

**Health Improvement Board: Tuesday 27 October 2015**

**Promoting a Healthy Weight Amongst Staff at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust – A report on current and planned initiatives**

This report outlines the areas of work which Oxford University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is delivering to prevent obesity and promote maintenance of a healthy weight in the workforce at The Trust, as well as amongst patients and visitors at OUH.

## **Background**

1. The health and wellbeing of the workforce is high on national and local agendas. NHS England's 'Five Year Forward View' (October 2014)<sup>1</sup> sets out a clear direction for NHS staff. Amongst a number of key objectives, the review highlights the importance of supporting the health and wellbeing of staff. Aimed at reducing sickness absence, the review promises to support new workplace incentives to promote employee health. As a key national driver, the Government recognises that a healthier workforce is a happier, more productive workforce, delivering a better patient experience. Importantly, when making healthier choices, the workforce has the potential to act as 'health ambassadors' to patients and visitors, being ideally placed to promote healthy lifestyles and behaviours, and improve health at the population level by leading by example.

2. Oxford University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) employs over 12,000 people, has around 1 million patient contacts per year and as many visitors. It is therefore ideally placed to promote healthy lifestyles and improve health and prevent disease at the population level.

3. The Trust's Staff Health and Wellbeing Strategy and action plan is led by the Deputy Director of Workforce, through the Centre for Occupational Health and Wellbeing (COHWB) and representatives from each Division. The Strategy outlines key priorities for staff wellbeing. From Department of Health and National Institute of Clinical Excellence recommendations, three particular areas of healthy living have been prioritised from 2014 through to 2015/16:

- healthy weight management;
- increasing physical activity;
- building resilience.

4. This is in recognition of inter-relationships between all three and the impact they have on each other in achieving weight management, improved fitness and mental wellbeing.

5. In keeping with these priorities, OUH delivers support to staff members to engage in healthy living to prevent obesity and promote maintenance of a healthy weight in the workforce through a number of channels led by the Health and Wellbeing Group.

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<sup>1</sup> NHS Five Year Forward View <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/5yfv-web.pdf>

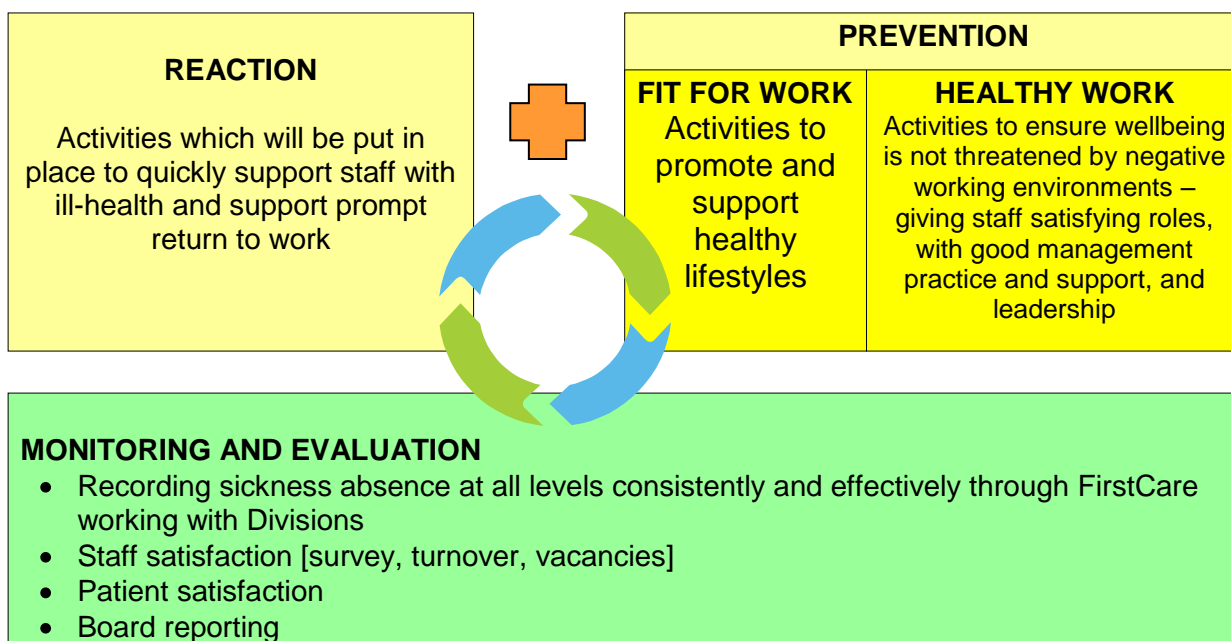
6. On 1 July 2015, OUH introduced a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). This service is delivered by Workplace Options, an independent provider of employee support services. Their staff are specialists in fields such as wellbeing, family matters, relationship issues, debt management, consumer rights and much more. Their webpages and support include a plethora of information on healthy eating, weight management and dietary advice. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year and is accessible by phone and online. The EAP can provide practical information, factsheets and packs, and resource information on support services in the local area.

