Nancy Redfern

Nancy Redfern is a consultant Anaesthetist in Newcastle upon Tyne, with interests in obstetric and neuroanaesthesia. Her long-term non-clinical interests include staff wellbeing, mentorship, education, and workforce. She is co-chair of the national joint fatigue working group, which works to improve understanding and management of work-related fatigue. As part of this she is involved in research on implementation of safe fatigue risk management in acute hospital settings, and speaks widely on wellbeing issues.

Abstract

Fatigue has detrimental effects on staff performance and wellbeing, and on patient safety. By understanding how night shift work affects our vigilance, decision-making and teamwork and how other safety critical industries have designed and implemented effective fatigue risk management strategies, we can identify practical approaches we can use to reduce fatigue both from long days and night shift work. But there are challenges in changing attitudes to fatigue risk management across the NHS. The Covid-19 pandemic has given a new emphasis to staff wellbeing and junior doctor support, which might provide opportunities to improve the way we manage night shift fatigue. Some changes are inexpensive and relatively easy to implement, but can we persuade everyone that this is worthwhile?