

AUGUST 2016

BARKING, HAVERING & REDBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

EMPOWERING STAFF TO MAKE INFORMED WELLBEING CHOICES

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

- Two main sites and six outreach sites
- 6,500 staff
- Sickness absence rate - 3.7 per cent
- Turnover rate - 14.3 per cent
- Serves a population of 750,000

SUMMARY

The occupational health and wellbeing service (OHWB) established a dedicated health and wellbeing team in 2010 to provide a wide variety of programmes. This consisted of a full time wellbeing advisor and a health and wellbeing manager who specialised in communications.

The OHWB service realised that creating the right environment can empower and support people to make informed, balanced choices. They linked their strategy with their wider trust commitment to supporting key public health initiatives. This gave the OHWB service a focus and framework to shape their strategy.

In February 2015 the OHWB service received the Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Services (SEQOHS) national accreditation. The OHWB service, on behalf of the trust, undertook the Healthy Workplace Wellbeing Charter assessment, a self-assessment framework that recognises and rewards employers for investing in workplace health and wellbeing. In June 2015 they were awarded the achievement rating. The following year they were awarded an excellence rating.

WHAT THEY'RE DOING

The OHWB team started by creating a motto, 'keep well, live well, work well', to help raise their profile across the trust. They quickly gained support from both the CEO and executive team by providing a robust business case to the board and regularly reporting updates and the impact of the work.



The team established a close working relationship with their local food providers to support their wellbeing strategies and encourage healthy eating across the trust.

Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) then developed a number of pledges as part of their strategy to help staff lead a healthier lifestyle:

✓ **Physical activity**

The trust created a full range of benefits and activities for staff to participate in, both on and off site. They now offer health initiatives such as netball, Pilates, aerobics and body conditioning classes. In addition, a personal trainer is on hand to help staff increase their health and fitness through simple changes to their lifestyle. On site, the trust has a static table tennis table with equipment for staff to use at lunch and break times. The team also run motivational programmes throughout the year such as the Global Corporate Challenge (GCC), Walk to Work and Cycle to Work events, including a 'make your own smoothie' bike machine.

✓ **Healthy food options**

Working closely with local food providers, the team ensure that healthy food is available to all staff. They have developed an excellent working relationship with the local catering team and collaborate with them to promote activities such as healthy eating barbeques. They also run 'fruity Friday' across the trust each week, providing 100 pieces of fruit for staff, as well as a fruit stall outside the main entrance and a new range of healthy salads available. The OHWB team also run a 12 week challenge for healthy eating and weight loss.

✓ **Staff health checks**

Health and wellbeing MOT's are carried out by occupational health (OH) nurses, who check blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, diabetes and cholesterol, which gives employees a picture of their general health. The service also includes a full time senior physiotherapist experienced in both musculoskeletal and neurological problems. Following evaluation, the team have since employed a part time physiotherapist to manage the demand for the service. In 2015 they put together a business case to hire a cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) therapist to support the existing employee assistance programme.

✓ **Smoking cessation and respiratory health**



In March 2015 the trust became smoke-free and no one is allowed to smoke on any of the trust sites. The smoking cessation group introduced a new smoke-free policy and, together with the communication department, yellow cards have been produced for staff to hand out to smokers asking them to smoke offsite and offering them help if they wish to stop. The trust has also signed up to the NHS Statement of Support for Tobacco Control and has pledged to support the local government in their work. All nurses within the OH department are fully trained to provide a Smoking Cessation Service and this is offered at every appointment. A stop smoking buddy sits in OH on a weekly basis to help staff quit.

CHALLENGES

The trust's main challenge in implementing their health and wellbeing strategy was communication. The majority of staff do not have access to a computer and therefore the OHWB team needed to be creative with their communication channels. They communicated with staff by:

- keeping noticeboards up to date with information
- distributing newsletters through the health and wellbeing champion network
- dropping leaflets at the post room
- hosting pop up events, and
- presenting at steering groups.

Attendance at activities can also start with low numbers, to remain sustainable provider costs had to be subsidised initially. However as peers shared their positive experience of taking part in the activities interest and attendance has increased.

The OHWB reviews when activities are available also, to ensure that they are initiatives available on different days and at different times to suit staff.

NEXT STEPS

The OHWB team is always looking for new ideas and schemes and 2016 has already seen the introduction of a 'healthy hike' walking route, fruit and veg stall and a 'green gym' where staff can use outdoor gym equipment on site.

Future schemes include new picnic tables to lure staff away from their desks/departments for breaks, to get that much needed vitamin D.

TOP TIPS

- Ask your CEO and executive team to support and champion your initiatives.
- Listen to staff and what they want.
- Work collaboratively across teams to provide initiatives for staff.
- Be creative with your communications channels and choose ones that will have the most reach.
- Provide a range of activities on different days and at different times to suit staff.

Further information

For more information please contact elizabeth.platt@bhrhospitals.nhs.uk,
sue.kennard@bhrhospitals.nhs.uk or lisa.glavin@bhrhospitals.nhs.uk