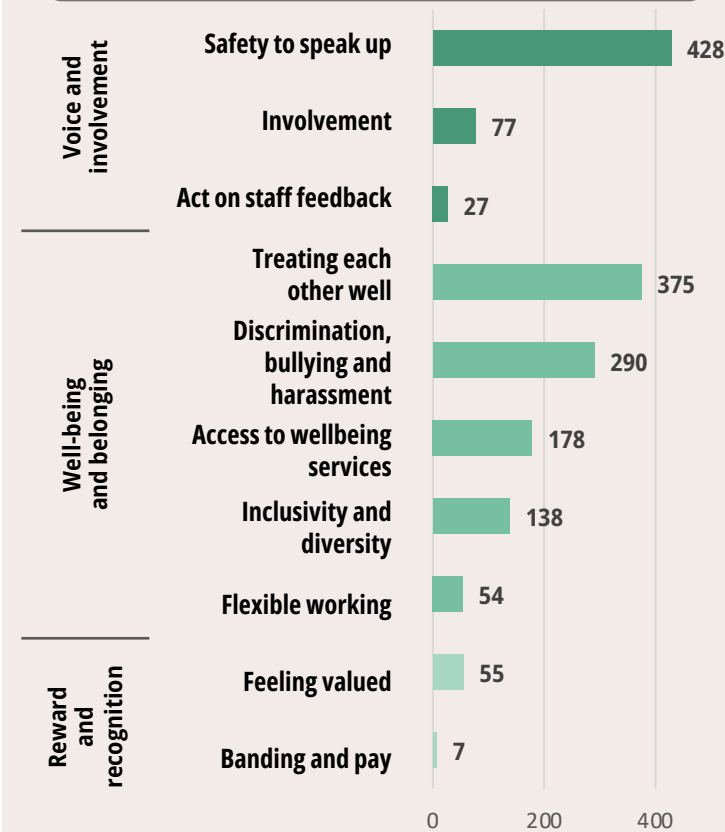
Somewhat unexpectedly, we did not see many contributions under this theme. Some staff expressed concerns about pay, advocating for fair compensation in line with the Living Wage Foundation's standards or reintroducing overtime as a way to incentivise staff, reduce agency costs, and enhance safety. We also heard calls for the equal recognition of staff going above and beyond, with some scepticism whether the "Star of the Month" system accomplishes that fairly. Recognition of good practice and the importance of acknowledging all staff contributions were highlighted.

Maps out to the *We put you first value and behaviours*

Best Place To Work: Engaged theme

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions

185 ideas and comments | 1,620+ votes | 43% of total contributions*



*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes

Best Place To Work: Fit for Purpose

Summary of findings under the theme - find specific suggestions from the crowd [\[here\]](#)

1 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Under this theme participants raised concerns about parking, cleanliness, and sustainability. A large share of staff expressed dissatisfaction with the current parking arrangements, noting lack of oversight, poor security measures, overall cost, lack of enforcement on parking in spaces reserved for disabled people, or visitor and patient use of parking facilities without paying. Some of these suggestions are detailed [here](#). We also heard positive notes regarding green initiatives, but also the need for better facilities (such as safe bike shelters) to promote sustainable commuting. Staff were complementary about spaces such as the staff garden but complained about the general lack of rooms for interviews, meeting, or clinics.

2 DIGITAL AND COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Speaking on this theme, participants focused predominantly on the current issues with internal communications and their desire for streamlined digital systems. Staff were complimentary about the staff app and how helpful it has proven to be but at the same time they requested that digital systems be optimised to talk to each other and reduce duplication, particularly when it comes to patient records. This would prove especially useful to those that work in the community. Many highlighted the need to update the intranet and create an up-to-date organisational chart to combat wasted time and effort in trying to communicate across teams. Taken as a whole, the combined calls for integrated systems, centralised eLearning platforms, and dedicated basic IT training indicates a desire for a more cohesive and user-friendly digital infrastructure.

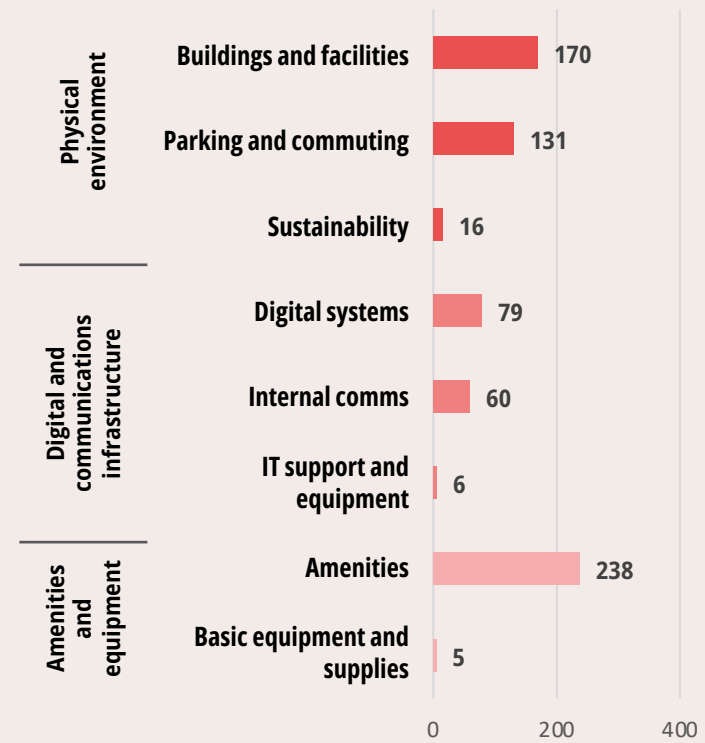
3 AMENITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Staff expressed a need for improved amenities, particularly in the realms of food and rest spaces. The suggestions encompass staff discounts, access to quality healthy food at all hours, and the creation of dedicated staff spaces, including staff-only canteens. Proposals for nursery/creche services and a focus on staff well-being, including an on-site gym, indicate a holistic approach to improving working conditions. These proposals were presented as vital to staff morale, health, and overall job satisfaction.

Best Place To Work: Fit for Purpose theme

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions

78 ideas and comments	700+ votes	18% of total contributions*
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*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes

Best Place To Work: Quality of care

Summary of findings under the theme - find specific suggestions from the crowd [\[here\]](#)

1 SAFETY AND PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Inconsistencies in infection prevent control skills, it was suggested, can be addressed through frequent in-person assessments and a 'secret shopper' approach to monitor standards. Some staff expressed the view that patient safety could be better protected through full inductions, welcome packs, 121 support, and competency checklists for some internationally qualified nurses needing more support. Others shared a lack of faith in the quality of incident investigations and called for more meaningful engagement. Lastly, we heard concerns about public image and patient safety due to smoking near hospital entrances.

2 EFFICACY

One member of staff shared their visionary goals for 2035 which include for the Trust to set itself a target for the recruitment of young people from local communities (through partnerships with schools and apprenticeships offers); focus on digital health; patient-centric services; and a shift from an illness service to a health service.

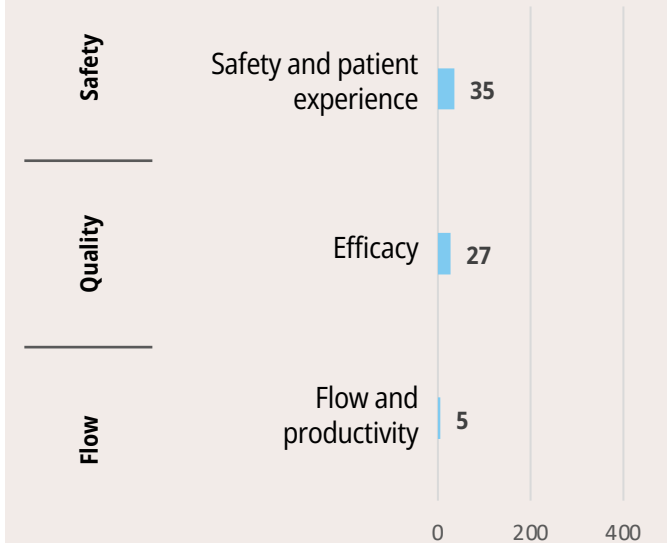
3 FLOW AND PRODUCTIVITY

That same person also shared their vision for a fully integrated Primary, Secondary and Community care, would put a stop to confusing and elongated patient journeys.

