

PRESS RELEASE – Wednesday 12 March 2019

**NHS staff survey results for 2018 show positive improvements in
South Tyneside and Sunderland**

Results from the 2018 NHS Staff Survey show continued positive improvements in staff feedback at both South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust.

The two organisations, which are soon set to become South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust*, had some of the highest response rates in the country with over 3,500 staff across South Tyneside (1,435) and Sunderland (2,241) completing the survey.

Overall response rates have seen continued improvement in recent years with more staff than ever before giving their views on their experience at work around key areas such as quality of care, health and wellbeing, staff engagement and involvement.

Despite a year of major change across South Tyneside and Sunderland, more staff in both organisations recommended the Trusts as places to work or receive care, with 90% of staff feeling like ‘their role makes a difference to patients’. The 2018 results also show improvements in the number of staff agreeing that the ‘care of patients is the Trust’s top priority’ (74% in South Tyneside and 78% in Sunderland).

The latest results, published last month, collected the views of staff from a wide range of backgrounds including those who provide care to patients in hospital in South Tyneside and Sunderland, as well as those looking after patients in the community across South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead.

South Tyneside scored above the national average in four of the ten key themes for: ‘quality of care’, ‘equality, diversity and inclusion’ and providing a ‘safe environment’. Some of the ‘most improved’ scores for South Tyneside since 2017 included:

- more staff feeling satisfied and valued in their work
- more staff feeling that their training, learning and development needs were identified
- more staff feeling that they are treated fairly when involved with any incidents, errors or near misses.

Sunderland scored above the national average in five of ten key themes for: 'quality of care', 'safety culture', 'staff morale', 'staff health and wellbeing' and providing a 'safe environment'. Some of the most improved scores for Sunderland since 2017 included:

- more staff feeling satisfied and valued in their work
- more staff feeling that staff are treated fairly when involved with any incidents, errors or near misses
- more staff feeling able to report incidents of physical violence at work.

Trust leaders will now look in detail at the survey results to establish where quality improvements need to be made in the year ahead as the two Trusts come formally together as one organisation subject to the approval of the merger at the end of March.

Kath Griffin, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development for the Trusts, said: "First of all, I would like to thank every member of our staff who responded to the 2018 NHS Staff Survey which is a very important indicator of how we are measuring up as an employer.

"We continue to go through a period of significant change across our organisations which can be difficult and unsettling for staff and we have once again experienced another record breaking year in terms of pressures on our services. Despite this, our teams continue to demonstrate their compassion, commitment and dedication to patient care, 24/7, for which we're very grateful.

"Whilst we have seen many indicators showing positive improvements in the past year, we are most interested in those areas where we need to focus more attention.

Our staff are the heart of everything we do every single day for our patients and we want every colleague not only to feel inspired to work here but empowered to make continuous changes that will benefit our patients.

“Through the formal merger of our Trusts we now have a fantastic opportunity to learn even more from each other, share best practice and continue to build an open, honest and supportive culture. This starts by listening to what our staff are telling us and continuing to support and nurture our workforce and do everything we can to show staff just how much we value them.”

The NHS Staff Survey, which seeks the views of staff working across England, is the largest survey of staff opinion in the UK. It is recognised as an important way of ensuring that the views of staff working in the NHS inform local improvements and that staff have their say in the delivery of high quality, safe and effective care.

ENDS

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Notes to editors

*South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust have been working together in a strategic alliance since 2016. A formal merger process is underway to create South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust which is expected to come into operation from 1 April 2019 subject to approval by regulators NHS Improvement and each individual Trust Board and council of Governors.