

Mental Health First Aid

Background

The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) programme was funded by Leeds Hospitals Charity in 2021 as part of a large campaign to support staff wellbeing. The funding was for a period of two years to train staff members to deliver MHFA to staff across the Trust.

Almost four years on, the health and wellbeing team now have four MHFA Instructors and 800 MHFAiders across the entire Trust.

Our instructors have supported various organisations to train mental health first aiders such as Leeds Community Healthcare, HEE and smaller organisations within the Leeds Health and Social sector.

Proposal

Delivery of the two day MHFA course to embed support within your organisation, supporting the needs of your workforce with early intervention for their mental wellbeing.

Training and Support will be provided.

Benefits of MHFA in practice

We have a positive spread of MHFAiders across the CSUs as shown in figure 1. We can also see that those MHFAiders are actively having conversations as shown in figure 2. A total of 9687 contacts have been made from June 2021-April 2024.

Figure 1 – MHFA by CSU

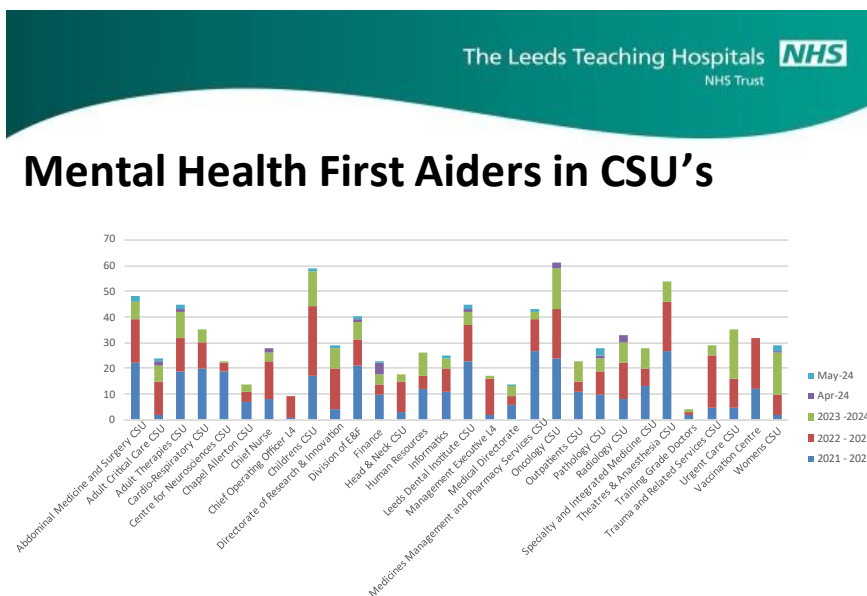
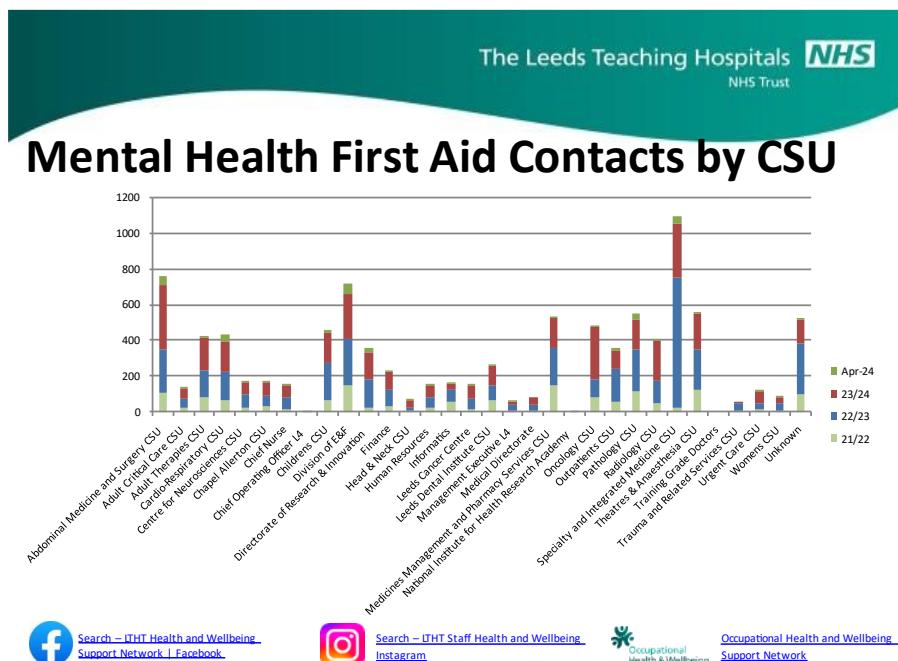