Best Place To Work: Quality of care

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions

15 ideas and comments | **60+** votes | **2%** of total contributions*



Delivering Quality of care is an overarching goal for the organisation and is embedded in all its Values

*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes



Proposed values and draft behaviours framework

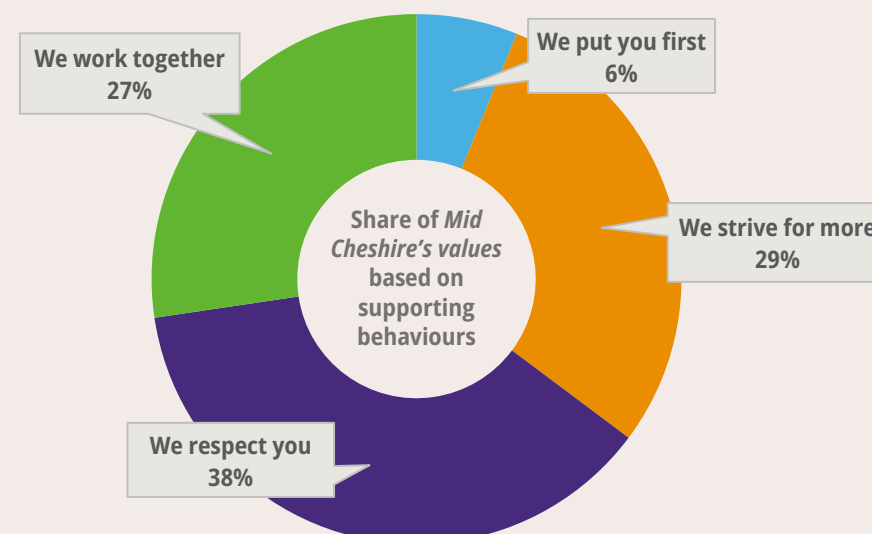
Our values and draft behaviours framework

Trust Values

Draft Behaviours

<p>WE PUT YOU FIRST</p> <p>...involving you in decisions which affect you and making time to learn from what you tell us to get it right for patients and staff every time.</p>	<p>WE STRIVE FOR MORE</p> <p>...setting ourselves high standards, encouraging innovation and sharing best practice to be the best we can be and deliver great quality, safe care.</p>	<p>WE RESPECT YOU</p> <p>...embracing diversity and treating everyone with understanding, dignity and compassion to support and care for the people we work with and for.</p>	<p>WE WORK TOGETHER</p> <p>...with colleagues and partners to go beyond traditional boundaries and deliver care which truly benefits our patients and meets their individual needs and wants.</p>
<p>We listen to understand, co-create with colleagues and patients, and act on feedback</p>	<p>We innovate and welcome change, removing obstacles to improvement, and building sustainable, fit for the future care</p>	<p>We approach everyone with kindness, compassion, and civility</p>	<p>We work as a team, being supportive and modelling collaboration across the organisation, with partners, and with our community.</p>
<p>We value and recognise everyone's commitment and varied contributions to our goal of delivering great care</p>	<p>We continuously develop and grow, ensuring that we have the people and skills to do the best for our patients</p>	<p>We are fair and inclusive, celebrating and learning from the diverse culture we have nurtured</p>	<p>We hold ourselves and each other accountable, challenge unacceptable behaviour, and embrace openness and transparency</p>

188+ ideas and comments | 1,606+ votes | 50% of total contributions*



The draft behaviours proposed here are largely grounded in the voice of your crowd, while also taking into account systemic demands on the Trust, its mandate, and other sources, such as leadership meetings and on-site interviews. They also partially map to our Best Place to Work framework – you can see this [here](#), [here](#).

The aim with introducing a behaviours framework

The Mid Cheshire values and draft behaviours framework proposed in this report are **largely grounded in the findings of the online conversation**, wherein we posed participants with a specific challenge question and analysed all contributions through a ground-up thematic coding framework seeking to identify positive behaviours colleagues wanted to see modelled or poor behaviours they wished to avoid. We further looked at behaviours that were not explicitly talked about but were associated with key issues identified through the conversation and, at present, were not reflected in the Trust's current values (these include *accountability, transparency, or growth and development*). In finalising this draft behaviours framework, we also considered the systemic demands on the Trust and what we heard and saw during leadership meetings and on-site visits over the past couple of months.

While we find that **the Trust's current values - *We put you first; We strive for more; We respect you; We work together* - are already strong**, participants in the online conversation offered that they can be ambiguous in that some find them patient-, rather than staff-focused, or that they are not implicit enough to affect and govern staff behaviour.

We recognise that **a behavioural framework is a tool to instil and deliver cultural change** and as such, it is important that it reflects the beliefs of the people it serves. It also needs to be simple enough that it can be easily remembered and embedded in the organisation, through value-based recruitment, induction, appraisals, communications, and other people related processes. We propose a total of eight new behaviours – two for each value.



We have values in the Trust, however we don't have behaviours. [...] If we could develop and implement behaviours, this would lead to a more consistent culture across the trust.



We put you first: supporting behaviours

- **We listen to understand, co-create with colleagues and patients, and act on feedback ...**

Participants who had already been involved in co-creating change (for example, the design of new wards) expressed a strong sentiment that the results had been all the better for it, accommodating both staff and patients' needs. Others asked that the Trust should more wholeheartedly embrace listening and asking for feedback from staff and service users, using these suggestions for service improvement, innovation, or identifying issues and needs that decision-makers might not necessarily be aware of. Lastly, many complained that feedback, even if accepted, was often not acted on, which discouraged and demoralised staff who wanted to get involved in workplace improvement or speak up on issues.

- **We value and recognise everyone's commitment and varied contributions to our goal of delivering great care**

This topic was not as prominent in the online conversation against our expectations and past experience working with other Trusts where it is brought up more often, and in a negative context. Our analysis of the conversation, as well as in-person visits, interviews, or even overheard exchanges between staff and patients, lead us to believe that there is a lack of appreciation for what is already there – a strong core of passionate and dedicated staff across all levels of the organisation, that cares for their patients, wants Mid Cheshire to succeed as a great place to work. This behaviour aims to codify this and push people towards the idea of appreciative inquiry, rather than critical focus on issues.

WE PUT YOU FIRST

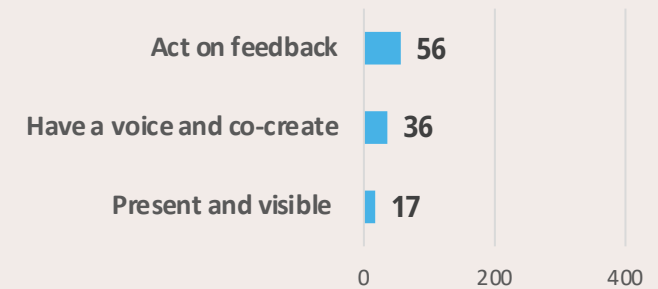
...involving you in decisions which affect you and making time to learn from what you tell us to get it right for patients and staff every time.

We listen to understand, co-create with colleagues and patients, and act on feedback

We value and recognise everyone's commitment and varied contributions to our goal of delivering great care

We put you first: Supporting behaviours from the crowd

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions



**Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes*

We strive for more: supporting behaviours

- **We innovate and welcome change, removing obstacles to improvement, and building sustainable, fit for the future care ...**

Multiple participants across the online conversation complained of difficulty in implementing change and improvement. This could take the form of a cumbersome governance process, lack of cross-divisional working, misalignment of priorities leading to stalled projects, or by encountering active resistance to new ideas or innovation from colleagues (i.e. in the form of “we have always done it this way” sentiments). Beyond their frustration, participants expressed the opinion that the pace of improvement at the Trust will be insufficient to meeting the future demands for healthcare.

- **We continuously develop and grow, ensuring that we have the people and skills to do the best for our patients**

We heard from participants that the Trust is already doing many positive things to aid the career progression and development of staff, such as offering apprenticeship and secondment opportunities, or highly-rated neurodiversity training modules. Yet others felt that the organisation is not doing enough to encourage and enable career development, provide training to extend roles and responsibilities, and aid them in progression or career changes. Many Mid Cheshire colleagues expressed a concern that this lack of investment in growth and development leads to poor retention and will ultimately result in a people and skills gap in the not-so-distant future. There is an absence of an explicit mention of growth and development in the Trust’s current values’ descriptions, but we believe the above is a strong argument to codify it among the organisations’ behaviours.

WE STRIVE FOR MORE

...setting ourselves high standards, encouraging innovation and sharing best practice to be the best we can be and deliver great quality, safe care.

We innovate and welcome change, removing obstacles to improvement, and building sustainable, fit for the future care

We continuously develop and grow, ensuring that we have the people and skills to do the best for our patients

We strive for more: Supporting behaviours from the crowd

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions



*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes



We respect you: supporting behaviours

- **We approach everyone with kindness, compassion, and civility ...**

Nearly one in every ten ideas or comments shared in the online conversation spoke, at least in part, on the need for staff to approach each other with respect, kindness, civility, and care, and to recognise the value these behaviours play in inspiring colleagues and boosting motivation, productivity, and the overall feelings of being valued and involved. Many of the contributions called for the practice and role-modelling of these behaviours and criticised instances of band-ism, division or bad behaviours they had personally witnessed.

