

# Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing Together Strategy

## Workshops Summary

### Workshop Context

Never before has the field of Occupational Health and Wellbeing (OHWB) had the acknowledged value and spotlight shown to it as this moment now following on from the COVID-19 pandemic. This was a key theme from the 2022, NHS Health at Work Network Conference. To help build on this momentum, three engaging workshops were conducted during the conference to explore the new and innovative NHS Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing Together strategy.

This strategy is a key conduit towards improving the health and wellbeing of our NHS people by growing our OHWB services and people to be trusted, strategic and national integrated partners. Supporting our NHS People Plan and People Promise of 'we are safe and healthy', the strategy sets out a united vision and areas for action that we can achieve together based on four [strategic drivers](#), outlined in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Growing OHWB Together Strategy: four drivers**



The Growing OHWB vision and drivers are underpinned by co-design, service improvement and a learning-focused approach. The three workshops continued this ethos, each exploring aspects of the first three drivers. The outputs from these workshops and the entire programme of strategy work, will be used to inform the final and fourth driver to grow a positive strategic identity of OHWB and to create a climate of wellbeing for our NHS people.



**People at the heart of OHWB services:** the importance of having our NHS people at the heart of OHWB services was a central theme uniting across all three workshops, such as:

- The need to grow clarity around current holistic OHWB roles, rather than creating new ones, so that they are fully integrated and recognised as a specialist preventative service for our NHS people.
- Growing good OHWB services which are truly accessible to all. When thinking about developing OHWB services, workshop participants highlighted the importance of looking through the lens of several groups – service users and NHS managers, other teams, senior leaders and also using the expertise and knowledge of OHWB team members.
- Ensuring the NHS is data-led and is recognised for driving best practice in OHWB for our NHS people, thereby adding value to the employee and service user experience and answering organisational needs.

**Data and digital:** A strong theme also emerged about the supporting structures needed for success, including:

- Being evidence-based.
- The value of good IT systems.
- Value of good accreditation systems.
- Access to, and confidence in, OHWB data – this was a common challenge faced by many.

It was identified however, that there are opportunity gaps available for OHWB metrics and clinical outcome measures to be common across the wider NHS. And the ultimate opportunity which is available right now to OHWB professionals is how we use OHWB data to tell the evidence-based story to CEOs and CFOs. By positioning qualitative data from service user experiences to tell the business case story, demonstrating how OHWB services can be the answer to the needs and challenges executive boards are facing.

**Growing our workforce:** further feedback suggested that a greater focus over coming years could be placed towards developing our existing and future OHWB people via apprenticeships, an 'in-house' development programme, and enabling more opportunities for 'early exposure' for people to OHWB to help make "OHWB everyone's business".

## Next steps

By understanding the input raised across all three workshops, we can all help to start to grow and shape the ongoing development of our OHWB people and to grow the impact of the data we use to evidence best-practice. The input from the workshops will also help to build a practical and tangible route into service development that celebrates what services are already doing well and helps OHWB professionals to focus on areas for future development for their service.

The workshops are part of an on-going conversation and co-design, of which the OHWB community are key partners. NHS England has taken this feedback and is developing the next stage of future stakeholder engagement sessions. The national Growing OHWB Culture Team are still listening, so if you are interested in finding out more about the Growing OHWB Together strategy, wish to share best practice examples and ideas, or have any questions, please email the team at [growing.ohwb@nhs.net](mailto:growing.ohwb@nhs.net) .