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Title of innovation / initiative

'Helping Hands' Staff Stable of Care

Problem

Staff coming to the chaplains with financial and/or practical problems, some of which we could help with, some we knew someone who could, some we needed external expertise.

Aim

- Stop feeding people a fish and instead enable them to fish for themselves*

Plan

- What did you do and how did you do it? We started off with Period poverty 'Little paper bags' scheme, where staff could collect a cycle's worth of sanitary products, with some nice smellies and chocolate, in a little paper bag from the chaplaincy offices.*
- Then we added in small cash grants from our chapel fund to help staff in need of one off help*
- We became Foodbank voucher providers for our local Service*
- Then we negotiated with the Hospital eateries to allow us to give cards to staff who needed a meal a day. These cards are discreet and enable staff to have a meal which we as chaplains then pay for.*
- From this our amazing Hospital catering teams bought fridges and we can now provide a 'too good to throw' scheme for staff to get a meal/sandwiches etc from discreet fridges across the Trust.*
- Finally we submitted a charity bid to Newcastle Hospitals Charity and are now in our second year of having our own Welfare Advisers from Citizens Advice Gateshead providing a bespoke service to all of our staff. This includes benefit advice, rent/housing, relationships, budget provision. All areas we did not have the expertise to advise on.*
- We listened to the staff, we looked outside of the box of chaplains = prayers and more at the whole person approach. We took small steps, used what we had, and built on our experiences to be able to develop a stable of care, which we are immensely proud of, whilst simultaneously wishing it did not have to exist at all.*

Benefits

- We keep staff at work, knowing they are cared for, treated with dignity and respected at a time in their lives when things are rough.*
- We have provided a £1000 worth of meals to staff at work.*
- Our Welfare workers have enabled income gains for multiple members of staff (amount confidential)*
- Staff have been cared for without being done to, in a confidential safe setting.*

Measures

We complete a monthly audit of all our work recording our staff support contacts. What we provided and for how long/how much. Our Welfare Advisers provide us with a confidential dashboard monthly. During the first year of this part of the scheme they reported:

We supported 74 individuals with 397 issues, an average of 5.5 issues per person. People have needed most support with Welfare Benefits issues including accessing in work benefits. However, we often uncover other deep-seated problems and have gone on to support people to resolve those problems. 20% had issues around relationship breakdown and access to children while 18% needed support with

debt problems.

Resources / team

- *We needed donations to start our period poverty packs*
- *Donations to our chapel fund*
- *Buy in from the Catering Team*
- *A successful charity bid to the Newcastle Hospitals Charity for our Welfare Advisers*
- *Audacity, tenacity and broad shoulders for tackling such a sensitive area for staff and the Trust.*

Key learning

- *What have you learnt from this project? The need is there, if you look you will see it*
- *What would you do differently if you did it again? What would you do the same? Be a clearer on boundaries for things like how long we able to support people if they not ready to take the next steps.*

Tips for others

- *Who else can benefit from this work? Anyone who finds themselves in distress at work.*
- *What advice would you give to others doing the same thing? Be brave and think about what you would need at the worst time in your life.*

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Date of innovation / initiative: Initial phase commenced 2019, have continued to build the stable of care since then

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.