- **We are fair and inclusive, celebrating and learning from the diverse culture we have nurtured**

Many participants celebrated the positive steps the Trust has already taken with regards to equality, diversity, and inclusion, citing the success of international recruitment, or the focus on mental health and neurodiversity training. Some ethnic minority staff shared being made to feel welcomed and supported. At the same time, other participants argued that more needs to be done in other areas – criticising the trust for not being a disability confident employer, calling for more support, a comprehensive induction, and supportive competency training programme for internationally qualified staff (in particular nurses), or, in the case of some participants, suggesting that some younger staff feel dismissed or excluded. This proposed behaviour aims to celebrate what the Trust has already achieved, while making a promise for the future the future.

WE RESPECT YOU

...embracing diversity and treating everyone with understanding, dignity and compassion to support and care for the people we work with and for.

We approach everyone with **kindness, compassion, and civility**

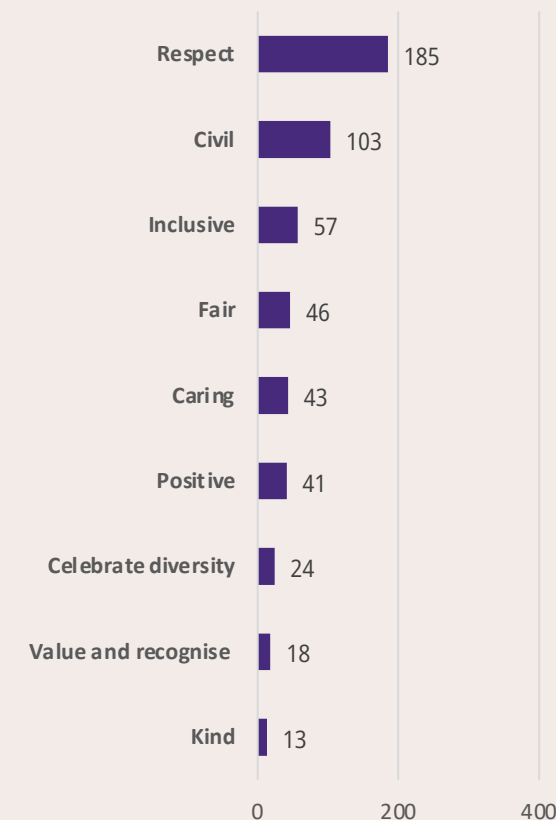
We are fair and inclusive, celebrating and learning from the diverse culture we have nurtured



Mid Cheshire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

We respect you: Supporting behaviours from the crowd

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions



*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes



We respect you: supporting behaviours

- We work as a team, being supportive, communicating, and modelling collaboration across the organisation, with partners, and with our community ...

There was a clear difference in the way participants in the conversation experienced collaboration across the organisation. While some celebrated the team-working success of their current team or ward, others listed various obstacles they had encountered when trying to work across teams or with other specialties. These included issues with communication, lack of sufficient spaces to meet at, no opportunities to network or shadow other departments, or instances of closed-off cliques and band-ism type behaviours. This behaviour reflects its parent value, while seeking to address some of those obstacles to team working that we heard through the conversation.

- We hold ourselves and each other accountable, challenge unacceptable behaviour, and embrace openness and transparency ...

Personal accountability and staff responsibilities were two of the biggest topics of this conversation and the cause of much of the contention between staff. Many of the participants hold a very strong perception that staff in some areas of the Trust are not held accountable for their actions, such as not following policies and rules, engaging in poor behaviours, or not fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. We further seek to respond to participants in the conversation who shared that they feel disconnected from the Trust's leadership and are unclear as to how or why decisions are being taken, what the organisation's priorities are, or are calling for more transparent processes, particularly around recruitment and progression. We believe codifying openness and transparency in the behaviours is a vital component of fostering trust within an organisation. Leaders can demonstrate transparency in reasoning and decision-making, by actively encouraging openness, inviting staff to express their thoughts and feelings, generating new ideas and innovative solutions. This is supportive of other proposed behaviours such as listening, innovation, fairness, etc. This behaviour is a small but important step towards addressing some of the biggest issues staff shared across this engagement and empowering them to act.

WE WORK TOGETHER

...with colleagues and partners to go beyond traditional boundaries and deliver care which truly benefits our patients and meets their individual needs and wants.

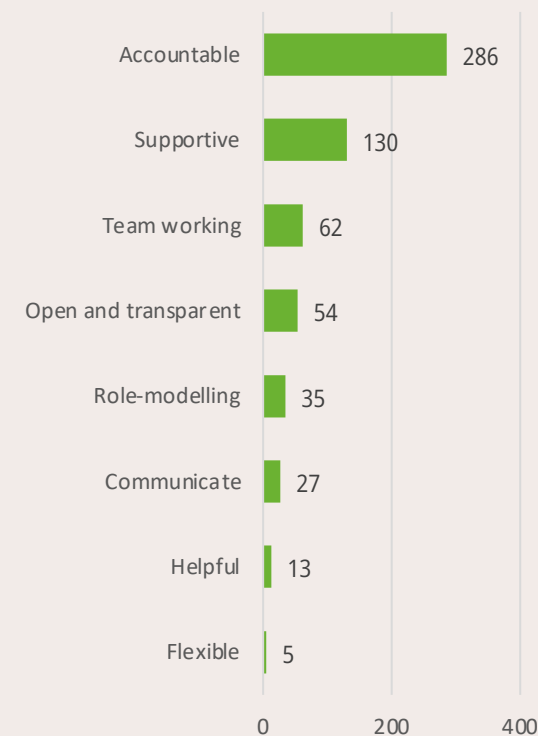
We work as a team, being supportive, communicating, and modelling collaboration across the organisation, with partners, and with our community.

We hold ourselves and each other accountable, challenge unacceptable behaviour, and embrace openness and transparency



We work together: Supporting behaviours from the crowd

Breakdown by topic, ranked by total contributions






*Total contributions stand for the sum total of written contributions (ideas, comments) and votes




Suggestions from the crowd

Suggested actions from the crowd: Well-led

The table below lists specific suggestions made under the **Well-led Best Place to Work theme** that staff believe should be considered when implementing actions from the Because You Matter online conversation


Theme	Well-led theme: Presence, Purpose and values, and Innovation and improvement		
Suggestions and opportunities	<p> Back-to-the-floor initiatives for both clinical and non-clinical senior management staff (such as in CCICP) have received praise from frontline teams – it was suggested these should be expanded and rolled out across the Trust.</p>	<p> Allow and protect time to embed action following audits, reports, investigations, or similar – staff are pressured and rushed and do not feel that real improvement is taking place.</p>	<p>Reinstate live events where members of the exec team highlight what is happening around the Trust, what is being planned, and allow for staff questions. This will improve visibility and connect everyone to the organisation’s vision and purpose.</p>
	<p> Following complaints of stalled projects, ensure organisational priorities alignment across innovation and improvement, guaranteeing improvement work can identify conflicts earlier.</p>	<p>Implement a “What matters to you” campaign seeking patient feedback. This should result in a much more robust person-centred care.</p>	<p>Increase investment and commitment to embracing digital technology as part of the digital health agenda.</p>

Key
 *Most popular suggestions*

The table below lists specific suggestions made under the **Well-managed Best Place to Work theme** that staff believe should be considered when implementing actions from the Because You Matter online conversation

Theme
Suggestions and opportunities


Well-managed theme: Roles and Resourcing, Opportunities, Fairness and accountability		
<p>Address and strengthen procedures around how managers and HR act on reports of poor behaviour. Be transparent around actions and outcomes from investigations, ensure safety to speak up, and act in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Consider strengthening and codifying rules, policies, and procedures, including those that might currently be “at-managers-discretion”, and support managers in enforcing these.</p>	<p>Consider reaching out in the community for recruitment, apprenticeships, and training, setting a target to have 'X' percent of the Trust’s workforce sourced from local schools by 2035.</p>
<p>Consider holding independent exit interviews and act on the gathered feedback, particularly for teams with high turnover.</p>	<p>Consider performance management as part of appraisals. Provide managers with training and support to carry out these actions.</p>	<p>Introduce 360-degree feedback for all managers as part of their development.</p>
<p>Allow clinical staff to have a choice of who carries out their supervision / motiv8s.</p>	<p>Reduce the time a new employee has to wait before starting work to avoid losing new starters to other opportunities.</p>	<p>Reduce number of locum staff and have more staff who are committed to substantive posts, so that they are able to contribute to improving patient care with the development of services.</p>
<p>Consider reintroducing overtime – this will allow staff to fill extra shifts, reduce agency cost, and improve patient safety.</p>		

