



Oxford University Hospitals scoop national award for boosting staff wellbeing during COVID-19

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) has been recognised for its standout response to staff wellbeing throughout the pandemic by workforce specialists Skills for Health.

Awarded the 'most promising OD & people' prize at the 2022 Our Health Heroes Awards held in London, OUH were praised highly by an expert panel of judges for their innovative approach to employee wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic saw OUH accelerate, redesign and launch a number of wellbeing initiatives, including the appointment of team-level Wellbeing Leads.

Prompted by research suggesting that resilience is best generated in teams, the voluntary role of team 'Wellbeing Lead' has played a vital role over the last two years by supporting colleagues and signposting them to the appropriate kind of help.

The initiative was so well received by staff that OUH now has a network of 280 Wellbeing Leads, and this continues to grow.

Another innovation judges praised highly was the OUH Growing Stronger Together people recovery programme.

Launched in February 2021, the programme is designed to look after the mental health and wellbeing of staff and enable their recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic and as the Trust transitions into a 'new normal'.

The programme comprises 5 key priorities with specific outcomes including a comprehensive online guide to health and wellbeing, wellbeing check-ins for all staff, a specialist psychological support service and a 'post-traumatic growth' team workshop called R3P, which nearly 300 staff across a range of departments took part in.

The R3P workshop received fantastic feedback with 98% of attendees recommending it to colleagues, 97% agreeing R3P helped them make sense of their own and their team's experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 89% agreeing that attendance at R3P will have a positive effect on how their team works together in future.

Jo Phillips, Director of Culture and Leadership, who has been responsible for the wellbeing programme since the pandemic started, comments:

"The wellbeing of our people is a real priority for us at OUH. Our Growing Stronger Together programme brings together a raft of wellbeing support and initiatives to help us look after our own and each other's wellbeing and enable us to continue to deliver compassionate excellence.

"I'm so proud to be here today to receive this award on behalf of the truly inspirational project team comprising members from our culture and leadership, psychological medicine, occupational health, communications, design, and Here for Health services together with our Oxford Hospitals Charity

who have championed us along the way. The team have demonstrated such passion, dedication and flexibility in their collaborative approach to make a positive difference to the wellbeing of our people.”

John Rogers, CEO of Skills for Health - the not for profit that delivers Our Health Heroes - comments:

“A huge congratulations to the team at OUH. Without the wider healthcare workforce that Our Health Heroes Awards aims to recognise and celebrate our NHS would grind to a halt. Now more than ever, it is important to raise awareness of the valuable contribution that these inspirational teams and individuals make to the health of the nation and to thank them publicly for the sacrifices they make.”