

## Appendix B1

# The Thirlwall Inquiry – Neonatal Staff Survey

### Sampling handbook

The Thirlwall Inquiry (<https://thirlwall.public-inquiry.uk>) has been set up to examine events at the Countess of Chester Hospital and their implications following the trial, and subsequent convictions, of former neonatal nurse Lucy Letby for the murder and attempted murder of babies at the hospital.

The Inquiry Terms of Reference cover three broad areas of investigation. These include examining the effectiveness of both NHS management and governance structures and processes and of external scrutiny including professional regulation in keeping babies in hospital safe and well looked after. The Inquiry will consider what, if any, changes are necessary.

This section of the Inquiry will include a consideration of NHS culture. As the Solicitor to the Inquiry set out in the Initial Request for Information letter to all Chief Executive Officers, gathering information from NHS trusts is an important part of how the Inquiry will build an understanding of the reality of how neonatal services work.

To further the Inquiry's work, and as referenced in the Chair's [opening statement](#), the Inquiry will be sending a short, confidential survey to all midwives, doctors, nurses and managers in hospitals with neonatal services. This will ask individuals for their views on the culture in their units.

Picker – a health and care research charity – are facilitating this survey on behalf of the Inquiry.

### Contact

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## How to use this document

Picker will distribute the survey to eligible staff electronically and will receive their confidential responses. To be able to direct invitations to the right individuals, we are asking NHS trusts to provide lists of staff involved in neonatal services. These will be used for the sole purpose of administering the survey.

The instructions in this document explain how to compile your staff list for the Thirlwall Inquiry – Neonatal Staff Survey. Please read through these instructions carefully and follow the steps to compile the staff list. It will be important to allocate sufficient work time to compile and check the staff list carefully before submitting it to Picker.

## Preparation of staff lists

Preparation of the staff list needs to be carried out by a staff member who is familiar with both the structure of staff records and Microsoft Excel.

**We request that trusts ensure that staff lists are comprehensive and securely transferred to Picker by Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February at the latest.**

If human resources provision is shared between multiple trusts, then it is important that separate staff lists are created for **each Trust**, not one overall sample for the provision. The staff list for each Trust should be consistent with the instructions in this document. Eligibility criteria for bank workers are also detailed below.

### Who should be on this list?

All staff who currently work in or in connection with your **Trust's neonatal services** and fall into **one of the below categories** should be included on the staff list:

- Nurse
- Midwife
- Doctor
- Consultant
- Managers
  - Please include staff employed in roles who devote all or the bulk of their time to coordinating the work of the neonatal unit or service or have accountability for the performance of neonatal services
- Senior managers
  - Please include people who attend or participate in the Trust executive board and have accountability for the performance of neonatal services.

This is an intentionally broad categorisation of staff; and may not be directly identifiable from within the Trust's ESR system. The Thirlwall Inquiry's Neonatal Staff Survey has screening questions included at the start which allow staff to self-identify whether their role should provide feedback via the survey or not.

Staff included in the above categorisation should also meet at least one of the following criteria to be included on the staff list:

- Full time and part-time staff who were directly employed by the Trust on **1<sup>st</sup> February 2024** (even if the sample is drawn after this date)
- Staff on fixed term contracts employed by the Trust on **1<sup>st</sup> February 2024**
- Student nurses, as long as they are employed by the Trust on **1<sup>st</sup> February 2024**
- Staff on secondment to a different Trust, but only if they are still being paid by the participating Trust **and** have been out on secondment for less than one year;
- Hosted staff (staff seconded to the participating Trust from elsewhere, e.g., social care staff seconded from the local authority) who either a) have a substantive contract with the Trust, and are currently being paid by the participating Trust; or b) have been seconded to the Trust for at least 12 months
- Staff who have an Job Role within one the specified ESR Job Role fields within the embedded Excel document:



ESR Job Role List

## For bank staff:

Bank workers should be included on the staff list if:

- They have been paid for any work within the Trust's neonatal services within the last 6 months (between **1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 and 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2024**).

