



Leicestershire County Council

Annual Health, Safety & Wellbeing Performance Report.

April 2020 – March 2021

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Key Facts

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Service endeavour to continually monitor HSW performance within the authority in order that improvements can be made to ensure legal compliance, financial savings and most importantly the safety of staff, clients, pupils, service users, volunteers and contractors. This annual report highlights some of the work that has been undertaken in the past year to put in place proactive measures, to address compliance issues and to raise awareness of the appropriate hazards and risks. The report also highlights the action that departments have taken to mitigate risks.



522

Injuries



17

RIDDOR Incidents



2121

Counselling sessions to
corporate staff



187

COVID inspections (H&S
only)



378

Near Misses



182

Injuries caused by slips
trips and falls



84

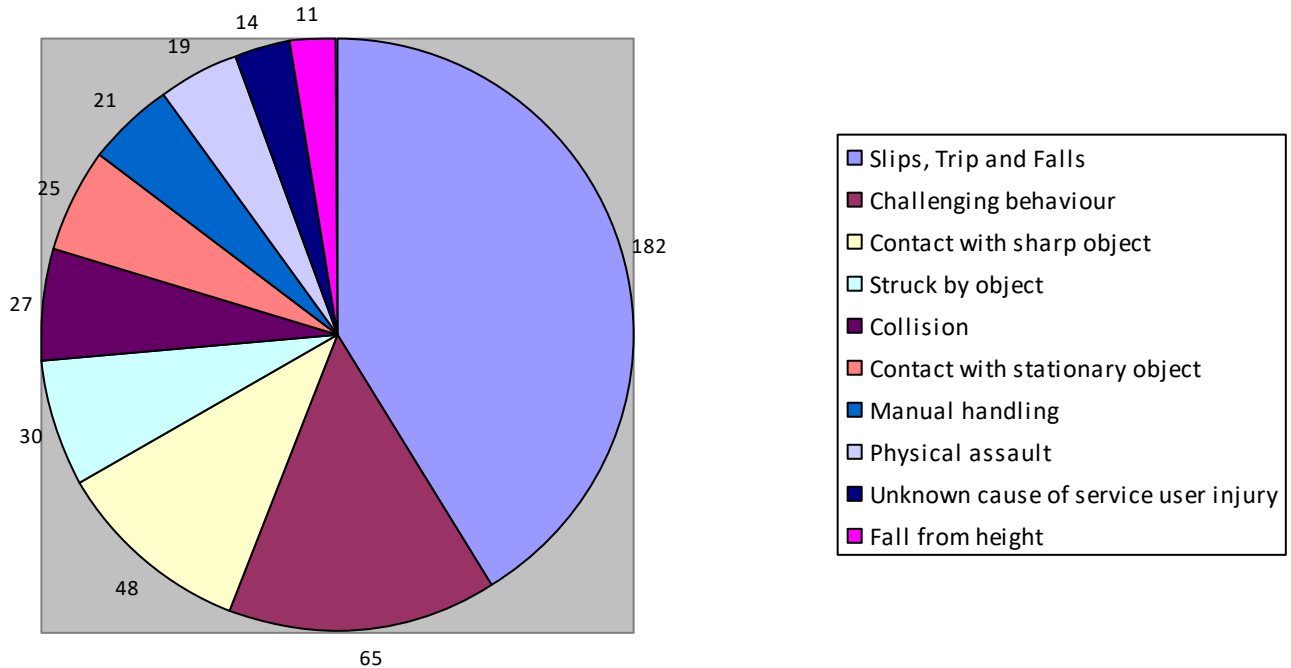
Injuries caused by
physical assault and
challenging behaviour



1290

Staff attended Health and
Safety Courses

Accident Data Analysis April 2020 – March 2021



NB: Categories with fewer than 11 have been omitted to enable clarity in the pie chart

17 RIDDOR reportable incidents occurred across the authority

378 Near misses were recorded **70** Violent incidents were recorded

- During the 2020/2021 financial year **522 accidents** which resulted in injury were recorded within the Authority (CFS & LA Schools, A&C, CR, CEx, E&T, Public Health and ESPO). This is a **52% decrease** in injuries compared to 2019 / 2020. This drastic reduction can be attributed to the coronavirus pandemic which caused many services to halt their operation for a large part of the year.
- **Slips, trips, and falls** continue to be the greatest cause of accidents and represent 35% of all accidents within the Authority (31% in 2019 / 2020). The H&S team will continue to monitor this trend and are planning to launch a campaign in 2021/22 to help reduce the number of slips, trips, and falls.
- The number of physical assaults and challenging behaviour (resulting in injury) has **decreased by 59%** compared to the previous year.
- **378 near misses** were reported in 2020/2021 – **8% decrease** from 2019/2020.
- **17 RIDDOR incidents** were reported in 2020/2021 – compared to 28 in 2019/2020, **39% decrease**.
- **70 violent incidents** (this includes physical and verbal abuse) were reported in 2020/2021 – **65% decrease** from 2019/2020.

Information within this report has been gained from Leicestershire County Council's accident and incident reporting system, AssessNET on 06/05/2021.



Accident Data

Location of Accidents (those resulting in injury)

The Council uses the AssessNET system to report all accidents and incidents. The information below shows the services that have reported the highest number of injuries throughout the Council.

Department	Service Area	No. of Injuries
CFS	St Denys Church of England Infant School	28
CFS	Wigston Menphys Nursery School	27
CR	Commercial Services > LTS Catering	27
ESPO	ESPO	20
CFS	Sketchley Hill Menphys Nursery	21
E&T	Highways Operations	31
A&C	Direct Services > Provider Services > Melton Supported Living Service	19
E&T	Recycling and Household Waste Sites	19
CFS	Badgerbrook Primary School	13
CFS	Belton Church of England Primary School	12
CFS	Thorpe Acre Junior School	12
CFS	Maplewell Hall School	12
A&C	Direct Services > Provider Services > Carlton Drive Short Breaks Service	11
CFS	Hinckley Children Family Wellbeing Centre	10



RIDDOR Reportable Incidents and Incidents of Significance

The Council is obliged to comply with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. It is a requirement that certain incidents that are more serious are reported to the HSE. The following information outlines the incidents by department that have been reported under the RIDDOR regulations during 2020/2021.

