

Virtual mental health awareness training for care home managers



Evaluation Report – Cohort One

Following an engagement exercise with care home sector representatives, the extraordinary pressures of the COVID-19 response and the effect on workforce, mental health and wellbeing were recognised as key priorities for action.

Bristol Mind was commissioned to deliver mental health awareness training after staff from the West of England AHSN attended similar training for line managers and gave positive feedback. The course focused on advice and practical tools for supporting managers in order to better support their staff. Practical resources were shared with attendees after the training, and they were also invited to a private Facebook group for managers where content on wellbeing tools and practical advice useful for care homes is posted regularly. Follow up calls will be conducted with attendees in Q1 2021 to gain a deeper insight into the actions they have taken and the longer term impact of the training.

Structure of training

Cohort One ran from 28 January 2021 to 4 March 2021. The course was made up of two 90 minute interactive sessions over Zoom, with a two to three week break between the first and second session. The cohort was made up of four groups of around 15 places.

Promotion of the training was carried out by contacts in networks, through existing communications channels, and on the West of England AHSN website. Bookings for the training proved very popular; a waiting list for future courses has 93 contacts currently registered.

Issues

Uptake from care home managers from BSW and BNSSG was good, making up the majority of attendees, however only one attendee was from Gloucestershire. This imbalance may be due to the extraordinary pressure care homes have been experiencing in Gloucestershire and so managers could not prioritise their time on training, or that the limited places in the cohort were filled before messaging through Gloucestershire communications channels was disseminated widely.

'Did not attend' (DNA) rates were around 30% for all sessions, with managers citing 'having to prioritise issues arising in the care home' preventing them from attending. Measures were implemented to reduce the DNA rate, including:

- Multiple bookings from single organisations were discouraged
- The capacity of sessions was increased from 12 and each session was overbooked to up to 20 attendees
- 24hr and 2hr reminder emails were sent to attendees asking them to confirm their place by email or phone
- Each attendee was telephoned on the morning of the session to confirm their place

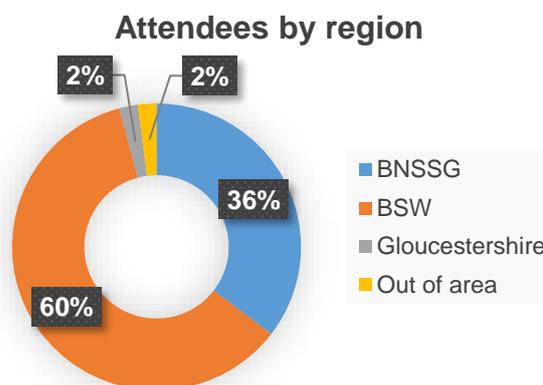
Data collection

Attendees were asked a series of questions upon registration that aimed to identify their main concern for their staff, how confident they felt as managers in supporting their staff's mental health and wellbeing, and whether they had already implemented any measures to support wellbeing. This was compared with data from a corresponding post-training survey.

Evaluation

Attendance rate

29 attendees trained were from Bath, North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire, 17 from Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire, 1 from Gloucestershire and 1 from out of area.



The overall attendance rate was 65.2% and 'did not attend' (DNA) was 34.8%. These rates are consistent with other training in care homes the West of England AHSN is running. Reasons cited for absence mainly focused around issues arising in the home that required the manager's attention. Attendance for the first session was higher than the second session, dropping from 71.2% to 59.2%, with 60% of attendees attending the full course of both session one and two. To mitigate this, the course will be shortened to one session per attendee in future cohorts.

	Session 1	Session 2	Total / %
No. of places	58	60	118
Attendance rate %	71.2%	59.2%	65.2%
DNA rate %	28.8%	40.8%	34.8%

Concern

Pre-training

The main concern of staff cited by managers was anxiety around contracting and spreading COVID-19. This word cloud illustrates further themes of concerns cited:

Managers were 'somewhat concerned' at 4.3 out of 5, where 5 is 'very concerned'.

