Exploring Bullying and Harassment in the CQC
Summary Document
July 2013

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and organisations

Background to this summary report
As part of a number of initiatives to promote zero tolerance for bullying and harassment David Behan appointed People Opportunities Limited to undertake a review of staff experiences and make recommendations for how CQC could move forward. We adopted an appreciative approach that invited staff to share their stories and enabled them to have authentic conversations.

Findings
The findings are based on our conversations with 236 people from the CQC. We classified 87% of those involved in the research as "staff" and 13% as "line managers". In the interviews we conducted we found that 92% of those we spoke to felt that they were subjected to bullying behaviours and that there was a problem. We noted that it was not only staff that felt they had experience bullying – this was also true of the line management community.   Of those line managers we spoke to, 79% had either personal experience of being bullied by a more senior manager or had observed behaviour that they felt was unacceptable.

The most consistent occurring themes are in the table below. The table contains recommendations that emerged as the findings were being recorded. The findings were codified and analysed through the lens of the Cultural Web. These recommendations are contained in the second table

		Theme	Details	Comments	Recommendations
1		**Fear**	Frequent reference to "fear" and repercussions Some related to historical "stories and "legends" Some connected with undergoing substantial change The reported instances of bullying were not confined to a particular region or function	Interviewees were representatives of all 4 regions as Compliance Inspectors and Compliance Managers; those working in Operations, Registration, NCSC, Governance and Legal Services, Intelligence, HR, Finance, Communications, Regulatory Development, Finance and Corporate Services.	The senior team acknowledges this experience and takes action to change the culture across the CQC These actions would include improved training for managers so that they effectively role model behaviours that generate high long-term performance. This would also include specifying what are appropriate responses to concerns about performance and give the rationale for alternative types of responses. People should be rewarded for creating a climate that helps others work without fear and which drives greater performance
2		**Targets**	Historic cases of bullying associated with experience of the ways in which they were managed in relation to targets	'Targets' or 'clearly specified performance levels' are important for any high performing organisation. What is critical is not *if* but *how* targets are managed.	Focus on addressing the cultural issues and drivers of bad behaviour. This could include drawing upon the high challenge high support approach.
			Stories told of ridiculing people in team meetings because of the pace of their work, people working long hours and becoming ill, lack of support in balancing inspections and enforcement action	It is important not to see bullying as something that is only caused by some individual "bad" managers but as a systemic issue that affects everyone in the organisation.	Avoid the temptation to 'solve' the problem by finding the 'culprit' and 'punishing' them, or solutions that are solely training based that seek to give people the 'skills' needed to behave differently. Though these may both be necessary in some instances we again stress the need to address the cultural factors that drive these behaviours.

	Theme	Details	Comments	Recommendations
		Staff are passionate about their work-committed to vision and values of the CQC They sometimes struggle with workload and often experience management as adding to that pressure	There is a wealth of good will and talent to draw upon in seeking to ensure that the CQC delivers an outstanding service	Responses are needed that demonstrate that people are valued as they engage in difficult tasks
3	Managing Experienced Staff	People who, in many cases, have left more highly paid jobs because they believe in the CQC do not feel their contribution or their experience is sufficiently utilised and valued	It is important to acknowledge that people tend to perform better when they feel valued	People that manage staff are encouraged to demonstrate an appreciation of the expertise, experience, efforts and performance of their staff as they seek to support them in raising their effectiveness.
		They describe themselves as being treated as difficult, negative and of little value. Feel "broken" by their experiences		All staff are offered training on working with others and how to have effective and difficult conversations
4	Teams	Staff have real affection and derive most support from their team	There is a real need for teams to spend more time together	Establish more ways of working that utilise these strengths.
		Managers are not seen as part of that team by many they manage Staff and managers spend very little time together in the same space	Use time to develop their understanding of the strengths of the team	Managers should engage with team development activities with their teams that help build a shared identity
5	Accountability	Staff do not simply blame others but do take responsibility for their part in the breakdown of relationships	Individuals look to others – HR, TU etc. to help make the situation better and need to take more responsibility themselves for resolving issues	The process for reporting and tackling bullying should include more options, including less formal mediation processes. This is a good

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		Theme	Details	Comments	Recommendations
					role for the DAW advisors to perform
			32% felt they had a part in creating the situation	Though many feel aggrieved it is worth noting that a significant proportion recognise that their own behaviours are in part to blame for the difficult situations that they sometimes find themselves in	Engage staff in finding ways of transforming the negative aspects of the culture.