Corporate Resources reported 2 RIDDOR incidents within 2020/2021. This has decreased from 10 in 2019/2020. These incidents are summarised below:

1. Corporate Facilities and Operations > Hard FM > Sites Development June 2020

An employee within the Sites Development team was diagnosed with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in June 2020, following several years of health surveillance. Since 2017 his exposure to vibration has been reduced and a personal risk assessment was implemented. In his current role the use of vibrating tools is nil.

2. Commercial Services > LTS Catering, Mowmacre Hill Primary School 08/10/2020

A School Food Assistant (IP) tripped over an old gas pipe which had been exposed after the kitchen was reorganised to allow for social distancing. The employee sustained a fractured ankle and was off work for 137 days. The investigation found that the trip hazard had not be correctly identified and rectified. Following the incident, the gas pipe was removed.

Other incidents of significance

3. Corporate Facilities and Operations > Contract and Business Development > Post and Premises 03/12/2020

A member of the Premises team fell from the loading bay at County Hall. The employee sustained bruising however luckily no further injuries were sustained. The incident highlighted that the employee, who is part of the supported employee programme, requires further supervision and support. The Premises Team are in the process of seeking advice from Mosaic on how best they can ensure his safety in the workplace. Following the incident, the safety of the loading bay was also improved, access to the dock leveller is now key controlled and a safe system of work and toolbox talk has been introduced.

A&C reported 3 RIDDOR incidents within 2020/2021. This has decreased from 5 in 2019/2020. These incidents are summarised below:

1. Adult and Communities > East Care Pathway > Direct Services > Provider Services > Emergency Care Team > 17/10/2020

A Care Worker in the Emergency Care Team slipped while traveling down the stairs in a home. The Care Worker sustained a soft tissue injury to her left elbow, resulting in 23 days off work. During the investigation it was noted that the stairs in the service user's home were steep, however the IP was aware of this prior to the visit. It was noted that the Care Worker seemed to be focused on calling for advice rather than focusing on walking down the stairs at the time of the slip.



2. Adult and Communities > East Care Pathway > Direct Services > Provider Services > Melton Supported Living Service > 06/12/2020

Whilst cleaning a light fitting on a step ladder an employee sustained an injury to her eye from falling dust, resulting in 9 days off work. Following this incident, the service has improved their risk assessments and arrangements for using step ladders, lone working, and cleaning light fittings.

3. Adult and Communities > East Care Pathway > Direct Services > HART > 06/03/2021

Whilst at a service user's home a Home Care Assistant suffered a pain in her right shoulder following a moving and handling manoeuvre, which resulted in 50 days off work. During the investigation it was identified that the injured person already had a weakness in their shoulder which team leaders were not aware of and no medical care had been sought. It appeared that correct moving and handling procedures were followed. It has been recommended that the team are reminded that they must inform their manager if they are injured.

E&T reported 3 RIDDOR incidents within 2020/2021, compared to 4 in 2019/2020. These incidents are summarised below:

1. Highways Operations 29/09/2020

Highways Operative sustained a detached knee muscle injury caused by him slipping into an open gully. His left leg fell into the gully, causing the injury, which resulted in 199 days off work. The open gully was not visible at the time and this combined with the slippery surface caused by the water and silt, meant that his foot slipped when placing it onto the kerb. The investigation found that existing risk assessments and method statements (RAMS) did not cover the jetting of longitudinal drainage channels which was being undertaken at the time. The RAMS have since been reviewed.

2. Highways Operations 12/01/2021

Highways Operative was in the process of replacing a street lighting column. The IP was lifting the clay out of the hole using a shuv holer when he felt a sharp pain in his left elbow, the injury resulted in 55 days off work. The investigation found that there was nothing unusual about the activity and the operative appeared to be using the equipment in the right way.

3. Highways Operations 09/02/2021

An LCC gritter vehicle slid off the road into a ditch whilst the operative was carrying out winter maintenance duties. The driver braked to conduct a 90° corner turn, when the gritter lost traction for a few seconds and slid into the ditch. The driver injured his back and was off work for 29 days.



LA schools reported 7 RIDDOR incidents within 2020/2021. This has increased from 3 in 2019/2020. These incidents are summarised below:

1. Harby Church of England Primary School – 18/08/2020

A teacher at the school sustained a fractured wrist from falling from a child's chair which she had used to reach a notice board. The teacher should have used a stepladder which was available. It was recommended that the school implement a formal working at height risk assessment which is communicated to all staff members.

2. Kegworth Primary School – 09/09/2020

A Learning Support Assistant was supporting a child with special needs. In preparation to guide the child out during a fire drill, the Learning Support Assistant (IP) had her arm around the child's back. The child ran in the opposite direction which resulted in back pain leading to 18 days off work. The investigation found that the IP was too close to the child, therefore she would not have been able to avoid the child's reaction, also the investigation found that there was not a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, 'PEEP' in place for the child.

3. The Menphys Centre Wigston – 16/10/2020

A Class Lead sustained a sprained hip when she fell whilst trying to separate two children by standing in between them. The injury resulted in 24 days off work. The investigation found that the IP lost her footing, there was no obvious cause of the incident. Behaviour plans were in the place and control measures were being followed.

4. Ashmount School – 18/11/2020

Whilst a Classroom Support Assistant (IP) was in the playground a student pushed past her to get through the gate, the IP fell onto her left wrist causing aggravation to an old injury. The IP was off work for 19 days.

5. Thythorn Field Community Primary School – 20/11/2020

A Teaching Assistant was running with a group of children on the field, the Teaching Assistant slipped which resulted in a fractured shoulder, the IP was off work for 21 days. The investigation found that the IP was not wearing sports shoes, therefore had very poor grip.

6. New Swannington Primary School – 22/01/2021

A Teacher slipped on the floor resulting in a fractured elbow. The investigation found that although cleaning had taken place earlier that afternoon and wet floor signs had not been displayed, however it is unlikely that the floor was still wet when the fall occurred. Therefore, it is unclear what caused the fall.

7. Ibstock Junior School – 11/02/2021

The Premises Officer sustained a fractured finger after her finger got stuck when lowering the roller shutter blind between the kitchen and the hall. The injury resulted in 21 days off work. The investigation found that



the IP did not moved her hand out of the way as she would normally do. The risk associated with the shutter was not identified in a risk assessment. The school have been advised to review the use of the shutter to consider if an alternative can be fitted.

