

Compassionate care in challenging times: Growing a peer support network for healthcare colleagues with healthcare staff

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Project Background:

The project focus is on staff wellbeing to maintain a preventative/proactive health promotion service. Evidence is growing that our NHS Covid-19 response will have had huge collateral damaging effects upon our population health, especially infants, children and young adults. By supporting our care-giving staff, (initially health visiting service and extending to other disciplines), we can protect the delivery of our healthcare service for all families in Aneurin Bevan UHB.

Practitioner peer support and reflection are recognized as a necessity by practitioners working at the 'caring face' as evidenced in the Kings' Fund Report. 'ABC Needs of Nurses and Midwives. Courage of Compassionate care' 2020

Project Aims/Objectives:

- Access voices of staff
- Access voices of service users
- Act on themes captured:
 1. Staff to be valued, heard and trusted (AUTONOMY)
 2. Support the support (Peer-to-peer) (BELONGING)
 3. Compassionate responsive management model
 4. Communication and celebration/feedback (CONTRIBUTIONS)

Project Approach:

The project uses the Solihull Approach, motivational interviewing and leadership concepts, among others, to support professionals working with complex families. The emphasis of the model is on the resilience of the professional, improving their own health and wellbeing. Volunteer colleagues will then be trained to become active in a network of 'Reflective/Restorative Supervisors.

Project Outcome(s):

- The continued functioning of peer-to-peer care via facilitation of reflective safe space and time. Virtual and face-to-face.
- Upskill colleagues, co-ordination of network. Availability of regular reflective supervision sessions for all staff.
- Annual professional review discussion to prioritize wellbeing.
- Delivered online monthly sessions to middle managers.
- Recognition that a cultural change is needed to support compassionate care to fellow healthcare professionals.
- The need to support all staff to practise their focus upon own wellbeing in a workplace that is learning to be compassionate and recognise that 'avoidable harm' to staff is a necessity.
- The introduction of a new senior professional role to support staff wellbeing throughout our service: Facilitation of:
 1. Staff to be valued, heard and trusted (AUTONOMY)
 2. Support the support (Peer-to-peer) (BELONGING)
 3. Compassionate responsive management model
 4. Communication and celebration/feedback (CONTRIBUTIONS)

Project Impact:

A different and new focus on staff self-care around emotional wellbeing.



Scan code left for access to participant feedback video

"RS has been extremely useful to me during a difficult year in management. It has been a support network where I felt listened to-it is invaluable- I wish more staff could take it"
Middle manager

Key Conclusions: From Concept to Reality

"This work is supporting a cultural change in healthcare. They need to be learning organisations with leaders accessible, listen more than they talk, and respond to concerns. Internal communications must exist in organizations that link leaders' responses to frontline provider concerns, in essence ensuring that staff feel their voices are heard."

A Framework for Safe, Reliable, and Effective Care. White Paper. Cambridge, MA: Institute for Healthcare Improvement and Safe & Reliable Healthcare; 2017

[What is compassionate leadership? | The King's Fund \(kingsfund.org.uk\)](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/what-is-compassionate-leadership/)

Read code to right to access



Next Steps:

- Support restorative peer-to-peer network
- Focus on wellbeing
- Protect safe psychological space
- Wellbeing strategy

