

Commonalities of Doctors' Experiences in Digby

Positives:

All wanted to come to Digby. They all liked the town, “ a nice place - liked the people- abnormally nice and friendly- there is nothing wrong with the community.”

“Before the changes Digby and Clare and Weymouth worked well, collaboratively, and with good relations between staff. Digby Hospital was a wonderful place, and they had quality control.”

Problems:

CONTRACTS

“ Bait and Switch tactics”, “Deception” (the words used by doctors).

Changing contracts AFTER getting here (e.g. buyout amounts, and terms- 2 changed to 3 years)

Changing workloads , after starting: given extra workload, often without payments for hours put in; having to cover for Senior doctors- without pay.

“On Call 24/7 without pay. NOT told this when taking the job in Digby. Though doctors in Yarmouth are paid to be on call.”

PAYMENT STRUCTURES

“Payment not proportional to responsibilities and time consumption.”

“Additional costs that could increase at any time!” Therefore did not know what earnings would be. (Therefore could not make a personal budget).

Doctors had to pay for support staff- but had no control/choice of who it would be, their employment conditions, their hours, or their pay.

Young doctors often have massive debts- which increased their STRESS

TREATMENT of/ RESPECT for DOCTORS

“TOLD what they could and could not do. “(e.g. patient-practice agreements)

Not treated with respect by bureaucrats- told to “ Toe the line.”

“ Did not care what doctors said.”

The managers in Yarmouth actually said to one that they...” just don't trust anyone else.”

“The word 'Authority' is very apt. We just cannot get any information out of

them.”

“It is the arrogance, it is horrible. We are treated like little kids- ' we know what is best for you'.”

“We never get an explanation.”

“NO ONE IS ACCOUNTABLE.”

“Who is making the decisions- not the doctors in the trenches.”

Overall feeling of being badly treated by the Department- “ controlling and compelling.”

QUALITY OF LIFE

New Doctors: increasing workloads that allowed NO TIME for a social life, or the ability to leave Digby more than 20 minutes away.

Stress levels increasing when doctors in Digby not working as a team of equals, and sharing workloads.

“ Could not work in Digby long term because 24/7 on call at hospital- with no 'call-group' to share the load. No relief, no social life, no respite.” AND- no support from Yarmouth management on this situation.”

“ (not having) a call-group is NOT NORMAL.”

PERCEIVED WASTE

“Highly qualified doctors not working in their specialty.”

“ Offers to do additional cover, emergency or 'unattached clinic'. Denied; and then locums brought in , at a higher pay rate.”

“ This new system is more about control...it is making it MORE costly.”

SYSTEM PROBLEMS

Off-site management, in Yarmouth. Control taken away so Digby has no input into decisions that affect Digby.

– No accountability

(Severe) lack of collaborative approach to decision-making

“The system IS NOT FAIR to Digby.”

“The dysfunctional system in Digby must be reformed.”

Deception in, and manipulation of contracts.

Unequal workloads.

Unequal payment for work/ time/ being on-call.

“The NSHA has driven a wedge between us and Clare. Nothing would suit them better than to drive another between Weymouth and Digby.”

“Their aim is to divide and conquer.”

Management of Digby from/by Yarmouth is not efficient or collaborative.

SOLUTIONS

On-Site Management: Digby makes decisions about Digby.

Accountability- “Openness is needed, no hiding.”

“Treat people nicely.” - Give respect, treatment as equals, give involvement in decision-making.

Make remunerations fair for all.

Make contracts transparent and honest before hiring. (With no changes without doctor's consent).

A call-group for all doctors in Digby.

(All “ marks are actual quotes from doctors.)

“Digby is large enough to be independent.”

“Digby is NOT SAFE especially for patients with with multiple problems, because of the distances.”

“Lack of access, lack of access to screening, it is SHOCKING.”

“I diagnosed (maybe) 15 cancers in 2 years here..and I was shocked...What if I hadn't been here?”

(There were no exit interviews with doctors who left Digby, by the Health Authority).