7. In 2014 OUH established a Public Health strategy<sup>2</sup> demonstrating an innovative commitment to improving the health of the population of the county, and thereby also reducing the demand on local health services through the prevention of ill health. This is a joint Strategy with Oxfordshire County Council, helping to strengthen links, and builds on existing Public Health work at OUH. The Strategy has three overarching aims which incorporate:

- building capacity to promote healthy lifestyles to patients, visitors, and staff at all opportunities;
- developing a hospital environment that enables and promotes healthy behaviours;
- embedding population health approaches within OUH.

### Approaches and initiatives developing year on year aimed at improving staff health

8. OUH approach to embedding health and wellbeing in the organisation is summarised in the diagram below:



<sup>2</sup> Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Public Health Strategy <http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/about/trust-board/2015/may/documents/TB2015.58-public-health-strategy-update.pdf>

9. In addition, part of the OUH Public Health Strategy was the establishment of the “Here for Health, Health Improvement Advice Centre” which opened August 2014. The Centre, based at the John Radcliffe Hospital, is an original approach to promoting and supporting healthy lifestyles in a hospital setting, focusing on the primary and secondary prevention of ill health, embodying an integrated care approach. It offers a drop-in service freely available to all patients, visitors and staff. The Centre offers lifestyle information and support on a wide range of topics, including: weight management, physical activity, healthy eating, and emotional wellbeing as well as basic health assessments. Services offered include:

- health promotion messages, brief advice, and educational materials about healthy living and health improvement;
- brief assessment of chronic disease risk;
- individual consultation with health promotion specialist and completion of health behaviour change action plan;
- signposting and/or referral to relevant local services to support behaviour change.

### **Initiatives implemented and in progress to prevent obesity and promote maintenance of a healthy weight in the workforce**

