

From: Allen, Patrick, DOH <patrick.allen@doh.nm.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 5:12 PM
To: doh.secretaryoffice, DOH <DOH.SecretaryOffice@NMGov.onmicrosoft.com>
Subject: Secretary's Message -- August

Good afternoon!

I want to thank all of you again for your participation in the McKinsey Organizational Health Index (OHI) survey and, as promised, provide you with more information about the specific findings. The OHI measured the health of our organization through four lenses; How healthy is NMHealth overall? How effective are you able to be? What actions and behaviors take place at NMHealth? And how do the employees experience the organization? Our overall health score was a 40 which landed us in the bottom quartile for any public or private sector organization who has ever participated in the survey. I don't think any of the leadership team members were surprised by the overall health score. I know I wasn't.

The overall scores portrayed an organization that has some specific, significant challenges related to Leadership, Accountability, Direction, Coordination and Control, External Orientation, Innovation and Learning, Capabilities, Work Environment and Motivation. Our lowest overall scores however, were in the areas of Financial Incentives and Rewards and Recognition. Financial incentives are tricky in the public sector, but I'll talk more about that later in this message.

The McKinsey Organization had one of their experts with the deepest knowledge in organizational health review our scores and paint a broad stroke of what it's like to work at NMHealth. Here is what the expert said, "people at the organization have a strong connection to the work they are doing and have a deep sense of individual purpose around their work. However, they feel unsupported in their professional growth and the agency lacks flexibility for employees to change or adjust as their interests or goals evolve. Employees aren't generally planning to leave the agency, but they aren't likely to recommend working at the agency to their friends or families. Many employees expressed a lack of psychological safety, fearing criticism if they make a mistake or speak up with a new idea or suggestion that is different than others. A number of employees are burned out and only a small portion are feeling energized by their work".

As your Secretary, this feels extremely disheartening and disappointing and I am committed to changing the culture of this agency, realizing that culture doesn't change overnight but it starts at the top and changes one interaction or conversation at a time.

In response to these scores, the McKinsey team analyzed the results and provided us with 12 initiatives which could help us improve, based on their vast research and experience in this area.

The leadership team met and prioritized 3 areas to focus on during the next 6 months. The three areas include: **Leadership principles:** Define a shared set of leadership commitments and expectations for the NMHealth Leadership Team. **Management training:** Provide training and coaching for all managers on critical 'soft skills' to help them develop, empower, and support their teams. **Decision-making:** Increase portion of decisions made at the division or facility level, and provide clear guidance when and how to escalate. This work is being led by the Key Goal #1 Workgroup, since this work is specifically related to creating a diverse, supported and proficient workforce and if you are interested in participating in this workgroup, please contact the committee chair, LeAnn Behrens, Director of Operations.

I have been meeting regularly with NMHealth's Leadership Team to develop leadership principles, mindsets and behaviors and have asked each of them to make personal commitments for change in their leadership behaviors. Each of them also has an accountability partner who has permission to hold them accountable when they are acting outside of the agreed upon leadership principles. Additionally, our Workforce Development team hired three new trainers who will be working around the state, providing in person learning opportunities and workshops focused on leadership skill development. Leadership training and coaching will be centered around Trauma Responsive Leadership Development, helping leaders recognize the humanness of our employees and how we can create a more supported and energized workforce.

Also, in response to the OHI survey, the Workforce Development Team, along with the DOH Marketing and Communications Team, is in the process of developing a robust Employee Recognition Program where peers recognize one another for a job well done. There is currently no mechanism within the State system to provide people with financial incentives for recognition or merit awards however, our Workforce Development team is working with various funding sources and administrative structures to find creative ways we can provide meaningful recognition for your hard work and dedication. Once we have a better sense of what's possible, we'll be polling all of you to determine how you want to be recognized, versus making our own assumptions about how to build this critical program.

Finally, the Workforce Development Office finalized an Educational Leave Policy which could potentially allow an approved employee up to 5 hours a week of paid educational leave to pursue and continue educational degrees or specialized certifications. Details and program requirements will be rolling out in the coming weeks but we hope this allows you to see that we are taking action to support you in your professional growth and interests.

The challenges identified in the OHI call for sustained, meaningful work. I'm committed to doing that work. But it will take time, and I'll need your help all along the way, whether it's in the form of answering surveys, participating in workgroups, or telling me what you think in office hours (coming this Thursday!).

Meantime, thank you for all you do for the people of this great state. It really matters.

Pat.

Patrick Allen
Secretary



Office of the Secretary
New Mexico Department of Health

ph: (505) 490-0264

email: patrick.allen@doh.nm.gov
nmhealth.org

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