There is potential to build upon staff recognition of their responsibility to help build more of a 'no-blame' culture |
6		**Behaviour of Line Managers**	By far the majority of stories describe a breakdown in relationship between employee and line manager	Supporting quotations are included in the full report	When many are feeling isolated or under-confident, a balanced managerial response would be to focus on task **and** to coach and support staff, helping them with tricky problems and enabling them to remain energised and motivated.
			Some manage well but many examples of poor practice and bullying behaviour were reported	Reports returned many times to the author with multiple conflicting changes	
			Stories of micro-management and excessive monitoring of work		
			People are fearful of making mistakes and there is a wide culture of blame	When being questioned about a complaint by a provider individuals described interrogative, threatening conversations – no opportunity to share their view, no support	

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	Theme	Details	Comments	Recommendations
		Individuals who have held very senior roles within health and social care before coming to the CQC describe themselves as being "broken" by the behaviours of their managers	Conversations with line mangers, seemed to be focused entirely on task with very little emphasis on development and support	
7	**Implementing the PDR Process**	Many felt annual PDR and the process inconsistently applied across regions, teams and individuals. 1:1's only focus on numbers with issues being raised in PDR that had not been raised before Many felt PDRs do not encourage managers to focus on HOW they are managed and there is no mechanism to feedback on either good or less good managers		The CQC Values and behaviours are given greater emphasis in PDR assessment and write up Is this IN PDR assessment and write-ups?
8	**HR Processes**	People "terrified of being punished for speaking out" so did not formally complain	Appointment of Dignity at Work Advisors seen as a positive move	Involve staff in revising/clarifying guidance for reporting grievances in relation to bullying Take action to establish in the culture that, in the CQC, speaking out is valued as it can drive an improvement in professionalism and effectiveness. There is a need to ensure that all understand that there is still a duty of care for those that raise grievances.

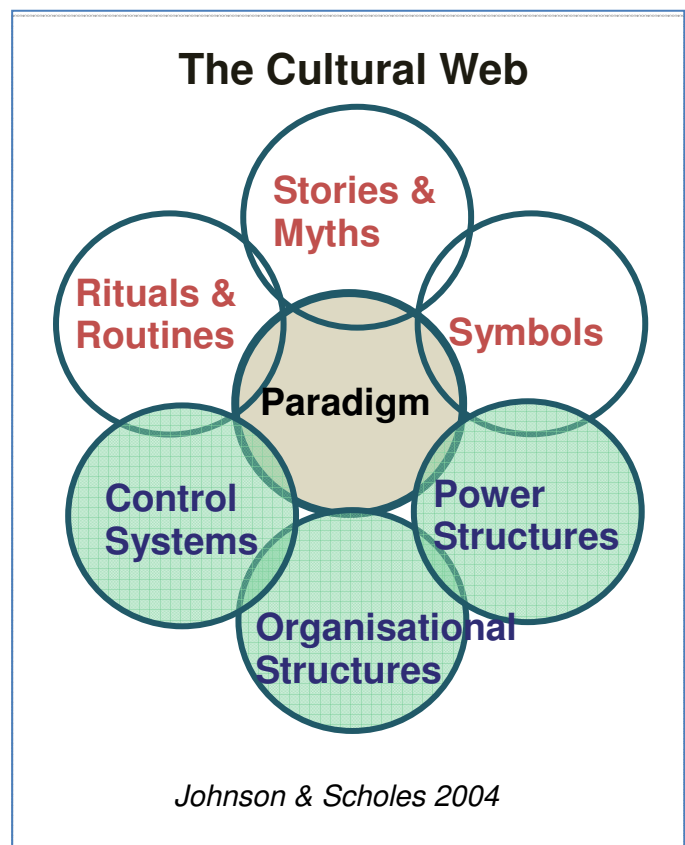|		Theme	Details	Comments	Recommendations
			Little faith in outcomes of grievance process Felt guidelines did not adequately explain what outcomes could be expected Many expected an apology	Many that had taken out a grievance did not feel they had achieved closure	Wherever possible mediation should be offered as an alternative to a formal grievance process. If grievance process is initiated, it would be useful to enhance communication during the grievance process whenever and wherever appropriate and ensure that those that initiate a grievance understand the types of outcomes that they could expect to achieve
9		**Managing Poor Performance**	Managers felt quite isolated by the experience and unsupported Line managers and staff expressed dissatisfaction with the process	Managers also commented that some people have a "victim mentality". "When we try and raise productivity inspectors raise a grievance – the stories are well known."	All staff receive training on holding developmental coaching conversations. There is a need to raise productivity and a good challenge and support approach would enable managers to stretch when appropriate **and** challenge attitudes that get in the way.
10		**Workload**	Used in the context of institutional bullying	A number of those who felt they had experienced bullying by their line manager connected it to their desire to make more thorough inspections than their line manager felt was necessary.	Managers spend more time in team meetings working collaboratively to explore and resolve expectations and issues together.
			People prepared to manage change in targets but wanted better more empowering conversations so they could input into the solution rather than have it imposed		

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		Theme	Details	Comments	Recommendations
11		**Regional Induction**	New inspectors felt exposed when moving out of induction and into their teams	People raised the fact that they were not being allowed to shadow inspections Buddies lacked the time to support them	Managers provide new members of staff with meaningful supervision and support
			Probation used as a threat - something to struggle through rather than a time for learning and consolidation		
12		**Historical Organisational Issues**	Isolation of homeworkers Perceived restrictions of TOIL Protected Pay (both from those who see others being paid more for the same job and those whose pay is being reduced Technology (CRM) Assisted Technology – slowness of Dragon etc.		There are a number of hygiene issues that may be quick wins and need to be addressed

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Context of Recommendations

In looking at what needs to happen to build on the existing strengths of the organisation we used the Cultural Web model (see below) to help provide a frame for understanding the current culture. We codified our findings and emergent recommendations and used the Cultural Web as a framework for reporting back to the CQC.