CFS reported 1 RIDDOR incidents within 2020/2021. This has decreased from 2 in 2019/2020. This incident is summarised below:

1. Children in care and post permanence support team – 27/10/2020

A member of staff within the team named above slipped and fell whilst making a drink in the breakout area in room 500, this resulted in a radical fracture near the elbow. The cause of the fall was unknown at the time as there was no slip or trip hazard.

ESPO reported 1 RIDDOR incidents within 2020/2021. This has decreased from 2 in 2019/2020. This incident is summarised below:

1. ESPO, Mezzanine Floor – 13/10/2020

A Warehouse Operative was changing a roll of paper used for packaging, and while doing so strained her wrist. She was subsequently off work for 20 days. CCTV identified that poor manual handling techniques were being used at the time of the injury. Since the incident the packing benches have been moved to allow the paper roll to be replenished from the back to avoid overreaching.

Health and Safety Audits

Due to the coronavirus pandemic a decision was made by senior managers within Corporate Resources to suspend all planned H&S audits, due to the uncertainty at the time and the rapidly changing priorities.

Audits are planned to recommence in April 2021.

Although no formal audits took place many health and safety inspections took place as part of the Covid-19 recovery project.

HSE Enforcement Action

The council was not subject to any enforcement action from the HSE.



Coronavirus response

During the initial wave of the coronavirus pandemic the H&S team were heavily involved in supporting services that remained operational. The team were supporting with writing risk assessments and advising on infection control and PPE requirements.

The team created guidance information and generic risk assessments. All documents were shared on the [‘manage health and safety during coronavirus’](#) intranet page.

The team were also advising the authority on health and safety measures that were needed for home workers.

As the first lockdown was coming to an end the Workplace Recovery Team, managed by the Transformation Unit, were required to support all services within the authority to recover their premises, making them covid secure.

The HS&W team, Operational and Strategic Property Services, with support from IT and Communications worked together to implement a programme of support.

To make a workplace covid secure the following measures had to be taken.

- A risk assessment must be completed for each site
- Recovery desks spaced 2m apart must be identified
- One way and give way routes identified
- Cleaning protocols put in place
- Social distancing stickers and hygiene posters displayed

Together with the site representatives the Workplace Recovery Group ensured that all sites had the signs, cleaning products and procedures in place to ensure each site could be signed off as covid secure, in line with the dates they were required to reopen.

An inspection checklist was devised to ensure the same safety standards were implemented across all sites. To be signed off as covid secure, each premise required an inspection by a H&S or Property Services staff member. Monitoring visits were also carried out 3 weeks later to ensure covid secure standards were maintained.

Across the whole authority

220 sites made COVID Secure

220 risk assessments written and checked

440 inspections and monitoring visits carried out

Over **700** monthly checks carried out by services

4000 safety stickers displayed

A health and safety [induction video](#) and [staying safe in the workplace guide](#) was created to inform returning staff of the changes that were in place to keep everyone safe.



As the country went in and out of lockdown the Workplace Recovery Group continued to support premises with health and safety arrangements while they were closed and supported the sites with reopening safety protocols.

Furthermore, as government guidance changed, i.e. in relation to face coverings and test and trace, the Workplace Recovery Group continued to communicate the updates with site responsible managers.

As it emerged that certain demographic and medical factors made some groups more vulnerable to covid 19, the H&S team devised a [personal risk assessment template](#) in consultation with Public Health.

This risk assessment template was rolled out to the authority in June 2020. The team supported the writing of many personal risk assessments for staff who remained within the physical workplace. Furthermore, as shielding came to an end the H&S team supported with ensuring personal risk assessments were in place for these staff.

The H&S team have created several guidance documents in response to the pandemic including.

- How to work from home safely
- How to do workstation exercises
- How to administer first aid during the coronavirus pandemic
- Covid 19 RIDDOR reporting guidance
- Guidance for PPE when administering first aid
- Covid 19 response procedure
- PPE waste guidance
- How to maintain good ventilation in the workplace.
- Sharing of vehicles guidance



Training Statistics

The following section highlights the numbers of delegates from the Council that have attended or completed corporate Learning and Development courses provided by the HS&W Service. **Note:** Figures also exclude job specific training which may have a safety consideration and any training which may have been arranged directly by managers within the department.

Course	A&C	E&T	CFS	CE	CR	PH
Stress Awareness E-learning	30	4	10	0	2	2
Managing Wellbeing, Stress and Pressure	0	0	11	0	0	0
COSHH	76	7	12	0	3	0
Fire Safety E-Learning	48	8	40	1	6	2
Fire Safety Practical	0	0	16	0	0	0
Introduction to H&S (Mandatory)	238	58	264	36	111	44
Legionella Awareness	30	0	10	0	2	1
Management of H&S (Mandatory)	0	0	29	0	0	0
Manual Handling	59	6	37	1	9	0
Principles of Risk Assessment	1	2	15	0	0	0
Working at Height	21	2	0	2	3	0
Asbestos Awareness	0	0	11	0	0	0
Fire Risk Assessment	0	0	11	0	0	0
Albac Mat	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evac Chair	0	0	9	0	0	0
Total	503	87	475	40	136	49

Due to the coronavirus pandemic all face to face training was suspended however essential training took place online, using Microsoft Teams. Many of the e-learning courses have also been reviewed this year.



Key Performance Indicators

The following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were set in the 2020 – 2025 Health and Safety Strategy to monitor improvements in Health, Safety and Wellbeing across Leicestershire County Council. The table below details the performance of the council against the KPIs.

Annual Performance

No.	Key Performance Indicator	2020-2021 Performance
1	Improve health and safety compliance so that there is a 10% reduction in the number of major nonconformities identified in audits each year.	As no audits took place in 2020-21 there is no data for this KPI.
2	All audit report and action plans are developed within 5 working days from the completion of the audit.	As no audits took place in 2020-21 there is no data for this KPI.
3	Achieve a 10% reduction in workplace accidents resulting in injury year on year.	A 52% reduction in injuries was observed this year, however due to the pandemic many services were closed for much of the year.
4	A 10% reduction in RIDDOR reported incidents year on year	A 39% reduction in RIDDOR reportable incidents was observed this year, however due to the pandemic many services were closed for much of the year.
5	All accidents / incidents which are RIDDOR reportable will be subject to an accident investigation.	100%
6	To achieve a 10% increase in the number of Managers trained in Health and Safety.	At the time of putting this report together this data was unavailable. This will be monitoring going forward.



Wellbeing Activity

The Wellbeing Service annual report can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

The data below is in relation to the usage of the internal Wellbeing Service (Counselling Sessions).

