



## Case Study: Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

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- Participant

### Overview

We ran two half-day online workshops with staff from the Trust to introduce mindfulness, the benefits, and how to make mindfulness practice a supportive factor for wellbeing and health with a stressful and demanding workload.

We subsequently trained a group of nine Mindfulness Champions to confidently lead mindfulness practices and mindful breaks within their teams.

### Results

Staff rated the training overall **9.7/10**



The Mindfulness Champions in the Trust have gone on to lead regular practices and mindful pauses and received a great deal of positive feedback on the mental health benefits experienced by staff.

*“Exceeded all expectations”*

*“Inspirational, Empowering, Supportive”*



Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust consists of over 7,000 staff members across more than 400 sites.

The Trust provides care and wellbeing services to the whole county, approx. 1.8 million people.

## Introduction

The Trust was experiencing issues with high sickness rates amongst staff and was scoring below average on staff survey questions relating to health and wellbeing, something which had been exacerbated by the extra demands imposed on the service by Covid-19. They were committed to supporting staff wellbeing, and got in touch with Breathworks to introduce mindfulness further into the organisation as part of these efforts.

## What We Did

We ran two half-day online workshops with staff from the Trust to get a taste of mindfulness, raise awareness of the many benefits of the practice, and to try out the key practices to move from stress to calm. We covered ways to establish mindfulness practice as a supportive resource - without it feeling like just “another thing to do”.

*[The training was] incredibly supportive and inspirational in deepening my personal practice.*

*I've started to notice my stress and how I react to stress, and as such I've been able to take a moment and level myself. That self-awareness is the most powerful thing I've learned on the course - how that impacts on how I facilitate within the team is something that's really helped me.*

After this initial training, we ran Breathworks Mindfulness Champions course for a smaller group of staff who already had an established mindfulness practice and were keen to support others. This training, which took place over four weekly sessions, was designed to give them confidence to lead simple mindfulness practices to help support their peers within the Trust, as well as develop their own practice further.

This Mindfulness Champions Training was carried out via Zoom, under the expert guidance of Breathworks teacher Taravandana Lupson, with small group practice and discussion for participants to gain some practical experience of guiding and leading mindfulness practices.

*Taravandana's presentation was enthusiastic, informative and very well organised. It provided a safe environment for learning and it cultivated positive relationships among the members of the group.*

## Results

The Mindfulness Champions overall rated the training **9.7/10**

They went on to hold regular mindfulness sessions with their teams and received much positive feedback from staff.

*Colleagues have said that they have enjoyed the practice sessions I have led, that they felt much calmer and spending a short period before meetings helps to settle them, enabling them to feel more present and creating a stronger sense of connection with others.*

Introducing mindfulness and integrating mindful pauses into the work culture had a large positive impact on staff mental health.

*I was personally struggling with my own mental well-being, and work-related stress. Having been off on long-term sick in the past with work-related stress, I was becoming increasingly concerned that history was going to repeat itself. I can honestly say my weekly learning and individual mindfulness practice has played a huge part in me being able to stay in work and continue to provide quality care.*

*“ In my opinion there is a myth throughout teams, that mindfulness, health, and well-being are luxuries. By having Mindfulness Champions in the Trust encouraging managers to ensure staff take time for mindfulness, I truly believe it will not only reduce stress levels and sickness and absence, it will increase productivity, and care. Whilst... the Trust has tried to encourage people to take care of their own well-being, in reality it's just words on paper. However, having Champions modelling, encouraging and inviting people to practice mindfulness in person will make a huge difference. ”*

## Ongoing Support

To ensure that the Mindfulness Champions in the Trust had ongoing support, we held a focus group to review participants' experiences and to decide upon next steps. In addition to the six-monthly refresher sessions to sustain and deepen practice, the Mindfulness Champions decided to start Monthly Mindfulness Drop-In sessions; an informal meeting to stay connected. The group are also keeping in touch via an active Whatsapp group, encouraging each other and sharing their experiences of mindfulness and coming together to practise regularly.

*“ I run a weekly mindfulness session for my team, which has always been greatly appreciated, however I feel that the practice I now lead, is of a much better quality, and more informed. I have had very positive feedback recently. This has given me confidence and motivation to build further in helping my team.”*

*“ I am aware from Trust well-being feedback that people are struggling to wind down from work and separate work from home. In our own team I have had feedback that the team enjoyed the two sessions I provided as a mindfulness wind down at the end of the working day. ”*