

NHS Case Study: Supporting Staff Wellbeing and Organisational Culture with Self-Compassion



Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Organisation:
Warrington and Halton
Teaching Hospitals NHS
Foundation Trust



Participants:
Staff across the Trust



Commission:
500 places on the
Self-Compassion at Work
Programme

Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was an NHS provider serving a population of over 300,000 people in the North-West of England.

Over 4,000 staff worked across two sites and the Trust provided around half a million appointments, procedures and hospital stays each year. Its mission was to be outstanding for its patients, communities and each other.

Creating Compassion was commissioned to provide **500 places on its online Self-Compassion at Work Programme** (the Programme) to Trust staff. The Programme was made available to staff across the Trust, who could access it flexibly at a time and pace that suited them.

Rebecca Patel, who was Associate Chief People Officer at the Trust at the time, said about the Programme:

“ Having the Self-Compassion at Work programme has enabled the hospital to have a renewed focus on wellbeing and compassion at arguably the most challenging period in the NHS's history. The programme has provided opportunities for staff who would not normally access these types of programmes to learn at a pace to suit themselves and to make positive changes to our organisational culture. ”

The Challenge

Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provided a wide range of services, from A&E to vascular surgery, across its hospital sites and in the local community. The Trust was operating in a significantly challenging environment, with increased pressure and additional workloads making staff more inclined to neglect their own emotional and wellbeing needs.

The Trust was seeking an easily accessible, cost-effective solution to support the psychological wellbeing of its staff and help build a more supportive organisational culture. It was important that any solution did not impact significantly on work or personal time but could be embedded into day-to-day activities. Having considered a range of services, the Trust decided that the Self-Compassion at Work Programme provided a valuable solution.

The Solution

International research evidence shows that developing self-compassion is associated with a range of psychological benefits, including greater emotional resilience and wellbeing and lower levels of stress and burnout. This is particularly relevant in healthcare, where staff work in inherently demanding environments while seeking to provide high-quality, compassionate care.

The Self-Compassion at Work Programme is an evidence-based online intervention that provides a grounding in the theory and practice of self-compassion. It includes four webinars alongside reflective and experiential activities, practical exercises and resources designed to help participants develop and embed self-compassion in everyday working life.

The Programme was evaluated in a peer-reviewed randomised waitlist control trial involving 190 professionals, which found significant improvements in self-compassion and mental wellbeing and significant reductions in perceived stress and burnout.

Creating Compassion provided access to the online Programme together with organisation-specific briefing materials that enabled the Trust's Human Resources team to promote the Programme as part of its Health and Wellbeing offer. Places were available to staff at any level and in any role.

Reported Impact

Following the introduction of the Programme, the Trust reported:

- A renewed focus on health and wellbeing across the Trust, with large numbers of staff accessing the Programme.
- Staff have said the Programme opened their eyes to how critical they are of themselves and helped them to pause and reflect differently in those instances.
- Staff have felt more confident to focus on their own resilience and found the Programme's exercises useful to draw upon as coping mechanisms.
- Participants commented that they have felt less overwhelmed by their emotions and have been able to react differently as a result.
- Staff have felt able to better support their colleagues.

More information

For further information about the Self-Compassion at Work Programme please visit: [Self-Compassion](#)

Organisational note: Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust became North Cheshire and Mersey NHS Foundation Trust in April 2026 following the acquisition of Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.