**If in doubt whether individual or groups or staff should be included, please include them on the staff list.**

**The Inquiry's timings require a quick turnaround and upon receiving the survey, the screening questions will enable staff to self-identify whether their role should provide feedback via the survey or not.**

## Who should not be on this list?

- Staff who started working at the Trust **after 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024**.
- Staff on **unpaid** career breaks;
- All staff employed by sub-contracted Trusts or outside contractors (this includes staff employed through wholly owned subsidiaries);
- Locum staff (unless they have substantive Trust contracts);
- Seconded staff who are **not** being paid by the participating Trust UNLESS these staff have been seconded from another NHS Trust and have been working at the participating Trust for at least 12 months;
- Student nurses who are not employed by the Trust on 1st Feb 2024 (unless they are active bank only workers).
  - Please note: **other ‘student’ and trainee/training staff**, such as student health visitors and midwives **should be included**, as long as they are on the payroll **and** not classified as student nurses;
- Non-executive directors (e.g. typically “Chair”, “Chairman” are in this category);
- Staff who work under a ‘retention of employment’ (RoE) model – these are staff who hold a contract with an Trust but are paid and managed day to day by an independent contractor.
- Any staff meeting the above criteria who are on sickness leave of up to 12 months on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024.
- Any staff member meeting the above criteria who is on parental leave (maternity or paternity leave).
- Any staff member meeting the survey criteria, but who is currently suspended.

### For bank staff:

- Any bank workers who also hold a substantive or fixed term contract with the same Trust, as they will be included on the staff list through their substantive or fixed term contract role

For details on the reasons some of these staff groups are excluded from the survey, please see page 8.



## Format of the staff list spreadsheet

The staff list should be in Excel spreadsheet format, with one person per row.

The first row should be used for column headings (Name, Email address, etc.).

There should be no blank rows.

**Each person should appear only once on the spreadsheet** with the following information:

- Trust ID (NHS trust/Trust code).
- Staff ID (generated from Trust records).
- First name
- Last name
- Email address.
- Job title
- Staff group – information on staff group will not be included in the standard Picker report but will be used for sample checking and will be valuable in monitoring response rates. **This field must be complete for all staff and must contain one of the following nine options only:**
  - Additional Clinical Services
  - Additional Professional, Scientific and Technical
  - Administrative and Clerical
  - Allied Health Professions
  - Estates and Ancillary
  - Healthcare Scientists
  - Medical and Dental
  - Nursing and Midwifery Registered
  - Students
- Job role – please see the [National Workforce Data Set Specification](#) (NWD) for a list of the job roles to include in this field. **All staff must be assigned a valid job role and that job role must correspond to that person's Staff Group as specified in the NWD.**

## Checking the staff list

Before submitting the staff list to Picker, it is important that it is checked carefully. The list should contain the above sampling fields as well as meeting the eligibility criteria outlined in the above sections.

### Please ensure that:

- No eligible staff members have been omitted from the list. This could potentially happen if, for example, staff records are kept separately for different departments or sites within the Trust.
- The list does not contain duplicate or redundant names and email addresses.
- Each member of the sample has an allocated ID number and there are no duplicates.
- All ineligible staff have been excluded from the list.
- All staff seconded to the participating Trust for at least 12 months are included.
- All staff on sickness leave, and parental leave, including those on long term sickness leave of between 90 days and 12 months), are **excluded**.

## Final sampling inspection by Picker

Once your Trust is satisfied that the staff list is correct, they must submit the staff list to Picker by Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February. This is to allow Picker to make final quality control checks.

Please contact Picker if you anticipate any problems with meeting this date.

Trusts should submit samples via the Picker online sample submission platform (<https://samplechecker.picker.org/>). Login details will be provided directly to your organisation.

Picker will follow up any issues arising from any final checks, although we anticipate this will be by exception given the simplified nature of the staff list and fields contained within.

All items detailed above must be submitted, but no other variables should be included in the file.

## Eligibility criteria: why are certain groups excluded?

The staff list is designed to include all members of staff who currently work on neonatal units.

**Staff employed through wholly owned subsidiaries (WOS)** are excluded as they are not directly employed by the participating Trust, and therefore do not meet the eligibility criteria.

**Staff who started at the Trust after 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024** are not included as the survey is designed to provide cross-sectional data on the views of staff employed at a particular point in time.

**Staff who have been seconded out of the Trust or on long-term leave for longer than 12 months** are not included as the survey is designed to allow staff to provide feedback on their experience of working at the Trust in the preceding 12 months. However, if staff have been seconded to another participating NHS Trust for at least 12 months they will have the chance to participate in the survey at that Trust.

**Staff on long term sickness or parental leave** are not included as staff are unlikely to be reviewing their work email address on a regular basis; and it is unlikely that all organisations have a consistent approval to utilise personal email addresses for workplace contacts.