Key
 Most popular suggestions

Suggested actions from the crowd: Engaged


The table below lists specific suggestions made under the **Engaged Best Place to Work theme** that staff believe should be considered when implementing actions from the Because You Matter online conversation

Theme	Engaged theme: Roles and Resourcing, Opportunities, Fairness and accountability		
Suggestions and opportunities	<p>Consider sending a behaviour-focused staff/patient questionnaires to all Mid Cheshire colleagues to anonymously report their concerns around poor behaviours and highlight any actions they have personally taken to address this. This will help identify areas where bad behaviours persist.</p>	<p>Consider making career advisors available to all staff that might require guidance, encouragement and motivation. For reference, research has shown lack of confidence to be on par with access to opportunities with regards to barriers to progression.</p>	<p>Provide independent Freedom to Speak Up Guardians, which will ensure impartiality and allow people to feel safe in approaching them. This is particularly important in cases where managers are perpetrators of bad behaviours.</p>
	<p>Provide easier and equal access to internal and external training courses that will aid in progression or career changes (e.g. outside the scope of current role).</p>	<p>Consider streamlining process to be accepted for bank work and offering better incentives.</p>	<p>Address reports of favouritism and nepotism by ensuring the internal recruitment process is open and transparent, with all posts advertised for a set minimum duration.</p>
	<p>Investigate reports that the Trust might be not be delivering agreed reasonable adjustments for disabled staff; enforce disabled permits rule for those parking in disabled parking bays.</p>	<p>Consider how to address issues with and improve online training exercises. Some participants report that online training is a 'check-box' exercise, with instances of people photographing the information and going straight to assessment.</p>	<p>Invest in succession and skills planning through more robust recruitment, internal training, and offering more pathways into health care (e.g. sponsoring more apprenticeships).</p>
	<p>Consider running an "I am more than my band campaign" to challenge use of banding language throughout the Trust.</p>	<p>Offer better/increased access to secondment opportunities and apprenticeships. Some participants have expressed their gratitude for receiving one, while others report not being supported to access these and feeling stuck.</p>	<p>Consider the Trust joining the Living Wage Foundation – staff report that Band 2's are currently paid under below a Living Wage minimum.</p>
	<p>Consider establishing a paid nursery/creche service on site, or at the new hospital.</p>	<p>Ensure information around special consideration for management of long-term health conditions and impact on the sickness and absence policy is available and easily accessible to all staff.</p>	<p>Consider introducing a periodic job rotation scheme to other wards / teams to promote understanding among staff.</p>

Key
 *Most popular suggestions*


The table below lists specific suggestions made under the **Fit for Purpose Best Place to Work theme** that staff believe should be considered when implementing actions from the Because You Matter online conversation

Theme	Fit for Purpose theme: Physical environment, Amenities, Digital and communications infrastructure		
Suggestions and opportunities	<p>Consider ways to make parking cheaper or free. Investigate reports that a large share of patients and relatives use the car park without paying and consider addressing this with better signage around pay machines, control on exit, update to pay machines, or a license plate recognition system.</p>	<p>Address allocation of Healthcare Cleaning Professional staff to non-clinical areas, some of which are reported to be very unsanitary. This is noted by some participants as a staffing shortage issue.</p>	<p>Consider providing staff-only (buffet style) canteen(s) at the new hospital, with more and healthier catering options.</p>
	<p>As a priority, provide an updated staff/department directory, organisational charts and up to date intranet. Current lack of these is a cause of frustration for staff, stalls communication and collaboration, and wastes considerable amount of time.</p>	<p>Provide more staff-only break areas. Lack of these has led to staff currently adopting the serenity rooms as staff break rooms, defeating their intended purpose.</p>	<p>Consider providing an on-site discounted gym at the new hospital for staff use.</p>
	<p>Ensure a wider set of basic training packages is given to all staff, with IT training for bank staff being one example.</p>	<p>Provide safe bike shelter facilities at more sites to encourage staff to use green transport.</p>	<p>Consider allowing staff to purchase specific DSE equipment from a reputable company and get reimbursed. This should save money as sometimes the same items via procurement can be up to 3x the cost and take longer to be delivered.</p>
	<p>Strengthen surveillance of car parks – participants have complained that it is currently unable to capture reported incidents.</p>	<p>Look to standardise administration throughout the Trust with regards to patient documents printing and filing, GDPR legislation training, tidy desk policy.</p>	<p>Address lack of rooms that can be used or booked for interviews, meetings, or clinics.</p>

Key
 Most popular suggestions

The table below lists specific suggestions made under the **Quality of care Best Place to Work theme** that staff believe should be considered when implementing actions from the Because You Matter online conversation

Theme	Quality of care theme: Safety, Quality, Flow		
Suggestions and opportunities	Set a target to fully integrate primary, secondary and community care in the future, putting a stop to confusing and elongated patient journeys.	Consider reinstating relief ward clerk general medicine role to cover sickness and holidays. This will avoid build-up of work and relieve all other ward members	Adopt frequent in-person assessments and a 'secret shopper' approach to monitoring infection control standards.


Key
 Most popular suggestions

Appendices

Best Place to Work framework



Best Place to Work analytical framework mapped against the Trust's values and proposed draft behaviours

	Overarching theme and description	Corresponding value and behaviours
Well-led	People want to feel well-led , where align people around a clear purpose, role model the organisation's values, make their presence felt, and actively support and encourage innovation and improvement.	<p>We strive for more  We work together </p> <p>Innovate, embrace change, build for the future, be open and transparent, model behaviours</p>
Well-managed	People want to feel well-managed with the right people in the right places, an empowered workforce who are clear on their responsibilities and accountable for their actions, and a place where there are opportunities for development.	<p>We strive for more  We work together </p> <p>Hold ourselves and each other accountable, challenge bad behaviours, provide opportunities for development</p>
Engaged	People want to feel engaged and work in an organisation where they are valued and rewarded, their well-being is supported, their leaders actively seek their views, and relationships are based on trust and respect.	<p>We put you first  We respect you  We work together </p> <p>Value and recognise contributions, listen to understand, offer feedback, co-create, supportive, showing kindness, compassion, respect, promoting diversity and inclusion, modelling collaboration</p>
Fit for purpose	People want to feel the workplace is fit for purpose , with well-maintained physical and digital environments, and policies and communications that support and enable them.	<p>Themes under a fit for purpose workplace do not directly map to the organisation's values but are an important component of workplace culture, helping to enable, shape, and support living and embedding the behaviours.</p>
Quality of care	People want to be proud of the quality of care they deliver, working in an efficient, safe, and productive manner and meeting the needs of patient	<p>    Quality of care sits as an overarching goal for the organisation and is embedded across all of its Values</p>



Clever Together's
Best Place to Work
analytical framework

	Overarching theme and description	Theme	Topic
Well-led	People want to feel well-led , where align people around a clear purpose, role model the organisation's values, make their presence felt, and actively support and encourage innovation and improvement.	Purpose and values	40 granular topics, laddering up to the Best Place to Work themes
		Presence	
		Innovation and improvement	
Well-managed	People want to feel well-managed with the right people in the right places, an empowered workforce who are clear on their responsibilities and accountable for their actions, and a place where there are opportunities for development.	Roles and resourcing	
		Opportunities	
		Fairness and accountability	
Engaged	People want to feel engaged and work in an organisation where they are valued and rewarded, their well-being is supported, their leaders actively seek their views, and relationships are based on trust and respect.	Well-being and belonging	
		Voice and involvement	
		Reward and recognition	
Fit for purpose	People want to feel the workplace is fit for purpose , with well-maintained physical and digital environments, and policies and communications that support and enable them.	Physical environment	
		Amenities and equipment	
		Digital and communications infrastructure	
Quality of care	People want to be proud of the quality of care they deliver, working in an efficient, safe, and productive manner and meeting the needs of patient	Quality	
		Flow	
		Safety	

40 granular topics, laddering up to the Best Place to Work themes

Topic analysis by group and band

The following slides provide a breakdown of **themes by contributor and group** – including staff group, age group, and band.

At the theme level, it is difficult to draw strong conclusions or find trends - most groups that have a high-enough presence in our engagement have each spoken across most of the themes we identify in the Best Place to Work framework. Outliers in %-share are usually caused by smaller groups where a slightly uneven distribution of ideas and votes can result in what looks like a large deviation.

