



Short Case Study

Wellbeing Conversations

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust has 11 Community Hospitals spread over a wide geographical area. During Covid the Senior Leadership/Management Team based themselves across all community sites. This allowed them to build both relationships and have a visible presence with staff and be more aware of site-specific issues. Staff were open in sharing challenges with the senior leadership team, the good, the bad and the ugly and this in turn helped them as leaders to support and problem solve issues staff were experiencing. An example being additional breaks were added to shifts, to make sure staff were hydrating themselves with wearing PPE. This helped staff realise that they didn't need permission take a break if they needed it. The teams made health and wellbeing quiet areas for staff to take themselves off too and this empowered them to use these areas.

Peer support was important in the senior management team. The leadership team in the West Sussex area initiated "West Sussex Chat" every Thursday. It was specifically NOT for talking about work. It was a conversation for anyone to join and talk about anything not to do with the business agenda. A lot of conversation revolved around individuals' physical activity and challenges. Importantly this meeting has engendered a positive change in senior staff around their own wellbeing. Being able to call in and share how they are doing and talk about anything from healthy eating, hula hooping cooking new recipes, to walking the long way to work was helpful. The team got to know each other better as individuals so on teams calls together about

work it felt vastly different. As a senior leadership team, even though they had not at that time all met face to face, they have developed into a robust supportive team. This has improved communication, relationships and increased the teams support network.

Benefits for patients

- Care for by staff who felt valued, supported and cared for

Benefits for staff

- Focus on their wellbeing during a time of unprecedented challenge
- Supportive measures introduced
- Staff feeling empowered

Benefits for the Trust

- Staff feeling valued
- Senior Management Team developed enhanced working relationships
- Improved focus on wellbeing at all levels of the organisation

Next steps

- To continue to focus on wellbeing and build relationships

What we have learnt

- Proximity of senior managers to the team allowed for staff centred solutions
- Wellbeing can be relatively easy to do and investing in it sustained the team

Contact



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