#### **Weight management support for staff**

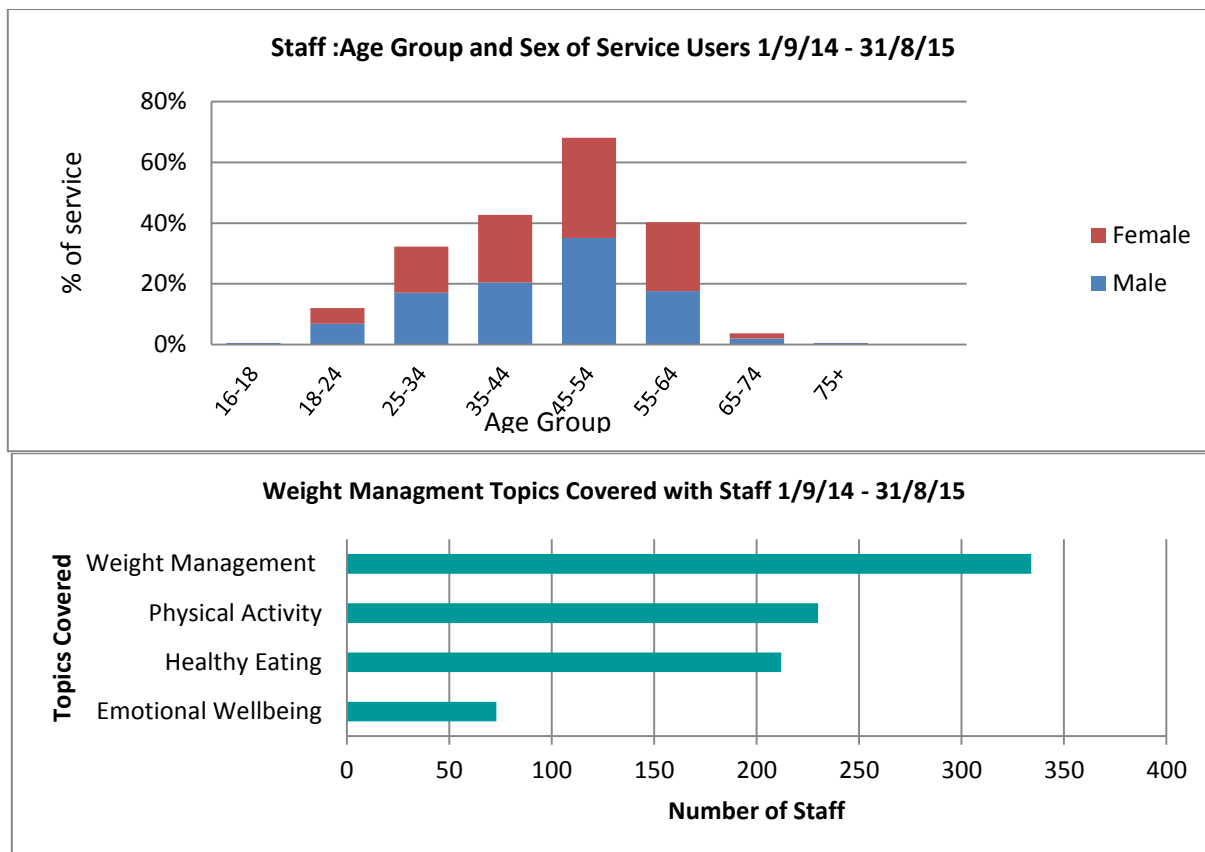
10. MOTs during annual healthy hospital days and an ongoing offer of MOTs by appointment at the Centre for Occupational Health and wellbeing (COHWB).

12. Staff health questionnaire for maternity services identified midwives with high BMIs wishing to reduce their weight and model weight management to mothers to be and resulted in a pilot on site group run by MORE LIFE for maternity services with 13 staff signing up to the programme.

13. COHWB has approached slimming world for onsite classes specifically for staff. However Slimming World is reluctant to establish a class specifically for staff at this time.

14. Accessible information with key messaging, for example newsletters information, webpages, leaflets and posters.

15. The Here for Health Centre offers staff the opportunity to drop-in for weight management support through information/advice on topics related to weight, health measurements, behaviour change action planning and referral/signposting to community services where appropriate. Staff are also offered the opportunity to return to the Centre for regular weight checks. During the Centres first year of opening 2,078 individuals accessed the service, of which 857 were staff members. The images below detail the demographics of staff and the topics covered (\*note: more than one topic may have been covered with staff member):



16. Advice and support is also offered to patients and visitors through the Here for Health Information Advice Centre and since opening in August 2014, 16 referrals have been made to More life the county weight loss service.

**Healthier eating for staff**

17. OUH, in line with Department of Health recommendations, is developing a Hospital Food Strategy. The Strategy seeks to improve the nutrition of patients, staff and visitors; create a healthy food environment throughout the hospital; and develop sustainable catering pathways. The Strategy aims to support staff, patients and visitors to maintain a healthy weight by ensuring that all catering outlets reflect this ethos by offering and promoting healthier eating choices.

18. In order to deliver improvements, OUH has established a healthy eating working group involving all food providers.

19. Providing a healthy food environment to staff, patients, and visitors has also been incorporated into the Trust Health and Wellbeing and Public Health Strategies. Our aim is to help the Trust achieve a health promoting ethos signalled by providing healthy food choices.

20. All staff members have been surveyed on the food provision at the Trust and their responses are being used as levers for change.

21. During 2013/14 the online survey was circulated to all OUH staff, asking about healthier eating in the workplace. The survey received 2,355 responses, with all four hospital sites represented. Leading barriers to healthier eating at work were identified as:

- the availability and choice of healthy options, particularly out of hours and outside core meal times, and for those with particular dietary requirements;
- the cost of healthier options relative to less healthy foods;
- time and convenience, with no/short breaks, and healthier foods not as easy to eat 'on the go';
- additional barriers cited were desire and temptation of less healthy options, the need for an 'energy boost', and 'comfort eating' due to stress or having a bad day.