Department	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
	New referrals	No. of Sessions	New referrals	No. of Sessions	New referrals	No. of Sessions	New referrals	No. of Sessions
Adults and Communities	4	110	11	110	12	136	15	117
Chief Executives	0	6	2	12	1	19	1	24
Children and Family Service LA Schools	5	135	5	80	9	81	9	52
Children and Family Service Non Schools	4	186	10	108	11	140	7	143
Corporate Resources	0	84	11	74	9	122	5	123
Environment and Transport	5	53	1	41	3	32	4	42
Public Health	0	13	2	8	0	22	4	13
Non-Declared	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
ESPO	0	7	2	2	0	22	1	3
Traded	11	105	16	98	14	111	19	117
Totals	29	700	60	533	59	685	65	634

Overview	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Total new referrals	247	304	320	213
Total sessions	1018	2183	3084	2552

33% reduction in number of referrals compared to 2019/20

17% reduction in number of sessions compared to 2019/20

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The overall usage of the EAP service has **reduced by 1.6%**.

Service Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Legal & Information	12	7	6	5	30
Management support	0	0	0	1	1
Career coaching	0	1	0	0	1
Emotional support	26	22	19	21	88
Total	38	30	25	27	120



Recent and Forthcoming Changes

Managers and staff within the Department are advised to be aware of the recent HSE safety alerts that could impact on service delivery.

Brexit

Some health and safety rules and procedures have changed for some industries. There are some new rules and procedures in relation to chemicals, civil explosives and work equipment and machinery in our domestic market.

UKCA marking

New products may not be placed on the UK market unless they fully meet the requirements of all product legislation relevant to the product. UKCA marking (and CE marking up to 31st December 2021), which is a sign of compliance, is required in most cases, as well as product labelling indicating the relevant economic operator(s). Manufacturers may only affix the UKCA marking when all the requirements of all UK product supply legislation applicable to the product have been met.

ISO 45001

ISO 45001 has replaced OHSAS 18001 certifications as the new international standard for the management of occupational health and safety. ISO 45001 focuses on the same core issue as OHSAS 18001, which is to reduce occupational injuries and make organisations a safe and secure place for employees to work. Like other ISO standards, ISO 45001 uses a structured framework to integrate policies, processes, and controls.

Throughout 2020 the HS&W team were devising health and safety management system guidance which complied with ISO 45001. The HS&W team's management system was externally audited in April 2021. The migration audit took place over 2 days. The auditor noted in the report that 'many areas of the management system audited were deemed best practice resulting in no finding being raised.' As a result, the team were successful in achieving ISO 45001:2018 certification. ISO 45001 guidance documents have been published on the intranet, training resources for managers are also available. The HS&W team will continue to support managers in embedding ISO 45001 into their processes and procedures.



Fire Safety Bill

The Fire Safety Bill was introduced to amend the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. It aims to make it clearer where responsibility for fire safety lies in buildings containing more than one home.

The bill will amend the Fire Safety Order 2005 to clarify that the responsible person or duty-holder for multi-occupied, residential buildings must manage and reduce the risk of fire for:

- the structure and external walls of the building, including cladding, balconies, and windows
- entrance doors to individual flats that open into common parts

Building Safety Regulator Bill

The Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has published the draft Building Safety Regulator Bill ahead of pre-legislative scrutiny, in which HSE is formally named as the new regulator.



The government has asked HSE to establish a new building safety regulator in the wake of the Grenfell Tower disaster and following recommendations in the 'Building a Safer Future' report by Dame Judith Hackitt.

The new regulator will oversee the safe design, construction, and occupation of high-risk buildings so that residents are safe and feel safe. It will be independent and give expert advice to local regulators, landlords and building owners, the construction and building design industry, and to residents.

Guidance and Information

The HS&W Service have been actively engaged in reviewing all the Council's policy and guidance documents available on the Intranet and developing further guidance. This ensures that the policy and guidance given to Managers remains relevant, concise, and appropriate to the changing circumstances of the Authority. The following table outlines the policies that have been reviewed or developed within the 2020/21 financial year and those that are planned for review during the next. Managers are advised to ensure that they are familiar with those that are applicable to their operations.

New Guidance Documents 2020 / 2021	Reviewed Guidance Documents 2020 / 2021	Documents to review in 2021 / 2022
How to guides - Work station exercises	Blood Borne Viruses & Needlestick Injuries	Use of car seat belts and restraint systems
How to guides - PEEP	Stress Management in the Workplace	Working at Height
How to guides - Administer First aid CV 19	Glazing	Microwave guidance
COVID RIDDOR guidance	Winter Gritting and Snow Clearing	Confined spaces
Manual Handling	Driver and Vehicle Safety Policy	
How to guides - Work from Home	Electrical Safety	
How to guides - PPE for first aid CV 19	Fire Safety Guidance	
LOLER	Driving in adverse and hot weather	
Whole Body Vibration	Asbestos Management Plan	
How to guides - Ventilation CV19	Infection Prevention and Control	
How to guides - Face Coverings CV19	Display Screen Equipment	
COVID Response Procedure		
Electrical pre use checks		
How to guides - Report an Incident		
How to guide - Risk assessment		
Near Miss poster		



Workstation poster		
Abuse poster		
DSE System flow chart		
PPE Waste Guidance – CV19		
Guidance for Vehicle Sharing		
How to Safely Lift a Load		
How to Carry Out Pre-Use Checks		

Conclusion

This report has shown that the number of injuries reported by the Council has reduced by 52% compared to the previous year, which is a considerable drop that can be attributed to the coronavirus pandemic. Furthermore, the number of RIDDOR reportable incidents has reduced by 39%.

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team have seen an increase in awareness and understanding of health and safety, in particular infection control and the importance of risk assessment. The service has seen engagement from teams that pre pandemic, there was little engagement from requesting support in writing risk assessments and requesting advice.

As a result of the pandemic, safety while home and flexible working has become increasingly important. During the pandemic, with support from the Communications and Digital Team, information about home worker safety has been shared with staff. The £200 equipment allowance scheme has helped to ensure staff have the correct equipment at home. The new DSE/Home Worker Assessment system was launched in April 2021, which is a replacement to an outsourced system (Shine). The new system will support future ways of working as it incorporate home and flexible working questions to help ensure staff are working in safe environments.

