

only factors that influence retention. The conditions in which one works also have a powerful influence on job satisfaction, behaviour and, ultimately, retention.

Good leadership and management

Managers and leaders set the tone in an organisation. Their values determine the kind of workplace it is for staff members; is it supportive and encouraging, or a 'blame culture', with an emphasis on fault finding?

Managers are most effective when they see themselves as providing:

- **Leadership**, e.g. by ensuring that staff members understand and share in the goals of the organisation.
- **Supportive supervision and feedback**, by means of regular review meetings that celebrate successes and review errors or challenges in a safe and

supportive environment. Allowing staff members to get in touch with managers at any time, whether to discuss patient care or personal problems, is highly motivating.

- **An environment that supports effective service delivery.** Staff rosters and schedules must balance work with time off. Provide access to a car or other means (e.g., a car or bike) and access to tools for communication and report writing (e.g., mobile phones and laptops).

“We encourage our team members to take on new roles in teaching or outreach.”

Supportive human resource policies

Any organisation must have human resource policies in place that are responsive to staff members in terms of their personal, family and professional needs; for

Continues overleaf ➤



From the field

Investing to improve conditions for retention and satisfaction at a paediatric eye centre in South Sulawesi, Indonesia

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Increasing the capacity and retention of human resources in specialised tertiary health centres is very important in order to achieve good quality eye care services for children. Our paediatric eye centre, part of the university hospital of Hasanuddin in Makassar (a province of South Sulawesi), provides services to the eastern islands of Indonesia.

Until recently, our centre was led by a paediatric ophthalmologist and a refractionist. At that time, the number of children we were able to help was very low, as refractions, orthoptic evaluations, ocular examinations and counselling took a long time, which meant that children and their parents had to wait for extended periods. Low vision assessment was similarly affected. The working conditions were stressful and staff members' overall satisfaction levels were low.

In 2016, supported by the Seeing is Believing programme and collaborating partners, a significant investment was made to increase the number of trained staff responsible for providing paediatric services. In addition to the paediatric ophthalmologist and refractionist, the centre now has a second ophthalmologist, an orthoptist, a counsellor, a low vision specialist and a rehabilitation worker. The centre was moved to a more child-friendly environment and the flow of patients through the clinic was re-organised to



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Improving conditions in an eye unit benefits staff and the community. INDONESIA

reduce waiting times and improve the quality of services.

Since this additional investment, the waiting time for patients in the outpatient department has decreased by 75% and up to 20 patients are seen daily. Furthermore, surgical referrals have become more varied as the ophthalmologists are now able to handle complicated cases. Low vision services improved after staff members at the clinic received basic and advanced low vision training, which is supported by the new facilities and space available to them. Currently, 3–5 paediatric low vision cases are assessed each day, compared to 1–2 cases per month before.

Retaining our new staff members is very important to us. In addition to the services they provide in the eye clinic, we encourage our team to take on the role of teaching residents and/or being responsible for outreach activities, including school eye health screening. We also encourage them to discuss patients' cases in internal meetings. All of this gives them a sense of belonging in the team and in the wider community. In order to give our staff members the best financial package we can, we now employ them as civil servants.

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