Sustainable policies for supporting Social care and mental health staff: Practicing what we preach

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- Support approximately 1600 people every week.
- 400 staff across most of the heavily populated regions of Scotland.
- 20% peer workers
  - own lived experience of mental health challenges
- Many staff’s role changed overnight:
  - From face to face support to telephone and video support
- But many staff continuing to work and potentially be vulnerable to exposure to Covid-19

Our challenge

- **Bring the same focus and commitment to wellbeing to our staff as we do to the people we support.**
Recovery isn’t waiting for the storm to pass….

It’s learning to dance in the rain…..

“A way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life, even with limitations caused by illness”.

Recovery is about a good life *even in the presence of symptoms*

William Anthony (1993)
Recovery – a model for Covid-19
Providing spaces

1st priority: Creating spaces for people to connect and support each other:

• Redesigning 1:1 Supervision
  ➢ From monthly face to face to weekly wellbeing check in.
• Online coffee breaks
• New series of reflective practice:
  • Zoom sessions
    • 3 per week for staff
    • confidential space to discuss wellbeing
Providing spaces

• Focusing on the HOPE framework:
  • Now you are at **Home** most of the time, what can you do to maximise your wellbeing
  • What are the **Opportunities** that the change of circumstances can offer you?
  • Who are the **People** who are critical to your wellbeing at this time?
  • How do you retain a sense of **Empowerment** within this context?
Circles of concern and influence

How do we avoid feeling powerless:

- Focusing on what we *can* actually influence now
- *Expanding* our influence
Providing resources

• **Focus on regular stream of communication & resources**
  – Daily bulletins – consistent times
  – Regular resource packages
Redesigning the work

What do you do when your role changes overnight?

• Many staff’s jobs changed overnight.
  • From direct face to face support to telephone and video support.
  • Dislocation isolation, new skills needed

• Focus on communicating their role as keyworkers:
  • Strong feature of good mental health is the sense of contribution:
    • Created regular Zoom sessions three times a week to support:
    • The purpose of their role in these times
    • Regular sessions on learning and reflection on new ways ways of providing support.
And finally

Hope is not optimism, which expects things to turn out well, but something rooted in the conviction that there is good worth working for.

Seamus Heaney