

Staff wellbeing in Women and Children's Services

Health and Wellbeing Facilitator

Following an application from the Women and Children's Director, the Charity funded £50,000 for a two year test of change pilot to address the high levels of stress and low levels of wellbeing reported by the service team. The funding supported a full-time Health & Wellbeing Facilitator post as a two year pilot to support the 2,530 staff members based at the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People and Women and Children's staff at St John's Hospital in Livingston and the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh. Lesley was appointed to the role in 2023 with a focus on supporting staff to improve their overall health and wellbeing.

Aligned with the NHS Lothian Work Well strategy, the activities of the role include:

- Promoting wellbeing and development resources available to staff on site and across NHS Lothian and signposting staff and managers to funding available to support staff wellbeing and development.
- Accessing NHS Lothian Charity funding streams such as Microgrants and Specific Funds to deliver wellbeing activities, creating/enhancing wellbeing spaces and other resources for staff.
- Developing relationships with staff groups and in particular engaging with staff in harder to reach groups (e.g. night shift workers) with access to online materials.
- Supporting staff in becoming Wellbeing Champions, a network that shares best practices and resources to promote well-being in their respective teams and departments.

This report highlights the impact of just some of the many activities and initiatives delivered by Lesley in this pilot role, building a business case for the role to become a permanent resource for Women and Children's staff.

Lesley's work has contributed significantly to creating a more supportive and connected workplace."

– Claire, Clinical Nurse Manager, RHCYP



Lesley has supported approx. 40 wellbeing activities, resulting in approx. 2,200 staff interactions



Lesley beside noticeboard at RHCYP

Informing staff about wellbeing opportunities

Recognising the challenges staff face accessing information, Lesley has increased the ways staff can find out about health and wellbeing support, including:

- Distribution of a baseline survey to staff to find out how staff feel about their wellbeing and what support they want/need from her
- Creation of dedicated Women and Children's website on the NHS Lothian Intranet (checked and updated regularly)
- Introduction of a Women and Children's Health and Wellbeing Teams Channel (180 staff on the channel, 3-4 posts a week and updated regularly)
- Regular newsletter 'W&C Newslines' (distributed to 2,000 staff)
- 3 x noticeboards installed in RHCYP, RIE and St. John's Hospital
- Creation of a digital wellbeing calendar
- Regular attendance at team, department and managers' meetings and newly qualified nurse and doctor induction trainings
- Bespoke 1-to-1 support and advice for staff and managers

No other area I have worked in within Lothian has this resource to keep staff informed of wellbeing initiatives...I believe we have been able to minimise long term absence given the support we are able to offer to team members e.g. following bereavement."

– Helen Directorate Assistant, RHCYP

Lesley has regularly spoken to newly qualified nurses at induction to inform them of the health and wellbeing support available. This has not only shown new staff that they are welcome but has shown them that the organisation cares about their wellbeing."

– Caroline, Clinical Educator, RHCYP

Events and activities to improve staff health and wellbeing

Women and Children's Staff Wellbeing Day

The first Women and Children's Staff Wellbeing Day, organised by Lesley, was held on 6th March 2025 at the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People. The event offered a mixture of bookable participatory activities e.g. yoga, reflexology, physio, Musical Fitness Theatre, nutritional talk ('Food and Mood' session), chair massages and drop in information stalls from support providers such as Work Well, Unison, British Medical Association and NHS Lothian Charity.



55 staff attended a participatory activity and 132 interactions across the information stalls



Staff getting information from stalls



Staff attending a yoga session

74%

of staff who attended a participatory activity reported an improvement in sense of relaxation



I enjoy things like massages – it feels like a treat and gives me immediate relaxation."



Increased awareness of what support is available to me."

74%

of staff who dropped into the information stalls reported they were now 'quite' or 'fully' aware of support services available to them



43 staff benefitted from Reiki, with 38 hours of Reiki sessions delivered in total

90%

of staff reported feeling more relaxed after the treatment



I feel lighter, more relaxed and uplifted. Excellent session and practitioner."



I felt reduced pain in my shoulder and more calm afterwards. Will definitely need to come for more!"



'Reiki for Wellness' Volunteer, Laure

Staff were asked to rate their wellbeing out of 10 (1 = low, 10 = high).

On AVERAGE staff rated:

Before

4

After

8



I feel more relaxed with a clearer head. Tension has released in my shoulders and I feel more balanced in my head and body."




Feeling more relaxed and energised."

Impact on managers and staff

Case study – Supporting managers to support their staff

Claire Adamson, Clinical Nurse Manager, Neonatal, shares: “I have been keen to provide my team with wellbeing training but just didn't know where to start. Lesley signposted me to NHS Lothian Charity for funding then connected me with Craig from the Wellbeing Project (a company that provides bespoke training). The sessions on resilience and communication were incredibly well received and relevant across all staff levels, from support staff to senior nurses. The workshops offered both practical tools and a space to reflect on wellbeing in ways that felt inclusive and empowering. It was so successful, that we extended this to St. Johns SCBU nursing team and overall delivered training to 109 staff members.”

Claire goes on to share: “I have also seen increased engagement in broader wellbeing initiatives like the Women & Children's Staff Wellbeing Day, and the wellbeing elements of the International Nursing Days were not only well attended but also appreciated by staff who don't always have time to prioritise themselves during busy shifts. I now have staff going on lunchtime wellbeing walks who are encouraging others to do so. Lesley's encouragement and visible presence played a big part in making those events feel accessible and worthwhile.”


 Having a Health & Wellbeing Facilitator has helped me normalise conversations about wellbeing, and it's reassuring for the team to know there's someone they can approach with questions or concerns.”

– Claire, Clinical Nurse Manager, RHCYP




Neonatal Team, at a wellbeing training session


Women and Children's staff share how Lesley's role has made a difference to their health and wellbeing when at work.

 I have found the events I have been able to attend very enjoyable and necessary for my physical wellbeing. Not something I say easily but my physical wellbeing is not what it used to be while I worked in pub, I was very active in the pub environment but in the office setting, this is not always possible. Since being introduced to Lesley, and with her support, I have been more active while working in an office setting.”

– Aaron, Team Lead Ward Clerks RHCYP

 Having a Health & Wellbeing facilitator on site has made a huge difference to me personally. I have used a lot of the resources including financial wellbeing, webinars and even Reiki. The health and wellbeing resources make me feel like I am supported within my role as a member of staff and as an individual.”

– Caroline, Clinical Educator RHCYP

 I have become much more involved in wellbeing events including becoming a Wellbeing Champion and attending champion meetings which is a great opportunity to find out what is going on, meet others and share ideas. I've organised massage days for my team, and I've attended the Musical Theatre Fitness classes which were great fun and an opportunity to meet and chat with others. ”

– Jane, Medical Education Co-ordinator RHCYP

Thanks to Lesley Santos and staff from Women and Children's Services for supporting this evaluation. This report focusses only a small number of activities and initiatives Lesley has delivered. Find out more about Lesley's role and support available for staff on the [Staff Health and Wellbeing pages](#) on the NHS Lothian Intranet. Funding is available through NHS Lothian Charity to support staff wellbeing and development. Contact us via the email below to discuss your idea.

Report compiled by Rebecca Caulfield, Evaluation Manager, NHS Lothian Charity