The HS&W team are in the process of adapting the health and safety training package. The team have been developing a new 'blended' style Management of Health and Safety training course which will incorporate e-learning and online training. The team acknowledges that online training is not suitable for all groups, therefore the team have continued to carry out face to face training when it has been safe to do so. This blended style of training will continue into 2021-22.

Work related to COVID 19 is likely to continue to be a priority for the team in 2021-22, however other priorities for the year ahead include;

- Working towards meeting the KPI's set within the H&S Strategy
- Supporting and delivering various wellbeing initiatives
- Carrying out health and safety audits and inspections



- Developing and reviewing H&S guidance
- Working towards the objectives set in each departmental action plan, including increasing awareness of near miss reporting and accident investigation
- Reviewing H&S training courses and developing new courses
- Supporting the Ways of Working programme on health and safety related aspects

Contact Us: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service

Health Safety and Wellbeing Duty Officer (0116 305 5515)

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Appendix 1 The Wellbeing Service Annual Report

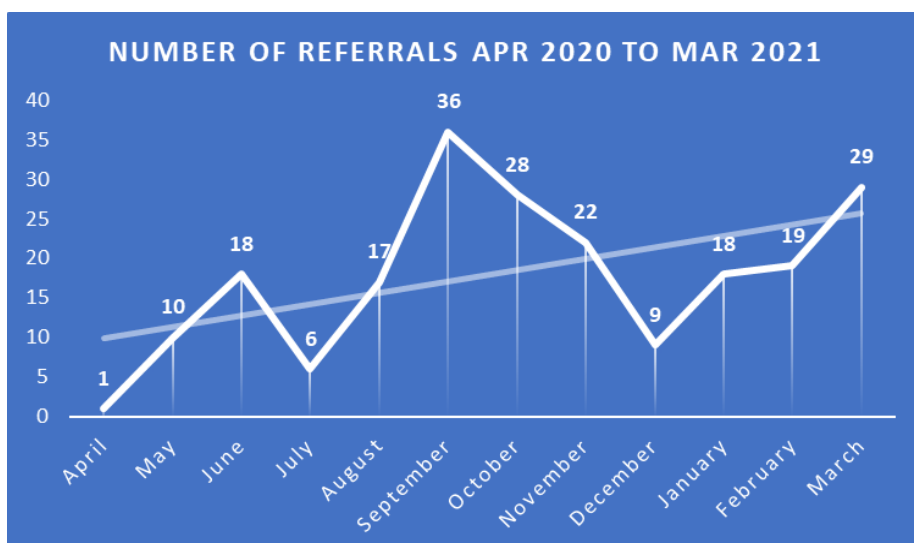
REFERRALS

The Well-Being service received a total of **213 referrals** (85% female and 15% male) from April 2020 to March 2021. Due to the unusual circumstances relating to the pandemic, the number of referrals was significantly lower than the previous year and this meant that the service was able to reduce the waiting list from several months for non-priority cases, down to several weeks.

Over the year, the service offered **2538 individual support sessions**, which was like the previous year, however, the way these sessions were delivered changed. The service offered 2205 sessions via telephone or Microsoft Teams video and 333 face-to-face sessions.

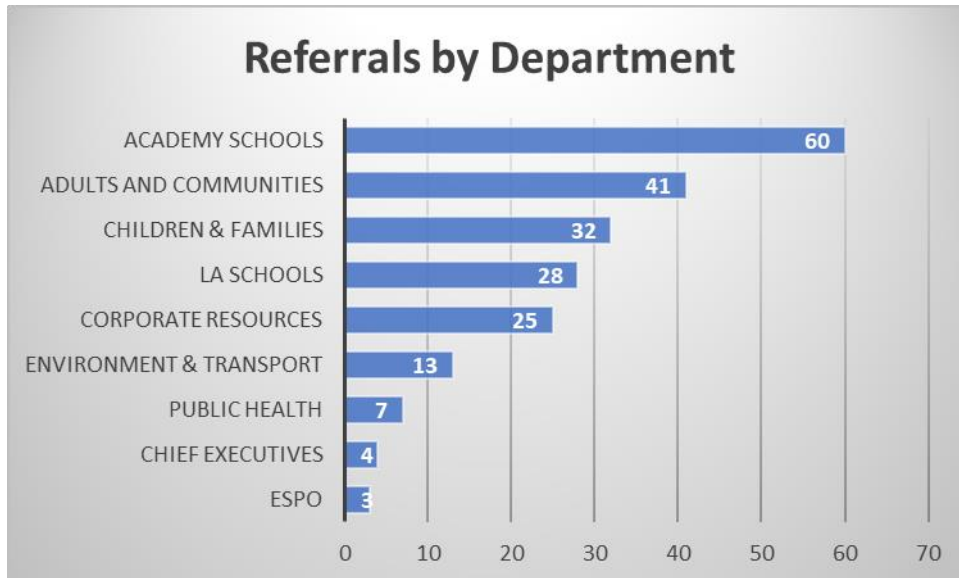
The team adapted quickly to a different way of working to ensure that clients continued to be supported through a very challenging period. Although face-to-face sessions were cancelled for a short period during the initial lockdown, safety measures were quickly put in place to facilitate face-to-face counselling for those in need or at risk. Due to Covid restrictions, the team did not deliver any training courses.

The following graph shows the pattern of referrals over the year. It should be noted that the service only accepted emergency referrals, for a 5-week period, following the initial Covid-19 lockdown in April 2020.



