

Scottish Ballet 'Health at Hand®' staff wellbeing sessions

Over 4 weeks, starting on 9 February 2024, NHS Lothian Charity's Tonic Arts programme delivered free online wellbeing sessions for NHS Lothian staff in partnership with Scottish Ballet.

The 30 minute sessions provides NHS Lothian staff with a movement and breath toolkit to support physical and mental balance in the workplace. Staff were offered the choice of 2 sessions taking place on a Friday, either 8.00am or 12.30pm to catch staff before work or during lunch. All sessions were delivered online over Microsoft Teams to make it easy for staff in all roles to attend.



These sessions were very accessible and easy for all levels to join in with. I'm not fit at all at the moment but managed these sessions. Afterwards I felt more invigorated and positive both mentally and physically."



132 NHS Lothian staff signed up for the sessions



Getting staff involved

The sessions were widely promoted to staff via the NHS Lothian weekly brief and on site communications, also through NHS Lothian Charity social media channels and support from Managers and the Work Well team. Staff from a range of professions signed up; nurses, doctors, allied health professionals, IT, and corporate services, and from a variety of areas: primary care, acute, community and support services.

68 staff members signed into one or more of the sessions with on average 17 staff signing into sessions. 8 staff signing in had one or more additional staff member taking part with them so the total number of staff taking part is closer to 80. Half of the attendees took part in the sessions at home and as part of their home working day, with a few staff participating in the session before coming into work or on their day off.

Staff working on clinical sites used spaces such as offices and seminars rooms and the majority of attendees, 81%, were able to complete the sessions without interruptions.

How the sessions made a difference to staff

Participants were asked to complete an online survey after attending the sessions. The results indicate how the sessions support NHS Lothian Charity to meet its priority objective of improved staff wellbeing and professional development.

96%

of staff indicated an improvement in
their emotional wellbeing



I definitely felt much more relaxed after each session and was able to go through a busy day without being stressed."

100%

of staff indicated an improvement
in their physical wellbeing



I have had quite a few injuries such as a frozen shoulder and very tight muscles which make me feel very stiff. This class really helped, I got up early on days off to join in and it was a great start to the day."

86%

of staff indicated an improvement
in their levels of confidence and
motivation



Trying a ballet class is somewhat outside of my comfort zone but I have felt very welcome and I have noticed that they have lifted my mood and increased my confidence."

How the sessions made a difference to staff (cont)

64%

of staff indicated an improvement in feeling connected with others



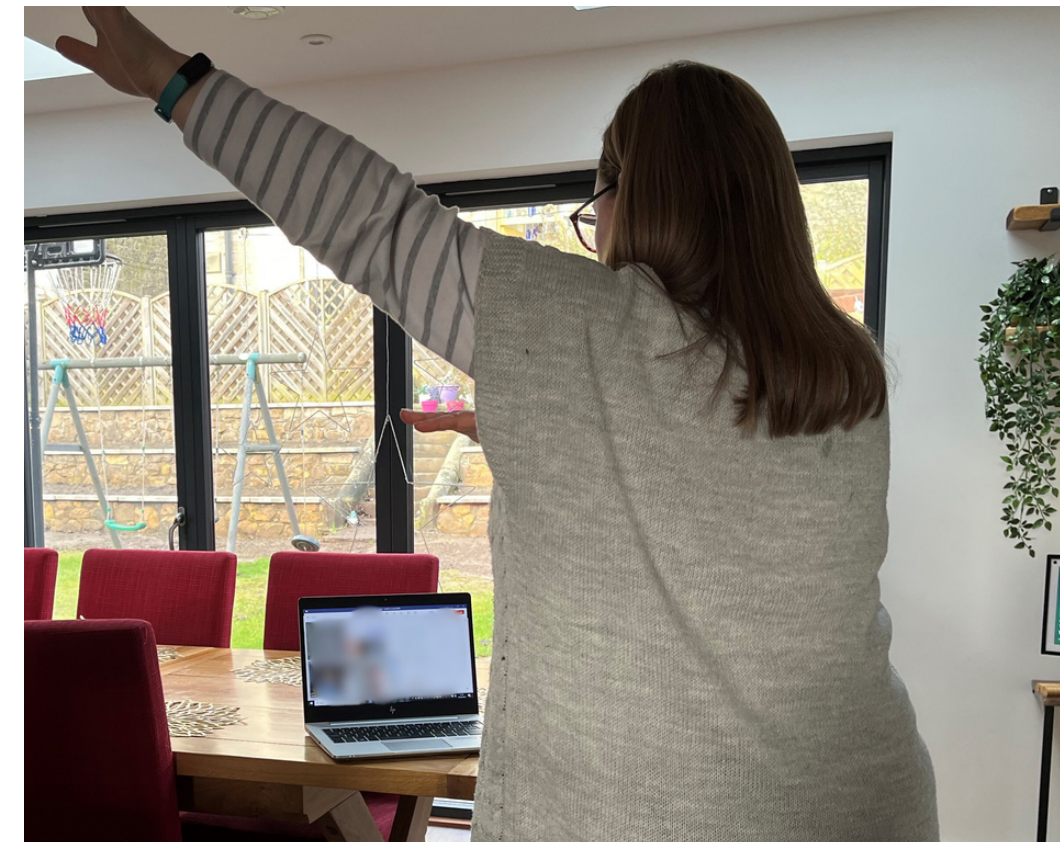
Although it was me that signed up, we did the sessions as a team. This helped the whole team feel valued and connected. We felt more energised. It gave us the need to take a break which we don't always do."