Some observations we can make are:

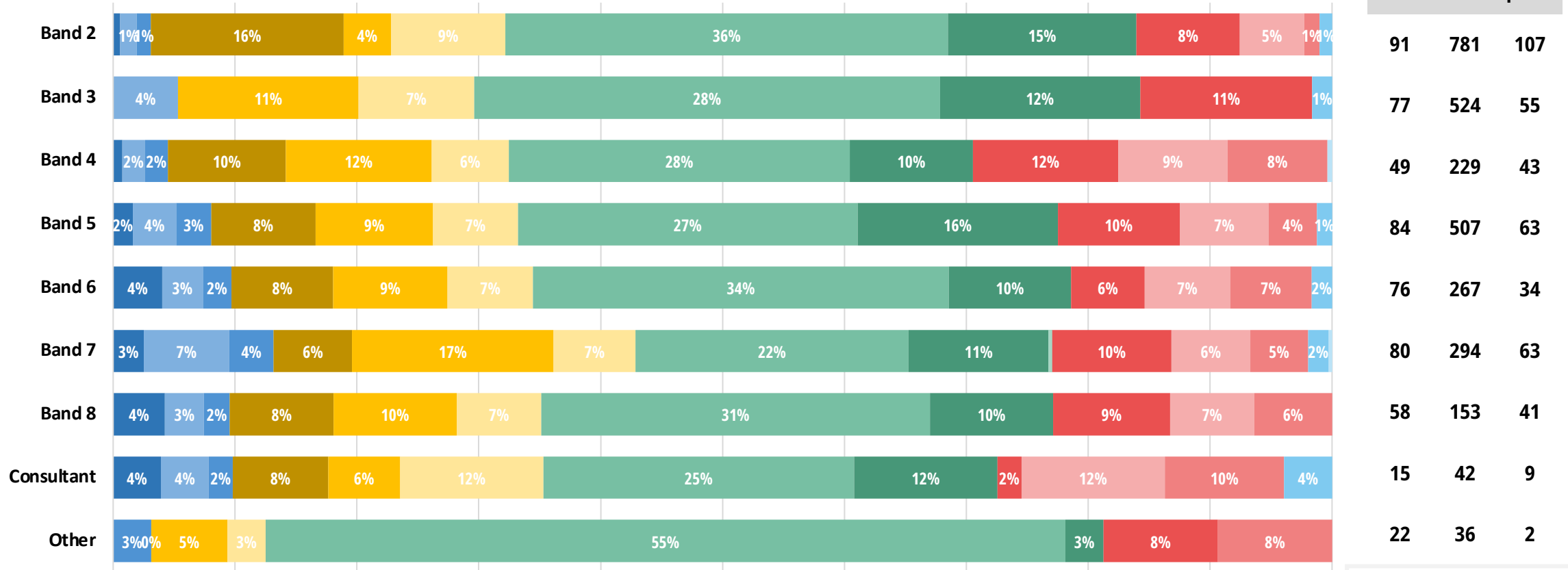
Participants in the conversation are largely unified in what they write about and vote on, with a breakdown by band, staff group, age, or ethnicity showing only small differences. We can observe things such as:

- Minority ethnic staff being somewhat more likely (by ~8-9 percentage points) to agree with ideas and comments discussing bullying and discrimination or fear of speaking up, though they are usually not the author;
- Admin and Medical and Dental staff being concerned with issues with communication and digital record keeping;
- Younger staff (21-40) are somewhat more engaged with issues around staff amenities, such as access to healthy food;

Despite these, we can say that overall, the issues engaging one group also usually engage the others, even if to a slightly lesser extent.

Thematic analysis by band

The following slide shows a breakdown of themes, by staff band, based on the number of contributions (ideas, comments, votes). It is possible that one idea, comment or vote can count towards more than one theme.

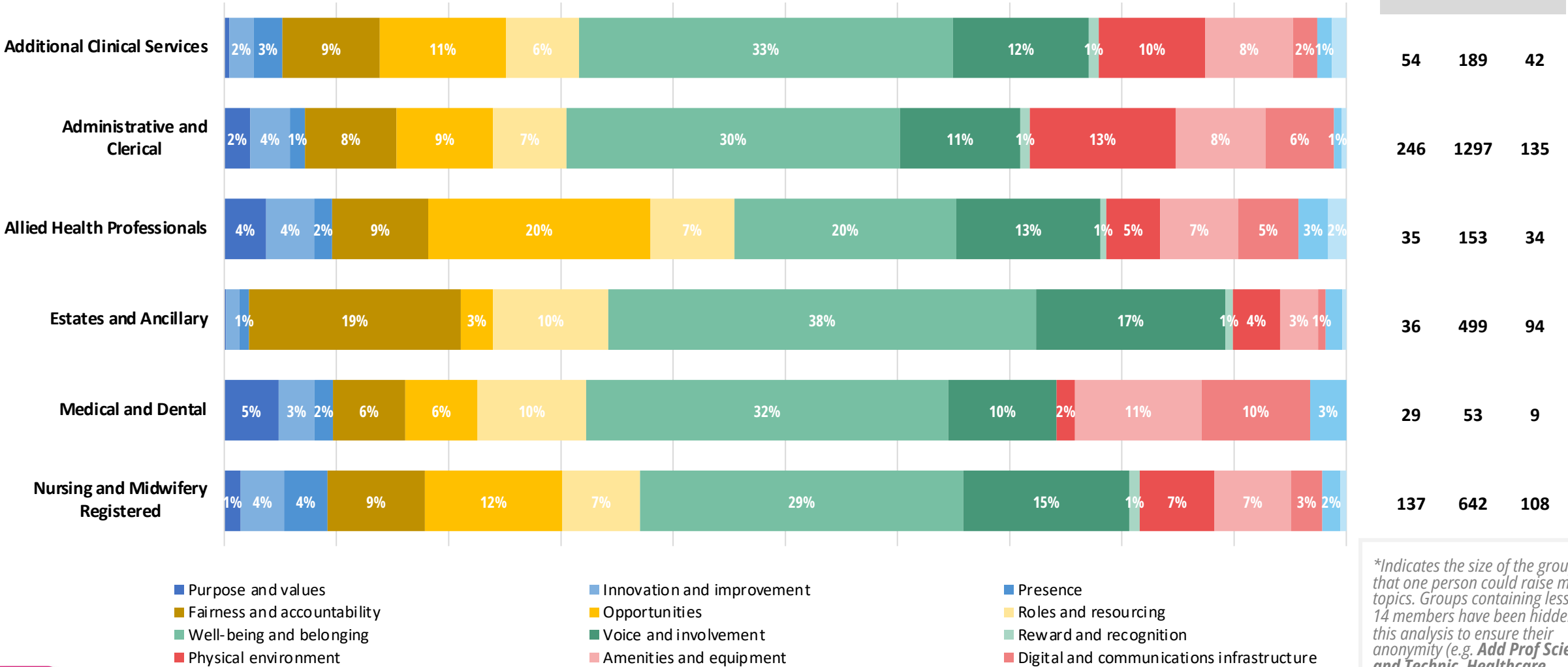


- Purpose and values
- Innovation and improvement
- Presence
- Fairness and accountability
- Opportunities
- Roles and resourcing
- Well-being and belonging
- Voice and involvement
- Reward and recognition
- Physical environment
- Amenities and equipment
- Digital and communications infrastructure

*Indicates the size of the group. Note that one person could raise multiple topics. Groups containing less than 14 members have been hidden from this analysis to ensure their anonymity (e.g. **Bands 1 & 9**). Some figures <1% have been removed to improve visibility.