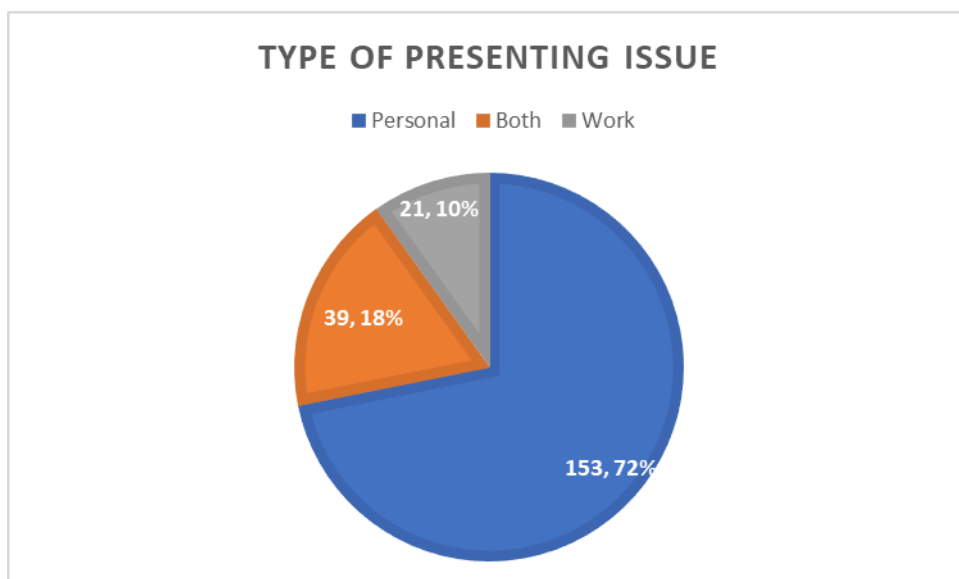


When looking at referrals by department, the pattern was very similar to the previous two years. The well-being service received the most referrals from 'Academy Schools', followed by 'Adults and Communities', 'Children and Families' and 'LA Schools'. Mirroring previous trends, 'Public Health', 'Chief Executives' and 'ESPO' referred the least.



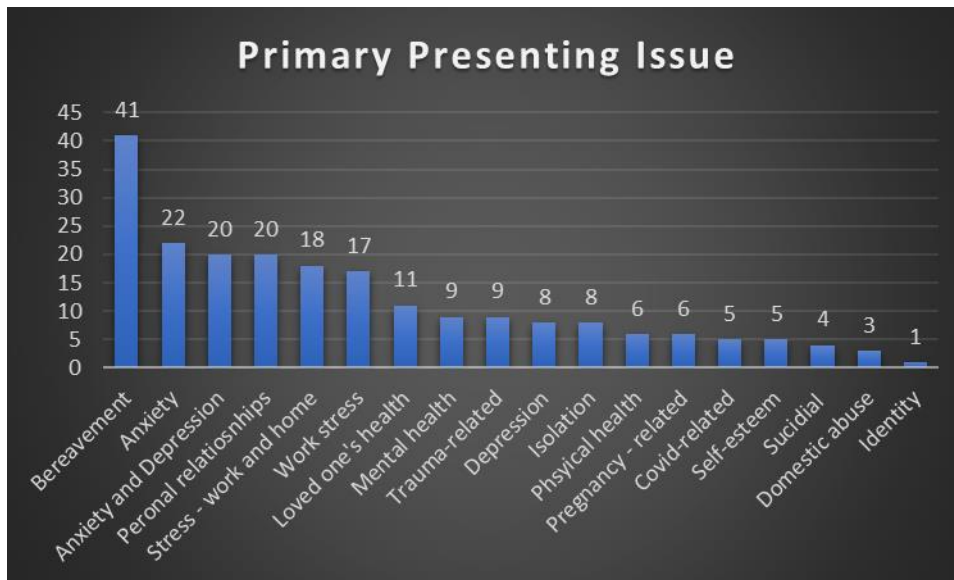
PRESENTING ISSUES

The referrals consisted of employees presenting with personal issues; work issues and a combination of both work and personal, (as shown in the graph below). The number of individuals referring for personal issues (153) remained stable when compared to last year's figure (168). However, following the shift to working at home, there was a significant drop in the numbers presenting with work-related or both home and work-related issues. Only 28% of clients mentioned a work-related issue at point of referral, compared to 47% last year.





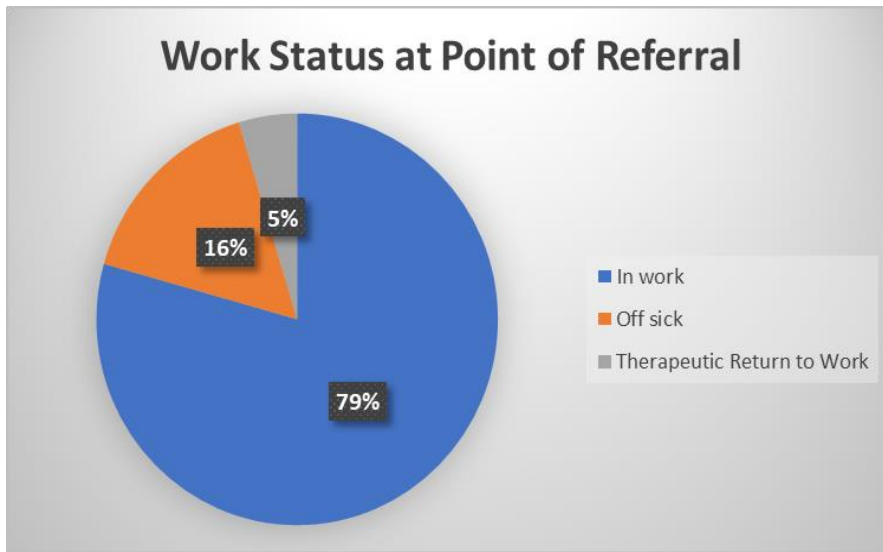
The referrals consisted of a range of different presenting issues and whilst employees often described lots of different factors affecting their well-being, the most common primary presenting issues were: bereavement; anxiety; a mixture of anxiety and depression; personal relationships and a combination of work and home stress, (see chart below). Some clients also presented with covid-related issues and isolation, because of the lockdown and homeworking.



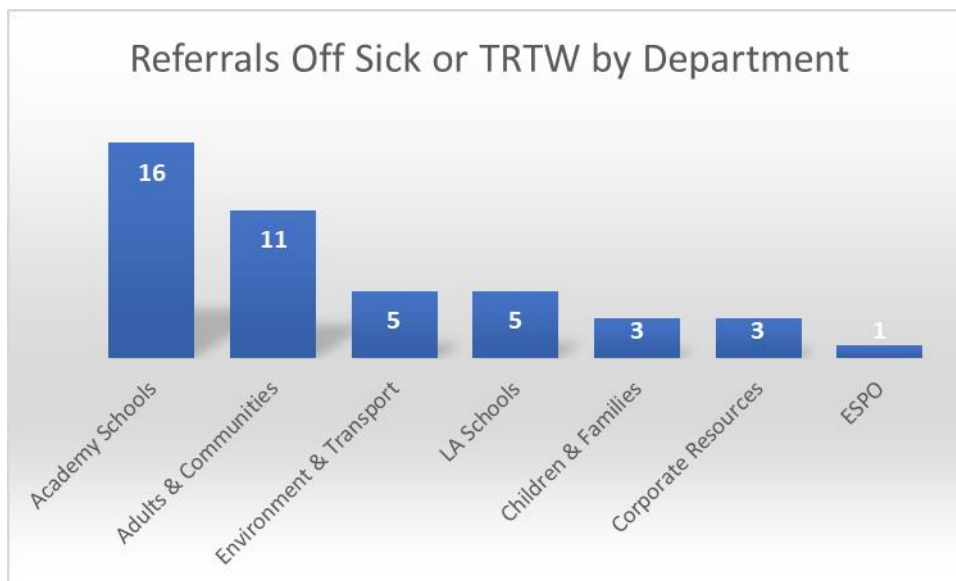
Over the year, 24 referrals (11%) were considered as priority, and were escalated to the top of the waiting list. These were cases that presented with risk concerns such as suicidal ideation, safeguarding issues or in need of immediate intervention. It should be noted that there was a significant reduction in the numbers presenting with suicidal ideation (4), when compared to the previous year (24).