84%

of staff indicated an improvement in feeling valued as a member of staff at NHS Lothian



The sessions gave me 30 mins of care for my mind body and soul. This allowed me to feel cared for by my employer...I had something positive to talk to my patients and other staff about. I had something to look forward to at the end of the week."



97% of staff agreed Microsoft Teams was the ideal platform as it was easily accessible and participants liked having the choice to have their camera off or on while doing the exercises.

Case study – ballet and lunch

Suzanne McHattie, Principle Sonographer at St John’s Hospital shared their experience: “currently there are only two of us doing it but I am trying to get more staff involved. I see it as such a useful and helpful thing for us so it has been a great opportunity to take part. Luckily the timing coincides with our lunch break at the department so we go into my office, shut the door and do the session together. We like to have a good chat while we do it and eat our lunch at the same time.”

Suzanne went on to explain that: “as sonographers, the work we do means we suffer from a lot of upper limb disorders, we have a lot of staff who are off sick with work related injuries. Having the ability to do something like this at work is a god send. I had a sore shoulder a couple of weeks ago and did the session, by the end of the day it had eased and wasn’t as painful. That to me is a big deal.”

Suzanne shared another benefit of the sessions for her team: “we work all day in the dark, so coming out a lunch time to do this is just great for the body.” Julie Eastwood, Senior Radiographer, who was taking part with Suzanne exclaimed: “this is actually a good workout, I am sweating this week!”



Thanks to Scottish Ballet for their support. The in-kind contribution for the 4 sessions was approx. £3,168



I loved the fusion of Yoga and Ballet movement. I would love to continue it. It set me up with a really positive start for the day. Thank you.”

What’s next?

97% of staff indicated they would like to continue attending the sessions and 100% of staff indicated they would recommend the sessions to colleagues. NHS Lothian Charity’s Tonic Arts programme and Scottish Ballet will therefore continue to deliver weekly ‘Health at Hand’ wellbeing sessions for staff until at least August 2024. Staff who have not already signed up or attended are welcome. To increase staff’s accessibility to the sessions, Tonic Arts are exploring recording the sessions and making them available for a week so staff can do at a suitable time.

There is also an opportunity for staff to put learnings into practice with a live dance and music performance as part of the Healing Arts Scotland opening celebration outside Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh in August 2024.

To find out more about our Tonic Arts programme or to get involved, go to [NHS Lothian Charity: Tonic Arts website](https://www.nhs.uk/lothian-charity/tonic-arts).