Thematic analysis by staff group

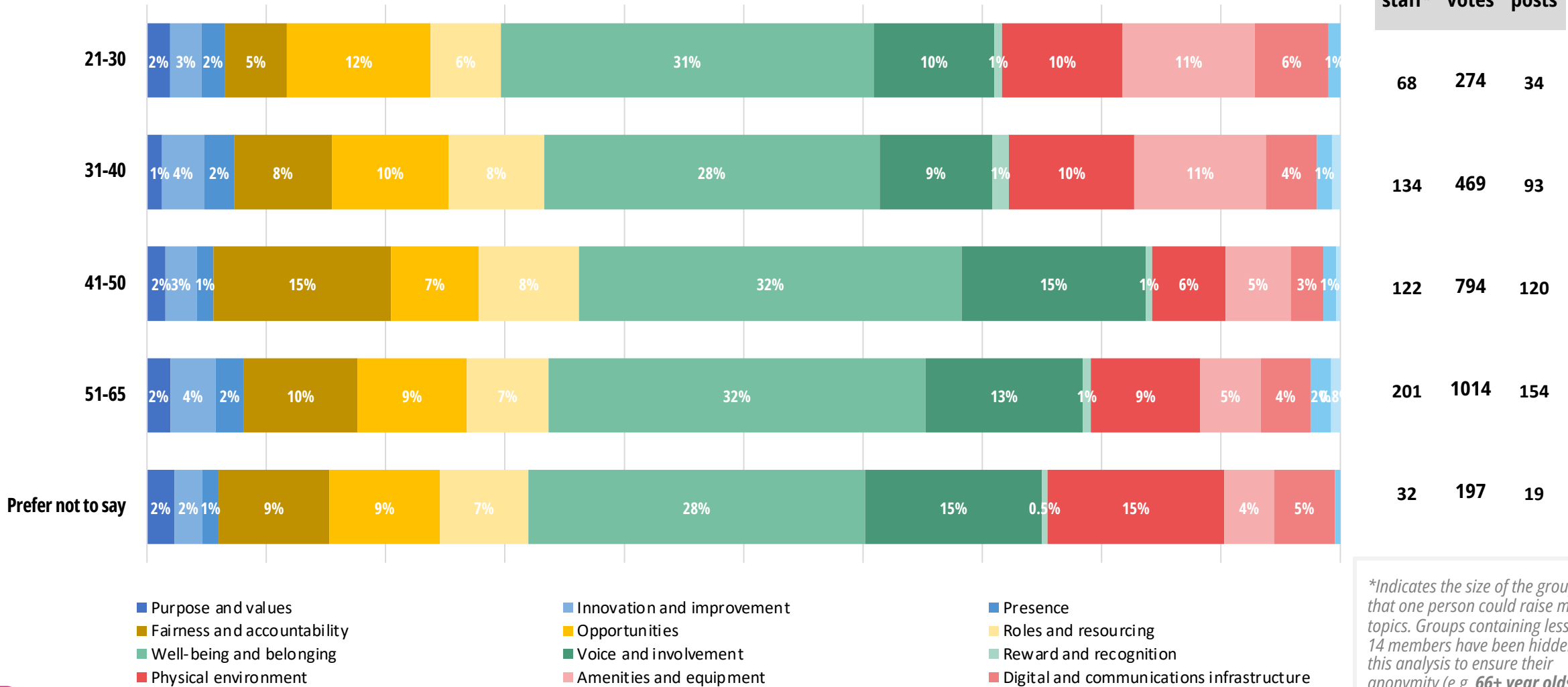
The following slide shows a breakdown of themes, by staff band, based on the number of contributions (ideas, comments, votes). It is possible that one idea, comment or vote can count towards more than one theme.



*Indicates the size of the group. Note that one person could raise multiple topics. Groups containing less than 14 members have been hidden from this analysis to ensure their anonymity (e.g. Add Prof Scientific and Technic, Healthcare Scientists). Some figures <1% have been removed to improve visibility.

Thematic analysis by age group

The following slide shows a breakdown of themes, by age group, based on the number of contributions (ideas, comments, votes). It is possible that one idea, comment or vote can count towards more than one theme.



*Indicates the size of the group. Note that one person could raise multiple topics. Groups containing less than 14 members have been hidden from this analysis to ensure their anonymity (e.g. 66+ year olds). Some figures <1% have been removed to improve visibility.

Gateway survey

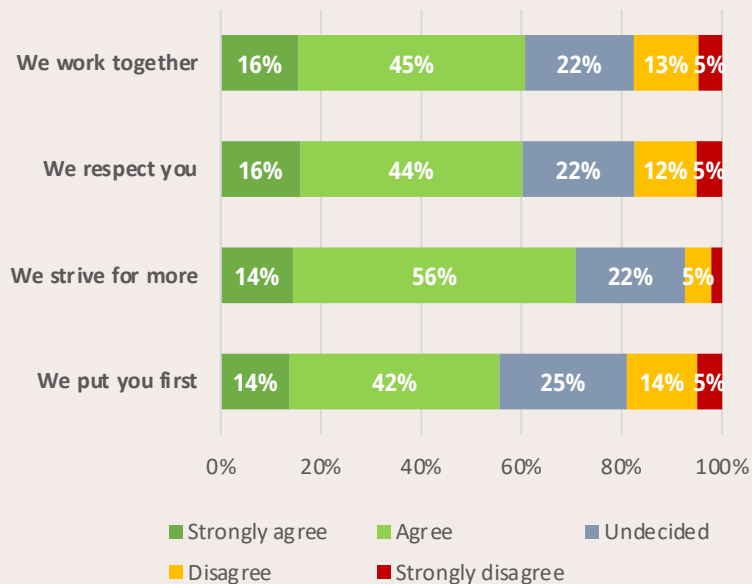
We asked participants who joined *Because You Matter* to evaluate how they feel about the values at Mid Cheshire Hospitals, if these were upheld by their colleagues, and whether they were a helpful tool to hold themselves and others to high standards.

Results for "Do you agree that our values describe the culture we need for a better tomorrow?" and "Do you see our values being consistently role-modelled and upheld by your colleagues?" show that, generally, over half of staff resonate with the current values, particularly *We strive for more*. On the other hand, a considerable proportion of people selected Undecided/Don't Know, indicating that further staff engagement is required to embed the values. Similarly, there is a small crowd who Strongly Disagree with the sentiment of the values, though it has to be noted that their share has decreased since the first week of the Conversation through to close.

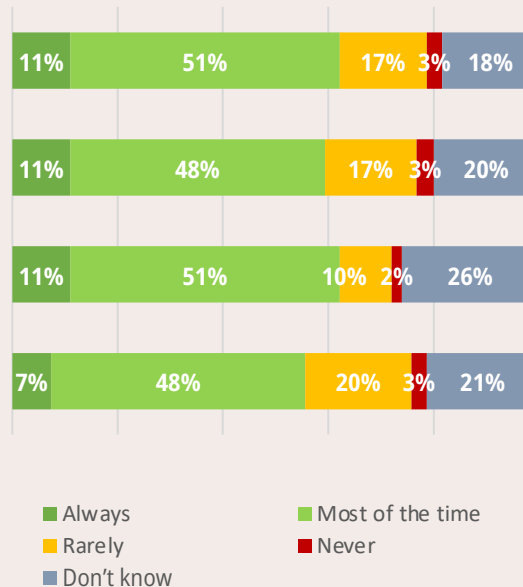
Participants responded positively to the values setting out clear standards that should be expected at MCHFT (over 70%), with just over half (53%) feeling that the values are a helpful tool (always or most of the time) to hold ourselves and others to high standards.

We asked...

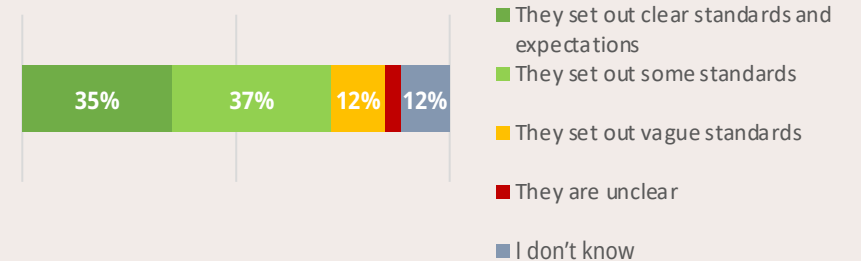
Do you agree that our values describe the culture we need for a better tomorrow?*



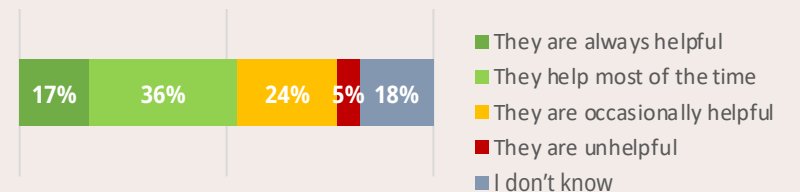
Do you see our values being consistently role-modelled and upheld by your colleagues?



Do you feel our values set out clear standards that we should expect from each other at work?



Do you feel our values are a helpful tool to hold ourselves and others to high standards?