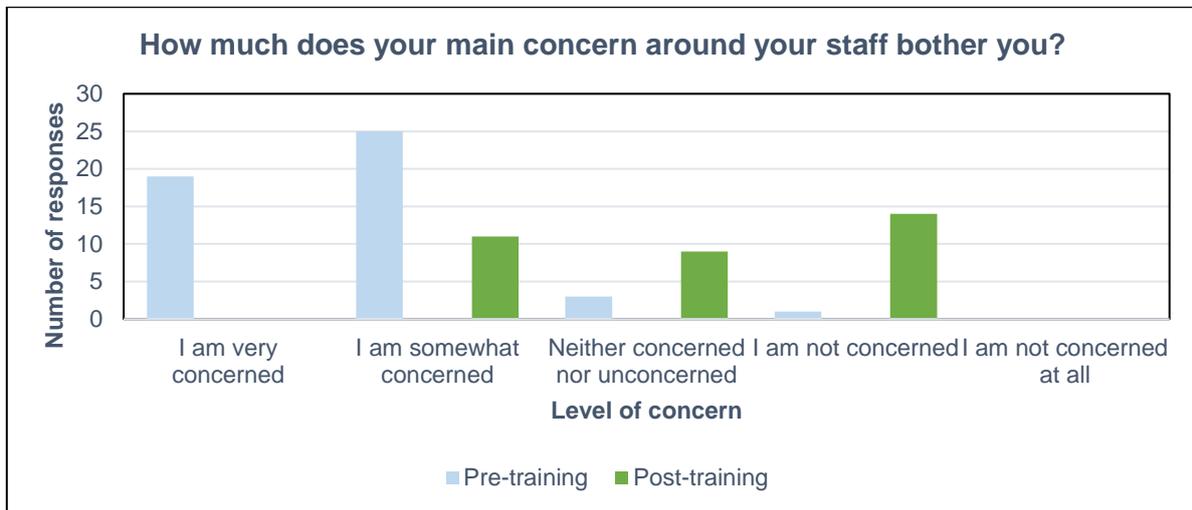


Post-training

Following the training, the data indicates a **28% decrease in concern**, from 4.3 to 2.9, where 2 is 'not concerned' and 3 is 'neither concerned nor unconcerned'.

94% of attendees who completed the post-training feedback survey said they found the training was helpful in supporting them to address their main concern around their staff's wellbeing. A high proportion of comments cited how the attendees felt it was useful to connect with each other.

"[It was] great to speak to other people going through the same situation, and who understand the reality of the situations faced on a daily basis"



Supporting staff wellbeing

There was a small increase in attendees' confidence in supporting their staff's wellbeing following the training, from 3.9 to 4.3, where 1 is 'not confident at all' and 5 'very confident', resulting in a 7% increase. This indicates overall attendees already had a fair level of confidence before the course, and in fact 81% of attendees reported they had already implemented some measures to support their team's wellbeing. Measures included offering increased opportunities to talk through regular 1-1 meetings, rewards, and referral or signposting to mental health and wellbeing resources.



Attendees referred specifically to tools taught in the sessions when asked if they plan to implement further measures following the training. Tools mentioned include the Wellness Action Plans, active listening, ACE (a mindfulness tool), and conducting supportive conversations. A number of respondents also planned to share the session slides with their staff, which were circulated in post-session resource packs.

Further free text comments about the training in general included two that expressed opinions around the basic level of the training, however otherwise comments were mostly very positive and provided a helpful insight.

"This was a breath of fresh air, people wanting to engage, and talk about common situations, and positive ways to reduce risk and stress in the future. I have not really been asked how I was coping thorough this pandemic, so was initially difficult to answer."

Future cohorts

Due to the popularity and positive feedback of the first cohort, the West of England AHSN is keen to commission Bristol Mind to deliver further cohorts, with wider availability. Some alterations will be made to enable this:

- Course will be reduced from two sessions to one
- Number of spaces on the courses will be increased from 15 to 20 (with overbooking to accommodate DNA rate)
- Targeted focus on increasing uptake of the training in Gloucestershire
- Evaluation questions will be refined
- Attendee questionnaires to include additional questions around the managers' own wellbeing

Further consideration around the measurement of impact and outcomes is also in discussion. This may take the form of monitoring care home staff absence and retention levels through system-held data dashboards, follow up with attendees to the training for more in depth feedback, and evaluating change in emotional intelligence post-training.

The West of England AHSN will also be scoping further initiatives to supplement the offer of support for workforce wellbeing in care homes, including the North Bristol NHS Trust Start Well End Well tool.