WORK STATUS

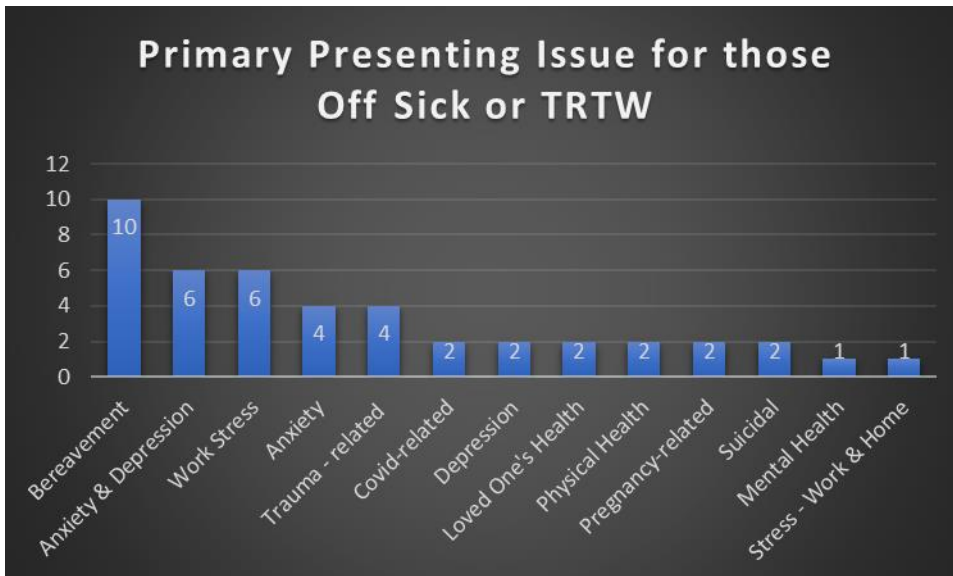
Whilst 79% of referrals came from employees who were attending work, 21% were received from individuals either absent from work due to sickness or undergoing a therapeutic return to work (TRTW), see chart below. This breakdown has remained stable for the past 2 years.



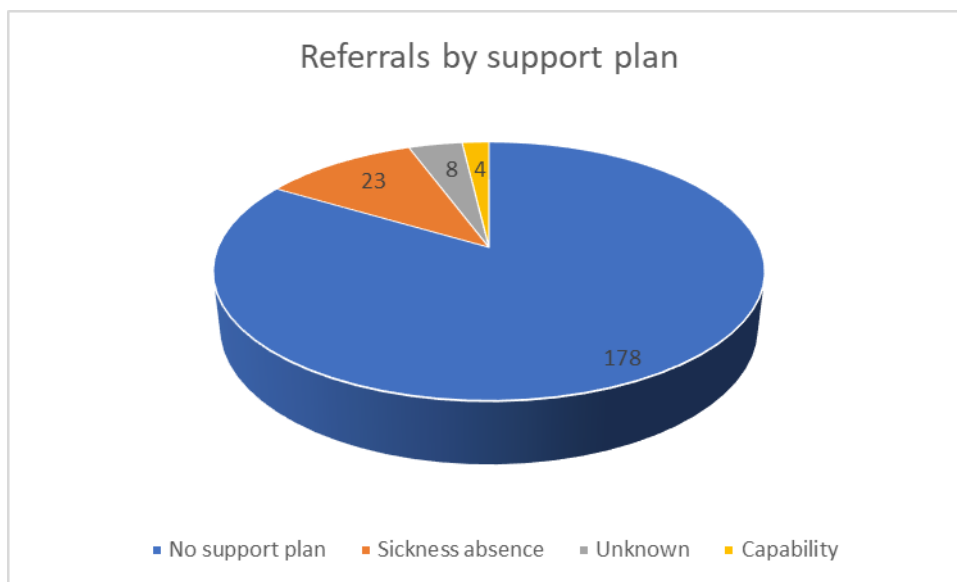
Of the 44 referrals that were either 'Off Sick' or on a 'Therapeutic Return to Work' (TRTW), 89% were women and 11% men, from the following departments.



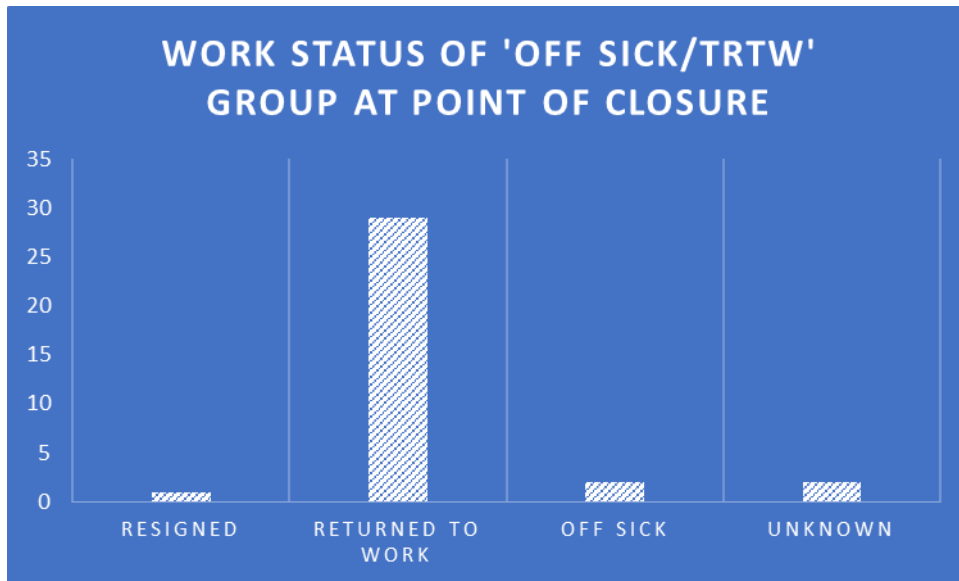
The main presenting issues for this group were '*Bereavement*'; (23%); '*Anxiety/Anxiety & Depression*' (23%) and '*Work Stress*' (14%), as shown in the chart below. All these issues have been identified as areas where further interventions may be of use and the team are working to develop additional online resources to support the counselling offer.