Participation analysis

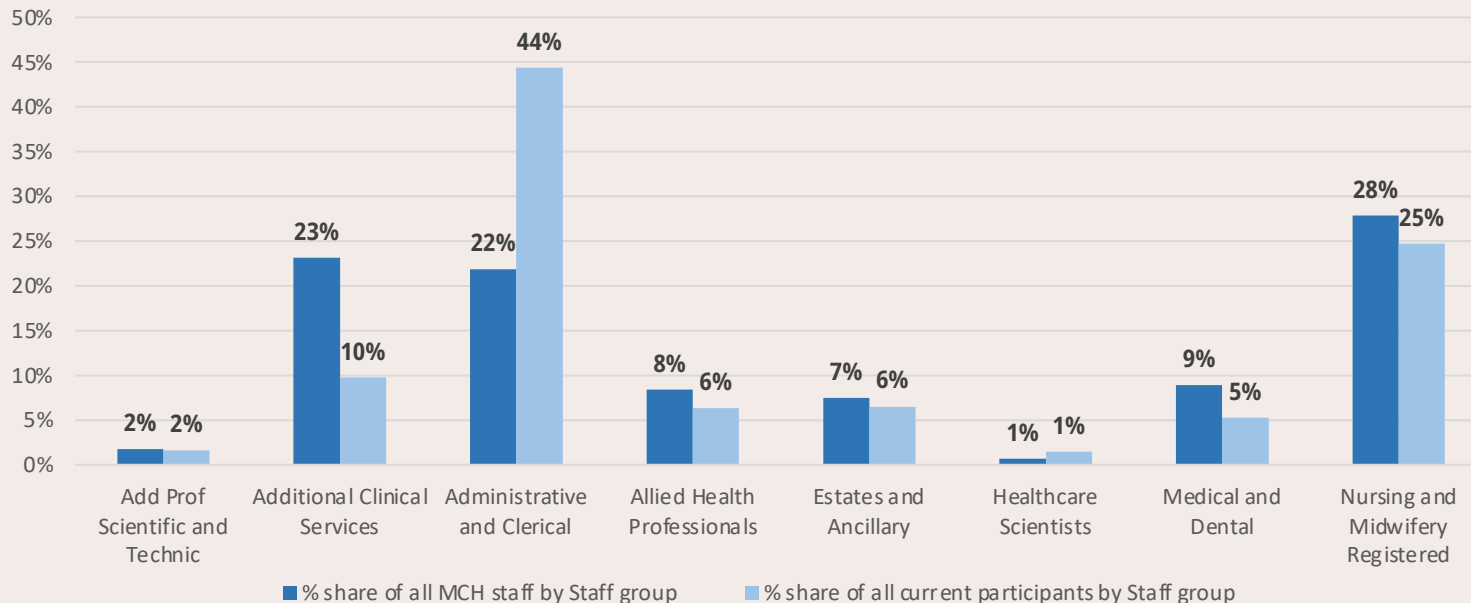
Participation statistics

By Staff group

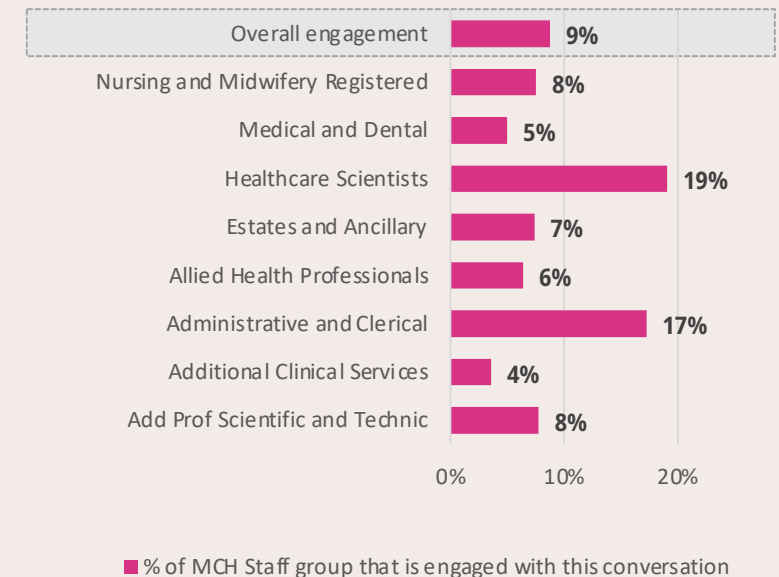
The chart below shows the current makeup, by staff group, of the ~570 participants that have actively taken part (light blue) in the Because You Matter Conversation (by completing the survey, posting ideas and comments, or voting), compared to that of all MCHFT staff (dark blue) as per data provided by the organisation. Additionally, you can see engagement, overall (9%) and by each organisational level (magenta). In addition to the staff groups listed below, we saw **8 Volunteers and 2 Lead Employer Trainee Junior Doctor** register and join the conversation.

Ideally, we wanted to ensure that all staff groups are represented in the Because You Matter Conversation according to their size and share within the organisation - or for the light and dark blue bars to be close to equal for each group. Overall, a majority of Staff groups were represented fairly, but we can see that *Admin and Clerical* staff joined the conversation at a much higher rate, while others, *Additional Clinical Services* in particular, were less represented than desired.

Share of participants, by Staff group



Engagement, by Staff group



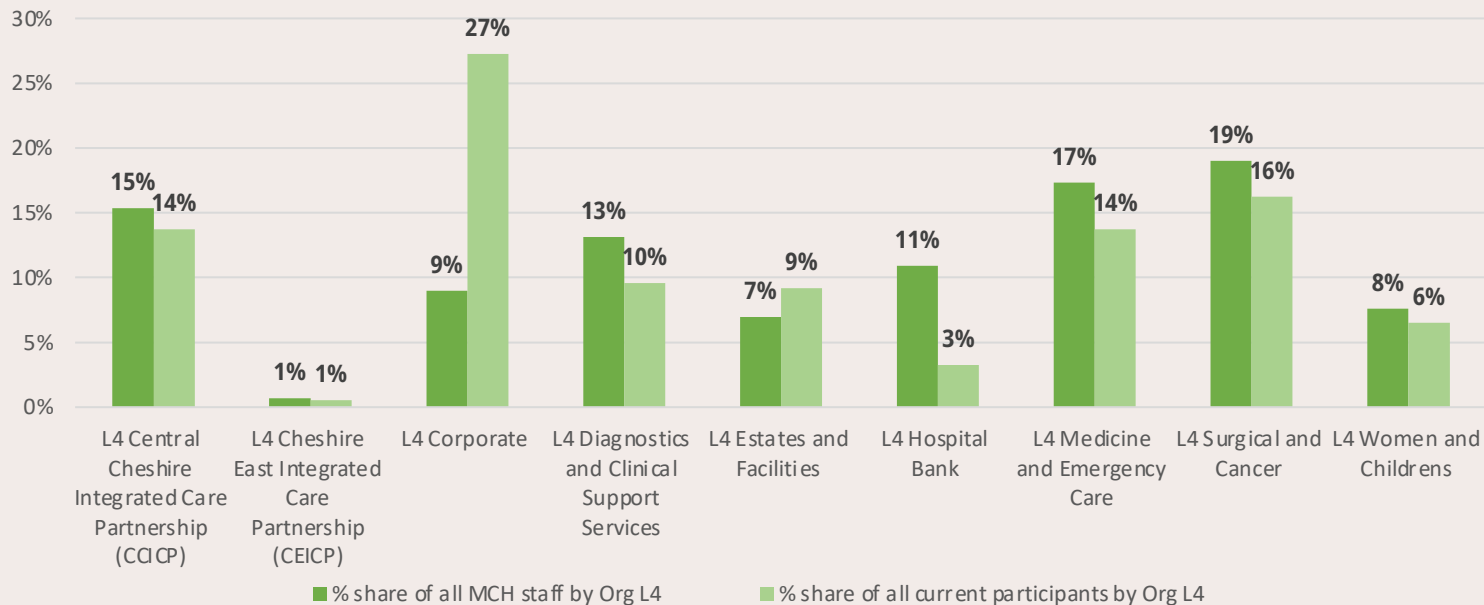
Participation statistics

By Organisational level 4

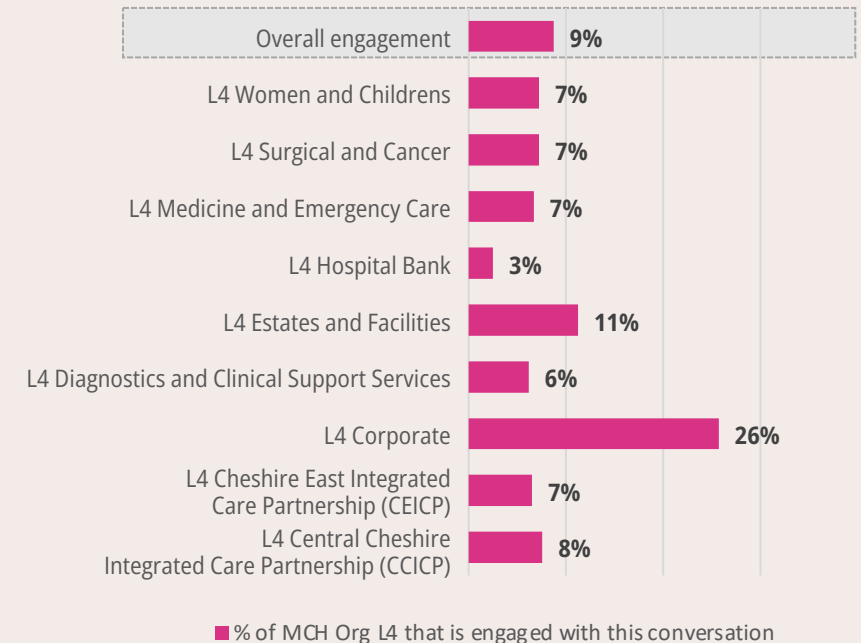
The chart below shows the current makeup, by Staff group, of the ~ 570 participants that have actively taken part (light green) in the Because You Matter conversation (by completing the survey, posting ideas and comments, or voting), compared to that of all MCHFT staff (dark green) as per data provided by the organisation. Additionally, you can see engagement, overall (9%) and by each organisational level (magenta).

