

Developing Health and Wellbeing Leads **Report Summary**

Supporting the upskilling of those who lead in health and wellbeing services to improve staff experience, welfare and retention.

November 2023



What we were asked to do and why

The NHS is at a point where the health and well-being of its staff requires urgent attention. This was reflected in NHS England's Long Term Workforce Plan. Throughout the development of the revised health and wellbeing framework NHSE recognised the need to develop those who lead on this agenda, our Health, and Wellbeing Leads. Four Health Innovation Organisations (Eastern, North East North Cumbria, Oxford & Thames Valley, and UCLPartners) were commissioned by NHS England to identify the development and support needs for health and wellbeing staff in collaboration with NHS organisations.

Improving personal health and wellbeing Mental & emotional wellbeing, physical wellbeing, healthy lifestyle

Relationships Supporting each other and working together

Creating a health and wellbeing culture



Professional wellbeing support Support services & partners, organisation design & policy, interventions overview

Data insights

Measuring effectiveness in our support

Our people, our patients

Environment

Physical work spaces & facilities available to rest, recover and succeed

Fulfilment at work

Purpose, potential & recognition, life balance, bringing 'yourself' to work

Managers and leaders

Senior manager responsibilities, healthy leadership behaviours, skilled managers



What we did

The review has been conducted in three phases. The third and final phase sought to understand how the key findings from Phase One and Two fitted with current practice and thinking.



22 semi-structured interviews



500

7

health and wellbeing leads and responsible officers contributed to workshops, surveys and network conversations

3

4 site visits

51 interviews

34 documents reviewed





What people told us

Discussions were categorised into four themes; Organisational structure; Staff need; Strategic leadership and building an integrated health and wellbeing offer for all.

> "I like the idea of a governance structure to support health and wellbeing, it holds us accountable. There does need to be a structure for decision making (and funding). There is no point in people just talking about it" Board level executive

"I feel that health and wellbeing should be undertaken at three levels, individual, team and organisational" Senior executive

> "There are often conflicting agendas at board. (We) need to work on understanding, awareness, organisational culture, to grow and develop an evidence-based business case" **Board level executive**

Organisational structure

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Strategic leadership





"I'd like to see a clear plan and monitor performance against the plan including staff stories" Health and wellbeing guardian

> "There is something from looking through an organisational psychology lens. Taking an organisational perspective to health and wellbeing is imperative to having skilled staff to meet and justify the needs of the organisation. Health and wellbeing lead

"Protected time is essential for health and wellbeing champions and mental health first-aiders" Health and wellbeing guardian





What we found

The overarching finding was that evidence-based health and wellbeing interventions, with robust implementation and evaluation, are needed to ensure staff experience and wellbeing improves.

To address this, a shift in the role of Health and Wellbeing Leads is proposed: from a predominantly operational position to one that has a strategic focus. Executive board support and recurrent funding is essential to ensure health and wellbeing progresses with an equitable offer for all.







What Next?

There is no one size fits all. Organisations will all be at different stages of their journey and have different needs. All can start by thinking about the findings of this review against current practice. Key things to consider are:

Evidence-based interventions: A reframe from well-intentioned gestures to a strategic approach that centres around interventions that are identified, tested, and measured.

Robust implementation and evaluation: Introducing a robust implementation and evaluation process is essential to ensuring that interventions undertaken are not only effective but are also adapted if, and when, the needs of staff change.

Executive Board Support: Leadership from the board is central to the success of this transformation. Their guidance and support in championing health and wellbeing can set the tone for the entire organisation.



Equitable offer for all: Every member of the organisation, from frontline staff to the boardroom, should have access to initiatives that meet their needs. This promotes fairness and inclusivity, embedding a commitment to improving staff experience.

Recurrent Funding: The sustainability of heath and wellbeing services hinges on recurrent funding. This funding is an investment in staff's physical, and mental health, which, in turn, pays dividends in staff morale, productivity, and organisational success.





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