

NHS and men: Why do you think men are under-represented in some NHS staffing areas?
What can be done to attract men to these areas?

Not sure what can be done about redressing gender imbalance in nursing. In recent times it has been financial issues and economic migration that has influenced people deciding to opt for state supported training systems

I think it is down to the shielding of boys and men from the basic (messy?) aspects of living that makes them grow up with an aversion to such work. Women are used to having to face those aspects of life which are thought of as messy, emotionally draining or challenging, such as dealing with people in an ill or distressed state through parenting or caring for the elderly. It has obviously improved over the years, with fathers being increasingly hands on and encouraged to get in touch with this side of themselves. Men should also be encouraged to appreciate the fulfilment and job satisfaction of NHS work. The pay and the current talk of pay constraints discourages a great many men I think. It is a sad situation when such work is so little recognised and rewarded by pay incentives.

Some roles, especially those that involve 'caring' are seen as typically female. This needs to be addressed.

yes Nursing as job is connected with projected gay stereo types, also most men would not be attracted to nursing because their feminine side is not connected to care for others, men will be men

Some of the NHS staffing areas concerned are typically seen as 'womens' work. This may be because they are less well paid or further down the staff hierarchy. I'm afraid I'm not sure what the answer is!

You are presumably trying to attract younger men into the professions. Two issues:

1. younger men may be more sensitive to the gender profile issue. Certainly as a young heterosexual male nurse I found it uncomfortable that patients, nurses, doctors and visitors alike tended to assume I was gay, and respond to me as such.
2. is there a well mapped route in for older men to change profession into these careers ?

Male nurses used to tend to be allocated the heavy work, used not be able to nurse both females and males on the same basis, used to be limited in their range of career (I was MADE to work in STD clinic rather than be allowed to do widwifery). For the same reasons it was always assumed that men could not become health visitors or district nurses (couldn't work unchaperoned with women) so career outlets were limited. Things have hopefully changed a little but the pressure for single sex wards seems to suggest that there is still a reluctance.

At the time I was nursing the pay was poor for general nurses and no way could I buy a house or support a family on the money and there were limited career options from nursing to improve on this (apart from management).

I in fact went on to train as an Environmental Health Officer but have always maintained my interest in health to this day.

Yes men are under represented in nursing - perception of men as Drs or nothing!

Expensive advertising! The beauty industry has done it!

Poor pay. High unemployment rates may change peoples attitudes!

I thought men were under-represented in all staffing areas. Why don't you have a recruitment bias such as seen in the educational sector e.g. Athena Swan awards but for recruiting men (anecdotal evidence: my local FE college's job adverts specifically welcome applications from ethnic minorities, all well and good. Their online staff statistics show that 73% of staff are female, sort of ignores the obvious really). maybe take a leaf out of the Fire service which holds women only taster and recruiting evenings. Maybe even a commitment from government to actively promote men similar to the Civil Service in their desire to actively promote females).

Outline the benefits of working for NHS more.

-Most GP offices and Hospitals have their walls plastered with posters and leaflets about woman's health, giving the impression that the focus is on women.

-Opening times for GP offices make it difficult to make an appointment when working 9-5, but requ

We dont need them/they are lazy.

The overwhelming image of nursing and related professions is that they are jobs for women. This is constantly reinforced by media - and experience! When I go to my GP or to hospital for appointments the first man I speak to is usually the doctor (after receptionist, nurse, appointments clerk, &c). I think the only way more men can be attracted to these places is by example; challenge the stereotype by highlighting places where this is not so - if you can find them!

by nature a lot of jobs in the nhs do not appeal to men.men do not need to be attracted to these jobs just for the sake of it.if some men want to do these jobs all well and good. why try and attract men when they have shown a natural inclination not to train for these jobs.

Possibly a few reasons-salary/don't want to work with lots of women/not comfortable with showing a caring side/don't want to be managed by a female/peer group pressure.

Gender roles are often ingrained in both sexes and sadly I still feel some women aren't comfortable with men showing their feelings, so not sure what can be done.

Sorry if i've waffled on a bit!

Nursing is under represented, mainly because it has been seen as historically the preserve of women, as they provide the nurturing and nursing of children, and older relatives etc, they aslo dont wish to allow men into that privilaged area, you only have to look at the outcome of divorce to see that where divorce occures 94 % of mothers gain custode to the detriment of men. If equality were to be applied then at least this figure should be 50/50. In the nursing environment men are and probably feel the environment created by large numbers of women are not conducive to a good working environment.

there is an over representation of women in management. start outreach into schools telling boys what options are available.

Perhaps those responsible for advertising and promoting these under-represented areas are not using men already working in these disciplines to provide positive role models for other interested men to apply.

men have a hard time in the caring/nurturing professions because historically it is seen as womens work. I never understood how people can accept male Dr's but question male nurses.

Much of the work is seen as caring work and this is often viewed as womens work. Why should we make any additional effort to persuade men to go into an NHS profession? Real equality is giving people the choice to make their own decisions. Provided that opportunities for training are equally available, then it is fair (our current buzz word).

Its all about education, and a dose of reality!

I do think that pay and prospects have a lot to do with this. Also it is about role models - how many male nurses are on Casualty or other hospital dramas? Also there is the "sexy" nurse image that as a female takes some living down - never mind if you are a man!!! I also think it is considered a career more for gay men - and it does attract more gay men than heterosexual men.

men are under represented in the nursing profession as a whole, as historically it is still seen as a womans job, work needs to be done with school age children to try and break this

stereotype, also nursing is seen as an under paid profession, again this stere type needs broken.

I think men are under-represented in some NHS staffing areas because not enough is done to encourage men to go into those areas - even from an early age. What needs to happen is positive discrimination. Make a commitment to ensuring say 45% of all nurses to be male by 2020. We often see positive discrimination for women (The Met Police introduced positive discrimination to get more female police officers) but NEVER for men. Why not hold events that praise the male nurses - e.g. 'Male nurse of the year' award? Then more men would be encouraged to join when they see men getting recognition in a female dominated profession. We have 'Business woman of the year award' but we don't have 'Business man of the year award'. So get male nurses in the spotlight with an annual award. This may cause friction as the cry will be, "There is no female nurse of the year award, therefore it discriminates against women" but this discrimination exists with 'Business woman of the year award' and no male equivalent. Work experience for school children. Mothers should be encouraged to take their sons to work to encourage them to follow in THEIR footsteps (and not Dad's foot steps!). We often praise women who succeed in a 'man's world' but we never praise a man who succeeds in a 'woman's world'. I often see features on the news showing the first woman to do 'xyz' but I never see features regarding men like this. It would be nice to see the first man ever to become the Head of Midwifery featured on the news - has there ever been a male head of midwifery??? If not why not??? I also think the hours suit women better in the NHS and this is sadly because child care is mainly focused on women. I feel if men had equal child caring rights as women, then you would see a better sharing of the child care duties and then more men could also work the hours in the NHS. Some employers don't employ women because they think they will have time off to have babies. They know men get less paternity so employ them instead. BUT if men and women were entitled to the SAME time off when the baby is born then the employer would not know which one of the couple will take the most time off (this happens in Sweden). Therefore it wouldn't matter if they employed a male or a female. Women would get more jobs and men could take more part time work to fit in with looking after the child, so both genders would win! So a better share of child care between the sexes would see more men take jobs in female dominated roles. I'm so glad you asked the question because we do need to address the balance.

Poor salary and promotion prospects - lack of realistic salary/bursary while training