

Greatix – Introducing a Positive Feedback Reporting System in Maternity Services

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Synopsis

In all aspects of medicine, we can become demoralised by adverse outcomes, with a propensity for safety investigations to focus on these events. This can lead to trainees feeling disheartened and undervalued, which may lead to burnout and attrition within speciality.

In response to this, a group of trainee doctors took the lead in implementing the “Greatix” project in our maternity service. Although already a nationally recognised project, this was the first department in the Belfast Trust to implement this project. It is known that job satisfaction, physical and mental wellbeing are predictors of key organisational outcomes such as effectiveness, productivity and innovation and we should encourage positive employee attitudes.

Objectives

There is an historical focus within the NHS on reporting negative events, using online systems such as IR1 or Datix. This breeds a culture based around reporting negative outcomes and ultimately leads to a culture of blame.

Studies have shown that individuals learn just as effectively from success as they do from failure. Nurturing positivity within teams leads to improved resilience and an increased ability to cope with adversity, something which has become even more important during the covid era in healthcare. Data also shows that patients report an improved experience when they’re looked after by teams who feel supported and content in work. Throughout healthcare and many other professional fields there has been a switch from Safety I (as little goes wrong as possible) to Safety II (as many things as possible go right). Preliminary surveys of RJMS staff showed 97% of staff were in favour of the development of an excellence reporting system being implemented.

Design/Methods

In March 2021, after learning of the “Learning from Excellence” initiative in place across health trusts in the UK, we set up a paper GREATix reporting system at the Royal Jubilee Maternity Hospital in Belfast. We first sent a survey via the online tool ‘Survey Monkey’ to assess interest in such a system. We raised awareness of this initiative via posters and by presenting at monthly audit meetings. Any staff member coul submit an anonymous paper nomination via a postbox situated on Delivery Suite, in order to feedback excellent practice from another member of staff. The nomination is then reviewed and a paper compliment card was sent to the individual. We collated the responses via a spreadsheet to assess usage. The hope was to improve staff morale and learn from good practice already seen within our service.



“Always brightening my day when I see you on shift!”