Ideally, beyond attracting more people to the platform, we wanted to ensure that all organisational groups had a chance to contribute to the Conversation, according to their size and share within the organisation - or for the light and dark green bars to be close to equal for each group. Overall, this was the case for staff across most org L4 groups, but we can see that *Hospital Bank* staff are still underrepresented in the conversation, and *Corporate* was overrepresented.

Share of participants, by Org L4



Engagement, by Org L4



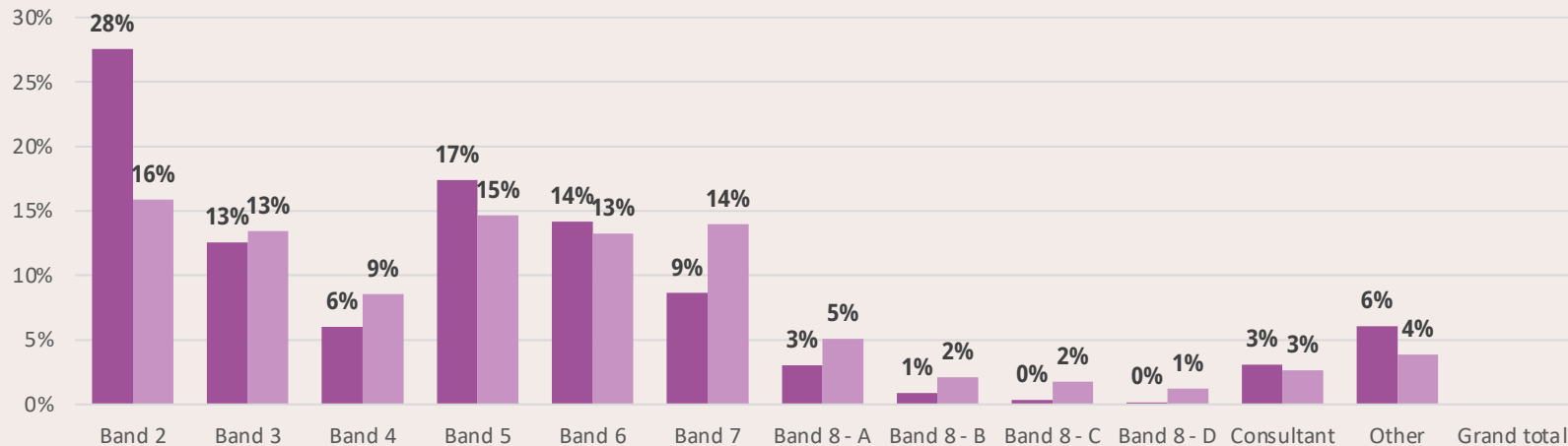
Participation statistics

By Pay scale

The chart below shows the current makeup, by Staff group, of the ~570 participants that have actively taken part (light purple) in the Because You Matter conversation (by completing the survey, posting ideas and comments, or voting), compared to that of all MCH staff (dark purple) as per data provided by the organisation. Additionally, you can see engagement, overall (9%) and by each organisational level (magenta).

Ideally, we wanted to ensure that all bands had a chance to contribute to the conversation, according to their size and share within the organisation - or for the light and dark purple bars to be close to equal for each group. Overall, we saw sufficient or strong engagement from staff from all bands (at or close to the overall engagement percentage), with the exception of Band 2 staff, who were somewhat underrepresented compared to their colleagues.

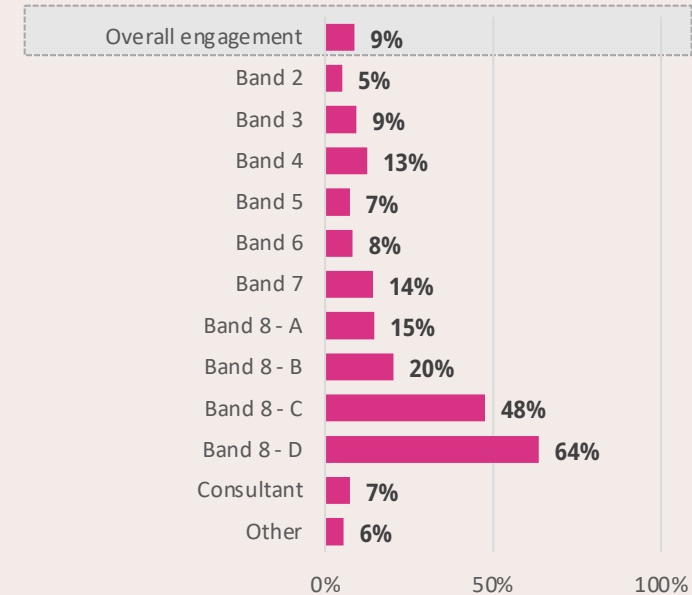
Share of participants, by staff band



■ % share of all MCH staff by Pay Scale

■ % share of all current participants by Pay Scale

Engagement, by staff band



■ % of MCH Pay Scale that is engaged with this conversation

Participation by demographic data

Breakdown by participant age, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, and health

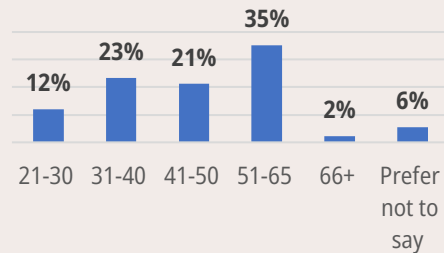
The charts below show the breakdown of the ~570 participants by protected characteristics.

As we do not have this data for all MCHFT staff, we cannot report on how representative it is of your staff population. However, we have made comparisons to 2021 Census data for Crewe and Nantwich.

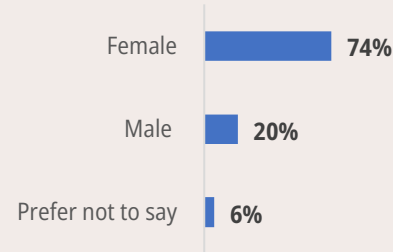
When comparing to demographic data for Mid Cheshire to Census data we note that people sharing minority protected characteristics are participating in the conversation in line with or above their proportional share of the population. This includes people living with health conditions (20% in Census vs. 19% in the Conversation), and all ethnic backgrounds excluding White are represented at a higher proportion compared with the population (e.g. 3% Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African vs. 0.9% taken from census data).

Breakdown by...

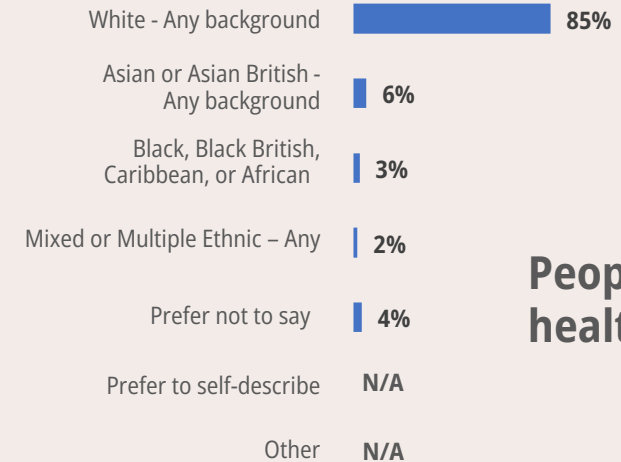
Age group



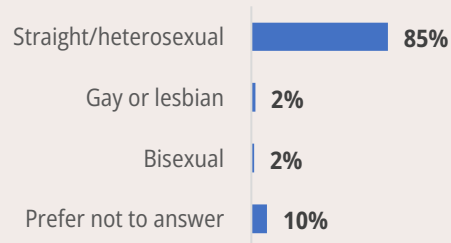
Sex



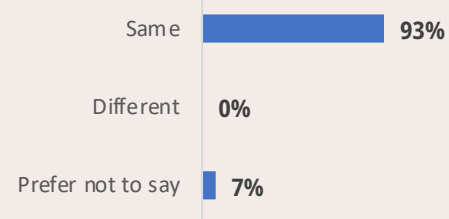
Ethnic background



Sexual orientation



Gender identity at birth



People living with a health condition

