

PRESS RELEASE

Chi Survey 'Reinforces Need for Ombudsmen to Tackle Bullying', says Health Union

The first national survey of NHS staff, which has highlighted bullying of employees, has been welcomed by the Amicus trade union, which has been campaigning for anti-bullying Ombudsmen in the NHS.

The survey of 200,000 NHS staff by the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) revealed that 37 per cent had experienced harassment, bullying or abuse at work in the previous 12 months.

The CHI findings dovetail with the results of a survey last year by Amicus and the Community Practitioners' and Health Visitors' Association (CPHVA) which revealed that half of the health visitors and community nurses surveyed had been bullied at their current place of work, mainly by senior colleagues.

As a result, Amicus – parent union of the CPHVA – called for a system of anti-bullying Ombudsmen to co-ordinate and monitor policies at the strategic health authority (SHA) and primary care trust (PCT) levels in England and their equivalents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Karen Reay, the Amicus/CPHVA lead officer on bullying, said today (11 March): 'The CHI survey reinforces our view that stress is often caused by bullying. The survey provides further ammunition for our campaign to have a system of Ombudsmen introduced to stamp out this epidemic of bullying and intimidation of staff.'

'If staff can't give a 100 per cent because they being bullied, this, unfortunately, affects care to patients and clients.'

The CHI survey – believed to be the largest ever survey of a single workforce – said that 91 per cent of staff had received some form of training in the previous year and that 73 per cent were generally satisfied with their jobs. On the negative side, 75 per cent of staff said they had to routinely work more than their contracted hours.

The Amicus Head of Health, Gail Cartmail said: 'We welcome the fact that this survey has taken place. It does present a mixed picture. We want to work constructively with the Department of Health and NHS managers to improve the working lives of NHS staff.'



'Amicus is encouraged by the ever-growing partnership forums at all levels within the NHS where these priority issues can be tackled.'

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NOTE TO NEWS DESKS:

- Amicus has been a key partner in developing the current *Dignity at Work* policies

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CPHVA press releases can be seen on the CPHVA website: www.amicus-cphva.org

The CPHVA represents health visitors, school nurses, practice nurses, district nurses, as well as working in the community in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The CPHVA is a professional section of the Amicus trade union. MSF joined with the AEEU to form Amicus, the UK's second largest union, on 1 January 2002.