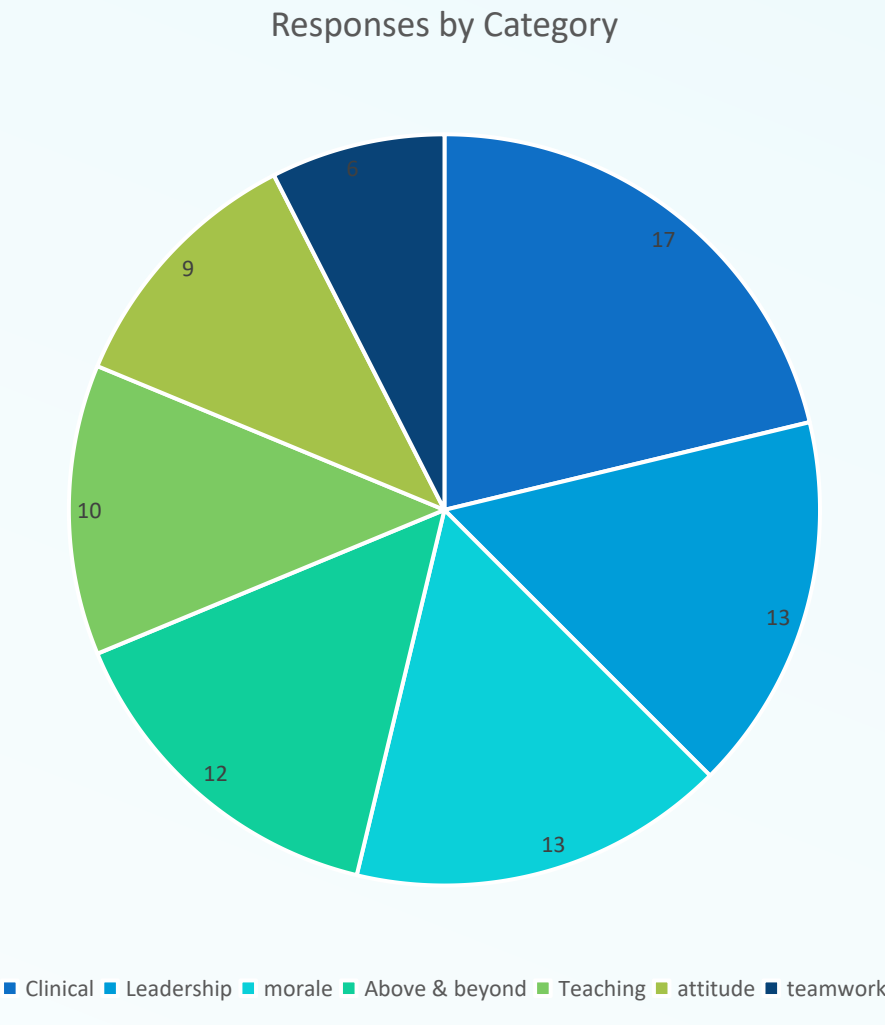
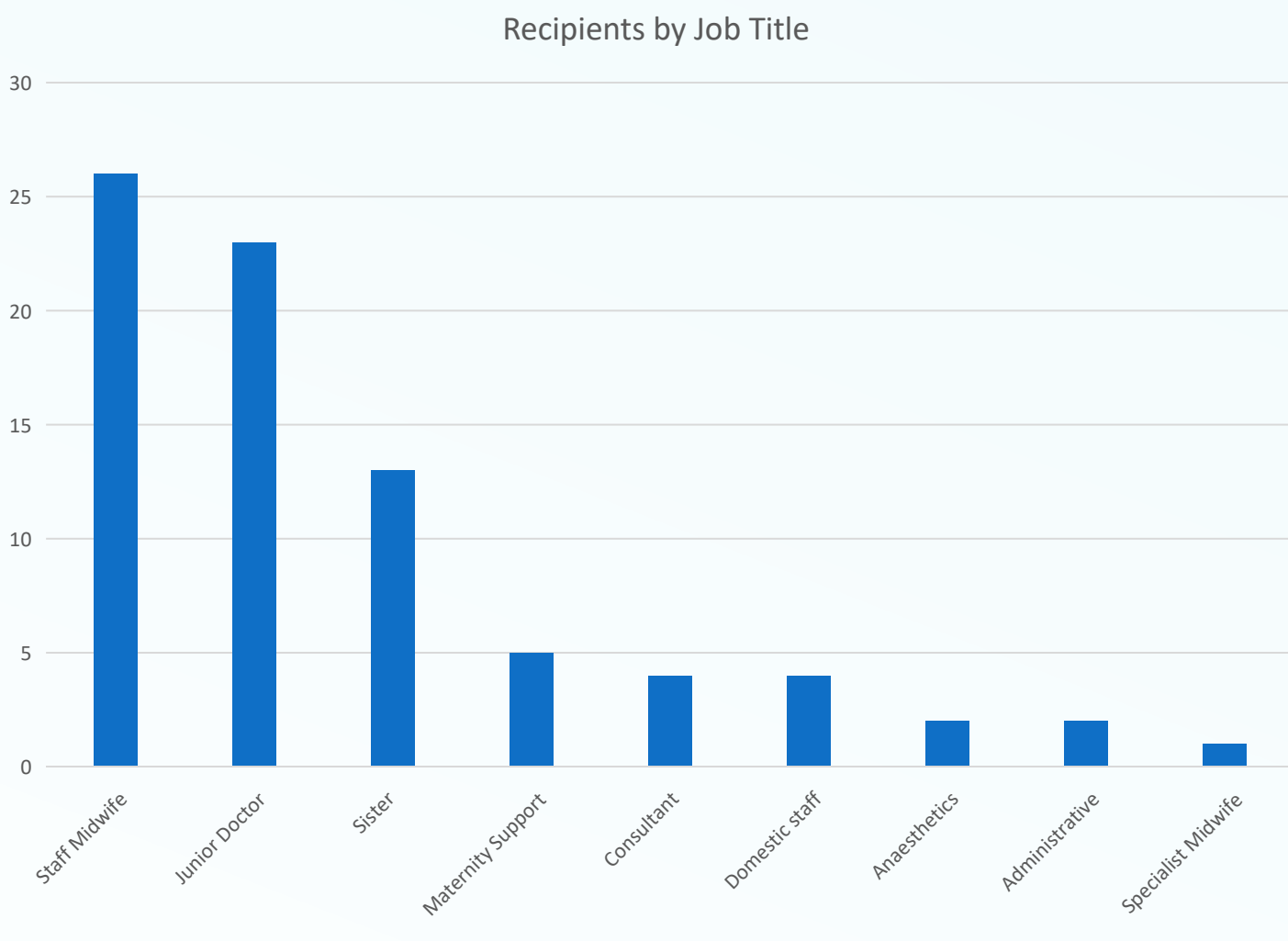
“Your knowledge and experience is incredible. I feel safer when you’re on shift”

“Always being so friendly and approachable”

“Showing great clinical skills with a high risk patient – a very calm and methodical approach”

“For creating educational opportunities and hands-on teaching on a busy shift”

“Always listening and supporting staff, we would be lost without you”



Results

We initially undertook this as a pilot for the Maternity Department – however as knowledge of this spread via word of mouth, we observed a ‘ripple’ effect, as other directorates began to take an interest into adopting the approach.

We have had a large amount of positive feedback from multiple areas regarding morale improvement and other specialties such as Neonates and Anaesthetics contacted us in order to adopt a similar system.

Following phase one of the project we sent a survey to all staff working in the maternity department. The feedback we received included the following:

40% of our survey participants had nominated a colleague for a GREATix certificate, and 70% of respondents felt that the GREATix system has improved staff morale. “Receiving a GREATix certificate really made my day, thank you”

Conclusion

It is important to shift the focus within the NHS away from a blame culture to one of openness, honesty and integrity, and improving morale by recognising excellent work is one of the ways in which to do this. GREATix cannot be a substitute for incident reporting but it can add value to our health care systems.

This tool shows real promise on its ability to improve working conditions and our ability to provide patient care. Within our unit we are now shifting to an online system to make it more accessible for all. The GREATix system is currently in the process of being adopted Trust-wide, so all departments and specialties within the Belfast Trust will have access to this positivity reporting system.