

NIHR joins colleagues to improve UK research culture



Beta

Results of a survey of over 4,000 researchers, published by Wellcome Trust, have revealed high levels of stress and insecurity with many researchers experiencing long hours and aggressive working conditions. The survey was published as part of their initiative to reimagine research and improve the culture for all.

The next steps of Wellcome's Research Culture work include a series of town hall meetings at universities across the UK to discuss the issues raised in the survey and will culminate in a 'Reimagine Research' summit in London in March.

The NIHR has a number of activities underway currently which will help to contribute to this including a strategic priority of implementation of an equality, diversity and inclusion plan. In addition several initiatives are focused on assessment of more meaningful impact criteria for research outputs and improving how research is undertaken eg team science. We will also be

continuing to work with our researchers' host institutions to ensure the research community is supported in their career development.

Jeremy Farrar, Director of Wellcome, said: "These results paint a shocking portrait of the research environment – and one we must all help change. A poor research culture ultimately leads to poor research. The pressures of working in research must be recognised and acted upon by all, from funders, to leaders of research and to heads of universities and institutions."

Louise Wood, Director of Science, Research and Evidence at Department of Health and Social Care, and co-lead of the NIHR, said: "We commend the Wellcome Trust for undertaking this survey and highlighting the worrying picture of the current research culture. At NIHR we are committed to continued collaboration with stakeholders across the research system to ensure research excellence is achieved in a supportive and inclusive environment and look forward to participating in the 'Reimagine Research' summit."

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