The responses that we gained from the interviews suggest that managers in the CQC pay greater attention to **control systems, organisational structures and power structures** than to creating a climate that fosters success.

In any cultural intervention it is important to acknowledge the existing culture and to understand the current paradigm – what people are saying, what they think about the CQC, how they describe their role. If the paradigm is to shift leaders need to pay as much attention to the top 3 elements, (**Rituals, Stories and Symbols**) as they do to the bottom 3. They need to work skilfully to co-evolve ways of working that generate and sustain a more positive culture. In seeking to do so they will need to pay attention to their own habits of thought and behaviour and avoid the temptation of using the types of approaches and behaviours that (usually with good intention and under huge pressure) created the situation in the first place. The model provides a useful basis for structuring future action. We have used the structure to outline some of our recommendations.

The Cultural Web

- Stories & Myths
- Rituals & Routines
- Symbols
- Paradigm
- Control Systems
- Power Structures
- Organisational Structures

Johnson & Scholes 2004

Recommendations

Aspect of Cultural Web	Current Culture	No	Recommendation	Actions: What, Where, Who, When.
Stories & Myths – important events and personalities embedded in CQC history.	Based on history of 3 organisations coming together	1.	The senior team work together to develop notion of shared leadership – that is, a culture in which **most**, if not **all**, in the CQC see themselves as leaders and take responsibility to lead and to encourage leadership in others. Identify and publicise existing stories of good practice within the organisation	
	Passion, dedication and hard work	2.	Publicly acknowledge that this is the case and that it provides the basis for the future success of the CQC	
	Fear and blame	3.	Describe and incentivise positive/desired behaviours	
	Focus on monitoring targets rather than developing and supporting staff	4.	Role-model the notion of high challenge and high support as a balanced way of addressing support and stretch of staff Create the conditions for this to succeed through explicit leadership communications and role modelling, training and team development activities	
Rituals and Routines - behaviour in the CQC, training, promotion, assessment, visibility – what is important.	Structure and patterns of 1:1s, team meetings and PDR meetings are main point of contact for staff and managers Focus on task	5.	Strategies are developed that create greater connection between staff and line managers - at all levels of the organisation	

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Aspect of Cultural Web	Current Culture	No	Recommendation	Actions: What, Where, Who, When.
	Much communication by email or phone	6.	Staff and line managers spend more time physically together e.g. monthly face-to-face meetings Conversations about task *AND* collaboratively working to improve team performance and well-being	
		7.	Current 1:1 structure reviewed to include an assessment of how managers contribute to the performance and well-being of their staff	
		8.	Training is offered to help develop the skills of coaching conversations. Online supporting material would also be useful	
		9.	Managers are supported to implement coaching conversations – linked to strategy and exceeding performance at review.	
Symbols - logos, offices, titles, language, terminology	Pamphlets and Literature focus on values relating to external performance and service rather than internal performance	10.	Produce posters and flyers to describe how you will work internally – highlighting what will be different. Public demonstrations of the espoused desirable behaviours at critical moments	

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Aspect of Cultural Web	Current Culture	No	Recommendation	Actions: What, Where, Who, When.
Organisational Structures - Formal and informal ways in which the CQC works, important relationships	Many changes in structure Currently an interim executive structure Recognised hierarchy with decisions and action communicated from the top level down throughout the organisation. Provides guidance for staff but they feel less accountable for the ways in which they work and behave.	11.	Leadership team cascades the shared leadership approach	
		12.	Chief Inspectors engage with staff to refine current practise Training in collaborative working made available Review structures generally so that, for example, people work more in their area of expertise rather than being generic inspectors. Increase the extent to which staff recognise and act as if they have accountability for managing their behaviours and that of others	

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Aspect of Cultural Web	Current Culture	No	Recommendation	Actions: What, Where, Who, When.
Control Systems – the policies and procedures of an organisation	Bullying complaints take a long time to resolve.	13.	CQC considers the Disruptive Behaviour Pyramid as a graduated method of dealing with disruptive behaviour. Seek mediation as first step – avoid grievances Make the grievance process a quick as legitimately possible as this reduces its toxic affect on the rest of the organisation and the individuals involved.	
	Staff are unsure of possible outcomes, timescales and options. Many people find it is difficult to achieve closure Staff feel disadvantaged when facing a complaint by a Provider	14.	CQC leadership work collaboratively with staff to review current procedures and guidelines to develop and implement an improved process for reporting bullying. Acknowledgement is one of the most affective ways of helping people achieve closure and this needs to be seen as part of the managers responsibility	
Power Structures - managerial groupings that set core assumptions	CEO and executive team make things happen	15.	A shared leadership approach is used to engage and empower staff	
		16.	Work together to create a culture in which positions of leadership and authority demonstrate valuing perspectives and contribution of staff irrespective of their position in the hierarchy. "Communicate, communicate, communicate" core assumptions, expectations, values, etc.	

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