22. The working group has worked with food providers to offer healthier food and drink options at our hospitals, and there are now greater numbers of healthy choices available during main meal times. A key provider (Aramark) has also signed the Responsibility Deal pledge. Food providers have reformulated recipes to provide meals which are lower in fat, salt, and energy. Additional actions providing healthy options and promoting healthy choices for staff, patients and visitors will arise from the Hospital Food Strategy.

23. Healthy Hospital Days have been held across all four hospital sites, promoting healthier eating and an increasing level of physical activity. The hospital restaurants have offered a greater number of healthier food and drink choices, including fruit and vegetables and price promotions, on and around these days.

24. Healthier "vending" is being implemented gradually. The Trust is obliged to follow the external provider's current contractual arrangement and going forward aims to negotiate with them to enhance the healthier eating options.

25. A wide range of information on healthier eating is available to staff through OUH occupational health website, the Here for Health drop-in Centre, EAP, health champions, mobile pop ups and healthy hospital days and Aramark's own promotion material as Provider of food on three sites.

### **Physical Activity: Opportunities for staff engagement**

#### **Staff feedback**

26. Staff health and wellbeing surveys began as part of a Go Active pilot with a specific Division which led to much greater involvement in healthier lifestyle Initiatives within their work area

27. During the autumn of 2014 a Physical Activity survey was conducted via Survey monkey with an onsite assessment of facilities. Recommendations were made and an action plan developed

#### **Activities available for staff**

28. Range of onsite classes are offered to staff, for example Zumba, Yoga, and Pilates.

29. Active travel initiatives such as cycle to work scheme and OxonBike, walk to work maps are focused on encouraging active travel through such detailed information.

30. Pedometer challenges are offered throughout the year across all four hospital sites and have been very well received with significant numbers of staff engaged in walking more and often using them to eat less in order to lose weight.

31. Discounted gym memberships are offered to staff and referral/signposting to a plethora of local resources is ongoing: for example Brookes Sport, Oxfordshire Sport and Physical Activity Partnership; Walking for Health etc.

### **Building resilience**

32. Trust-wide emphasis on building resilience to facilitate mental wellbeing through:

- A comprehensive training programme for all managers entitled “creating a mentally healthy workplace” commissioned by NHS employers and delivered by the COHWB, which emphasises the importance of physical wellbeing with “move more eat healthier and / or less” messages pervading training;
- COHWB support is provided for individuals with referral options for external support if required;
- HR support and advice through robust policies and procedures to enable managers and staff to build good working relationships, reduce workplace stress and ensure a culture of resilience;
- Staff unions provide a robust overarching together with individual support to staff promoting organisational and individual wellbeing.

### **Behaviour change**

#### **Staff training**

33. Health champion training has been building health improvement capacity within the Trust. Health champions are staff trained and supported to deliver brief advice to help others to adopt a healthier lifestyle by sign posting to services, providing information about health and wellbeing including weight management and initiating activities such as health challenges in their work area: examples of health challenges include weight loss challenges amongst teams and pedometer challenges. To date there are 21 trained health champions. They support the Trusts’ goals of becoming a health promoting organisation, improving staff health and wellbeing and positively influencing the health improvement agenda recognising the core principle that effective behaviour change is more likely through peer education.

34. Building resilience training for all staff has been embedded into the learning and development programmes for staff ensuring the key health and wellbeing messages are inextricably linked to working within the Trust.

#### **Individual support**

35. COHWB advisors offer individual staff support to lose weight together with health MOTs by appointment to engage staff in healthier behaviour change.

36. Here for Health Drop in Centre offers support to staff to engage in improving their wellbeing through behaviour change guidance.

37. The EAP offers online or telephone support on all personal matters including healthy eating.

### **Conclusion**

38. Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has implemented a number of measures to help support staff in living healthy lives and maintain a healthy weight. These include providing staff with advice, signposting to services and influencing the built environment.

Going forward, the Trust is energetically committed to supporting staff endeavours to lead healthier lives both in and out of work and seeks innovative measures to further engage staff in looking after themselves whilst working towards making the healthier choice the easier choice whilst at work.

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October 2015