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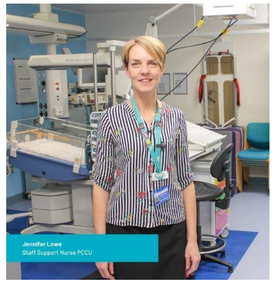
Optimising colleagues' wellbeing at work - Introduction of the staff support nurse on PCCU

The Challenge

Working in Critical Care can be stressful and has the potential to impact colleague's wellbeing in a variety of ways. We see, hear and absorb many difficult conversations and situations. Sometimes we feel we are coping and at other times this may feel like a struggle and be impacting our physical and psychological wellbeing both at work and at home.

We are a large and diverse multi-professional team with varying support needs, mitigating for these on an individual and team level requires a considered approach.



How did we address this?

We established the staff support nurse role – An innovative role to support the health and wellbeing of all colleagues who work on PCCU. A nurse by background and drawing on a combination of both lived experience and formal mental health training, this is an innovative role within the NHS and across the UK.

Training and qualifications

- Clinical PCCU Nurse for 14years prior to commencing the role in 2017.
- MHFA (Mental Health First Aider)
- PNA (Professional Nurse Advocate)
- ILM Leadership Level 5
- Insights Practitioner (Psychometric profiling)
- Trauma Support – Psychological First Aid
- Health and Wellbeing Champion
- Counselling Diploma

"Thank you for all your support whilst I have been off sick, I haven't been off work before and you helped to reduce my anxieties and make the transition so much smoother"

"Your support through some challenging personal times has been invaluable"

"The welcome packs were a lovely gesture and made me feel valued from day 1"

" I attended a debrief for a patient I looked after and felt much better for doing so, it validated my feelings and made me realise what I was feeling was normal"

Achievements so far

Since implementation, the following initiatives are now embedded in the practice and culture of PCCU

- Planned and Ad-hoc wellbeing conversations are now embedded in the practice and culture of PCCU
- Formal debrief process following all patient deaths – These feed into the Child Death Review meetings
- Regular Reflective spaces for both clinical and non-clinical colleagues – share /discuss any challenges, good practice etc.
- Education/Teaching on planned study days – Resilience, Transition from Student-Newly Qualified, Self-care, Resilience, Burnout, Self-Awareness and Leadership are examples.
- Supporting Line Management with sickness absence – Timely signposting and referrals to Occupational health, Physiotherapy and HR
- Creation of our 'Welcome Packs' given to all new colleagues who join PCCU.
- Signposting to additional support services/resources available both internal and external to SCH
- Comprehensive support package for all new nursing colleagues during their Foundation programme.

Critical Care