12.6 percent (n = 27) of referrals reported that they were subject to a monitoring or support plan at point of referral, (see chart below). The well-being service has a policy of escalating clients to the top of the waiting list if they are at risk of dismissal. The service plays a crucial role in supporting clients to get back to work following a period of sickness and to remain in work during challenging periods, when they may be experiencing stress at home and/or work.



Of the 44 cases that were off sick or on a TRTW at the point of referral, 34 had been closed at the end of the financial year. Within this group of closed cases, the work status of 2 clients was unknown, 1 person handed in their resignation, 2 remained off sick and the remaining 29 had returned to work.



INTERVENTIONS

The core work of the Well-being service remains individual counselling and this offer is valued by employees as a confidential space to explore both work and personal issues and concerns. Although a waiting list is in operation, this has been significantly shortened, and response times are much faster than other equivalent community services. During periods of high demand, the wait times will lengthen as the service prides itself on offering a quality support service that employees can rely on.

Due to Covid restrictions, the Well-being service was unable to offer the normal range of interventions, however, a member of the team continued to offer a Menopause clinic to provide advice and support to employees experiencing any menopause-related issues.

Other new initiatives have also been developed. The team felt that there was a gap in service provision for employees that wanted to talk to a well-being advisor, but not necessarily access regular counselling sessions. In response to this need, *Pause to Talk* sessions are now available. These half hour telephone/video slots are made available on a weekly basis and are open to anyone that feels they would benefit from having a one-off chat to a counsellor. They are open to all employees that want to talk through a concern; MHFAs that require a little advice or support in their role and managers that may be concerned about the welfare of a staff member. This means that staff can talk to someone relatively quickly, saving time on transitioning through the usual referral and assessment route.

In response to an increase in referrals presenting with bereavement issues, the Well-being Service has developed an online course that can be accessed via the Learning hub. This course is made up of different modules and employees can access the parts that feel relevant to them. The course supports employees to understand the process of grief and touches on the issue of suicide. It is helpful for those affected by bereavement and employees seeking to understand and support someone else through their grief.

As a result of the first National lockdown, the Well-being service was forced to cease delivery of the 6-week Mindfulness Now programme. The service recently offered, to those who had not been able to complete the modules, an opportunity to finish the programme via Microsoft Teams, with a view to continuing the



programme in this format. Unfortunately, the team felt that, due to issues around confidentiality and the need to manage the group's emotional well-being, Microsoft Teams was not an appropriate platform. Steps are currently being taken to resume this course at County Hall, in a space that allows for safe practice.

The well-being service includes a therapist trained in Restorative Practice. This is a whole team approach, focusing on perspective taking, strengths and an exploration of systems that may be impacting on well-being. Members of a team are invited to work collectively to address any issues they may be having. The process is tailored to unique teams and seeks to identify areas of need and find ways of moving forward.

At the start of 2021, a pilot project was completed with a team in the Children and Families department, triggered by a manager's concern about the impact of the pandemic on the team's well-being. The therapist found that whilst the team had been expected to change their practice, they were resilient and felt supported and valued by management. The team recognised that the challenges they were experiencing were organisational issues, outside their own control and that of their direct line manager. They also recognised that they had been offered tools to improve their well-being and were not necessarily making use of these. The therapist expressed a willingness to repeat this practice in other teams to ascertain whether the organisational issues are a common theme that could be explored further.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

The well-being service has a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to offer the client a face-to-face assessment appointment within 28 days of receiving their referral. To ensure client safety this year, all initial assessments were offered via telephone or Microsoft Teams. Excluding 1 referral that dropped out prior to assessment and 1 referral that requested a later assessment date, the team met the KPI target 100% of the time. Most clients were assessed within 1 – 3 weeks of submitting their referral.

MOVING FORWARD

Over the following year, the team plan to develop online resources to support employees experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as providing education for those that wish to understand more about these issues. We hope to re-launch the 6-week Mindfulness Now programme and advertise this course to reach a wide audience.

The current Well-being team lacks diversity and does not currently represent the workforce in relation to gender, ethnicity, or sexuality. There is a need for the service to reflect on issues of diversity and take steps to address any barriers individual employees may perceive or experience when considering or attempting to access the service.

At present, the Well-being service offers a placement to one trainee therapist, who is currently working remotely and supervised by one of the team's qualified therapists. Trainees are a valuable resource and offer consistent support to the team. It has been identified that they would benefit from being able to access in-house training and have a sense of being more integrated into the organisation. The service is currently looking to offer further trainee placements.



SURVEY FEEDBACK

The service had an overwhelmingly positive response from the client experience survey. Here are a few snippets of what employees had to say:

It was easy to self-refer and I was contacted quickly. The assessment process was thorough, and I was given clear information about what to expect.

My whole experience was great, I can't recommend it enough. My sessions have really helped to release emotional stress at a time that I needed it. I feel like I've dealt with things appropriately by talking things through and am now ready for the future.

The service has been amazing. I honestly was at rock bottom when I started, I didn't have any hope for any improvement in my grieving process and didn't see a way forward. My counsellor was sympathetic, but firm and honest and helped me gain the tools to move forward from a very dark period in my life. Thank you.

It has really helped me in my personal development, and I feel I have gained the tools to cope with my anxiety.

I have received an exceptional service from beginning to end. I felt listened to, valued, and cared about. My thoughts were gently and appropriately challenged with fantastic advice on overcoming negative thoughts.

I think we are so lucky to have this in house when so many organisations choose to rely solely on their EAP.

I think talking about things, even if you feel like you don't need to at the time, is so helpful and therapeutic. Having someone to listen, understand and help you see different perspectives is priceless.

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