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We've drafted this template to help you structure your story. It's designed to help others put your learning into practice. Try and complete every field if you can, but *don't worry if you can't*. When you have completed the template, delete these instruction and **SAVE AS A PDF**, upload it, together with any attachments, to

https://fabnhsstuff.net/login?ral=https://fabnhsstuff.net/upload-your-fab-stuff

Title of innovation / initiative

NHS Firebreak

Problem

• Since the NHS was created it has provided free healthcare, supported research made possible only by the dedicated staff that work within it. In some respects it has become a victim of its own success, innovation and more complex interventions have increased clinical activity, demand and costs. This has led to longer waiting times, an increase in patient dis-satisfaction and a decrease in staff wellbeing, leading to issues with recruitment and retention. In recent years the term firefighting has been adopted to describe the current state of the NHS, every day in work I hear the term firefighting, were just firefighting.

Aim

 Used by firefighters, a firebreak is created to stop the fire from spreading giving them time, to think, and plan to proactively prevent further damage. The NHS cannot simply continue to fight the flames of increased demands and a disempowered workforce, we need a firebreak to stop time, to allow individuals to breath, to think and to create more time and capacity within the confines of current resources. The overarching aim was to then facilitate change, improve outcomes for staff and patients and in the long term impact on recruitment and retention.

Plan

- I created the NHS firebreak working on the principle of "just an hour" and four simple questions
 - 1. Is there something that takes a significant chunk of your time, does it need to be done and are you the right person to do it?
 - 2. Are there things that you do that are duplicated by others, and who is best placed to do it?
 - 3. What one change to the way you work would make the biggest difference?
 - 4. What is your main learning, upskilling or development need that would enable you to improve patient outcomes and job satisfaction?

These questions are designed to start the individual on their journey to consider what matters to them, why do they do something, how do they do it, does it need to be done, is there a better, smarter way to do it and what do they need to make the change?

The answers form the foundations to the toolkit and establish the firebreak, the other elements of the toolkit, structured audit, population engagement and maximising resources can now be introduced to proactively move forward towards sustainability.

Benefits

- Utilising the firebreak to implement the toolkit, structured audit starts a cycle for ongoing service improvement, and investment in professional development, establishing a valued, resilient workforce, increased staff wellbeing leading to improved retention and increased recruitment. Population engagement and maximising resources increase capacity focusing limited resources where they are most effective, delivering high value health care whilst protecting and nurturing those that form the core of the NHS.
- The firebreak is easily adapted and the subsections can be utilise in isolation in a flexible way to address the needs of an individual or team

Measures

 A staff satisfaction survey was utilised before and during the use of the firebreak along with a stress self-assessment tool which was repeated at three month intervals

Resources / team

- The firebreak requires minimal resources, just the pre-printed questions, pen and paper.
- An information booklet and guide has been created for teams wanting to implement the firebreak
- I have been sharing the information with teams in meetings and I also have a background on my
 meetings that attracts questions from people so that I then get the opportunity to tell them about the
 firebreak

Key learning

• Whilst the concept was simple it was hard to get buy in, it has been slow to start but allowing people to take and apply parts of it and utilise it in their own way has made it more user friendly.

Tips for others

• Anyone can benefit from this, and where it has been utilised the feedback has been really positive. The simpler an idea is the better.

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Date of innovation / initiative: ... May 2022 Ongoing......

Do you have any attachments?

- "A picture is worth a thousand words". Are there any photos or graphics that could help bring your story to life?
- Are there any supporting materials, documents, communications or other outputs that you used or produced that you could share to prevent others reinventing them?

If so, please upload them to the Fab site with this completed template.