Figure 2 – MHFA Contacts



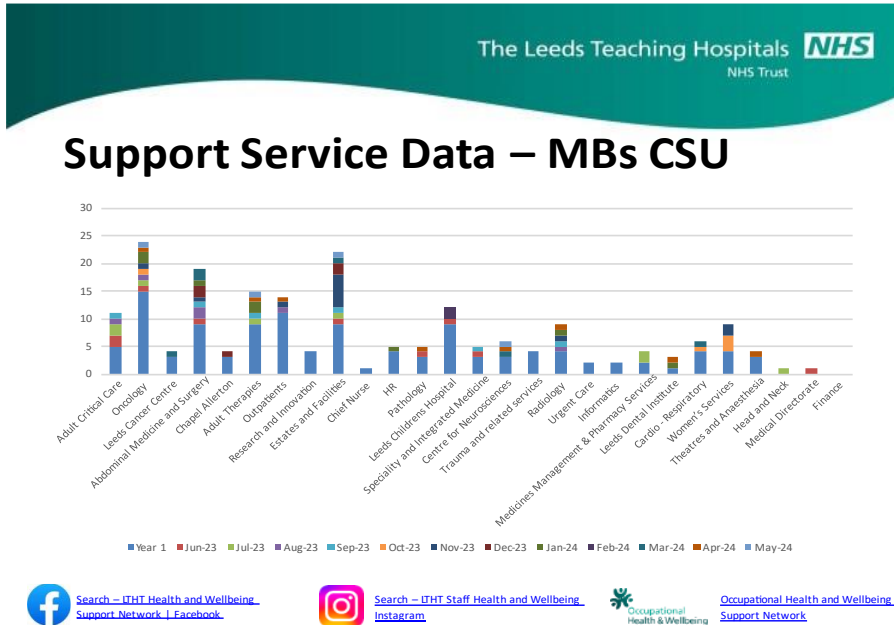
We can also demonstrate in figure 3 that staff are being signposted effectively with more early intervention to services such as Money Buddies.

Figure 3 - Signposting



We can see the trend in figure 4 that those CSUs with high numbers of MHFAiders are using Money Buddies such as Abdominal Medicine and Surgery, Children’s and Estates and Facilities.

Figure 4 - Money Buddies



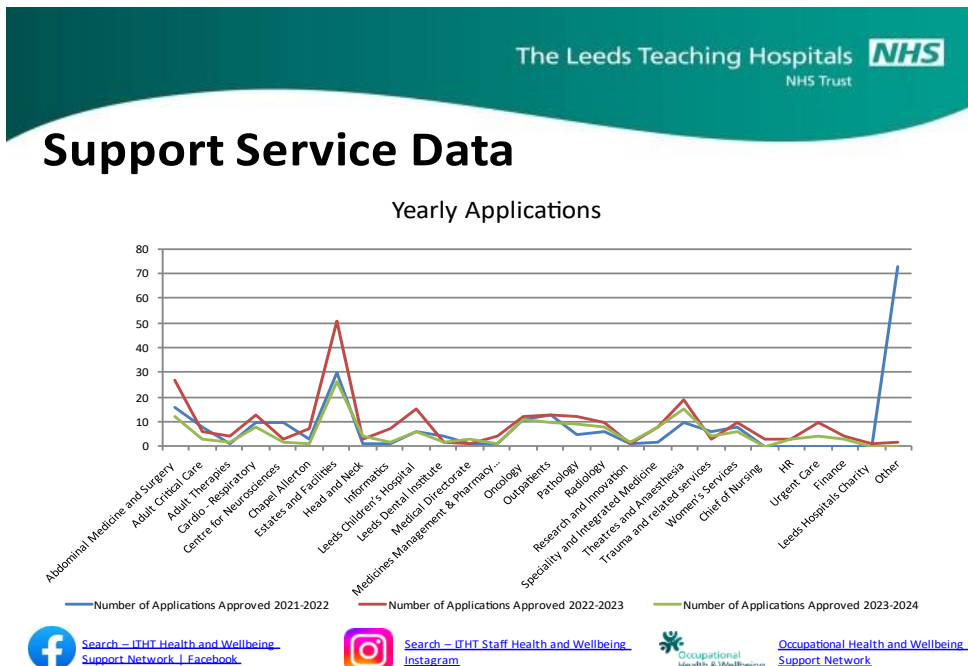
[Search – ITH Health and Wellbeing Support Network | Facebook](#)

[Search – ITH Staff Health and Wellbeing Instagram](#)

[Occupational Health and Wellbeing Support Network](#)

This is also reflected within the Employee Support Fund applications in figure 5.

Figure 5 – ESF Applications



[Search – ITH Health and Wellbeing Support Network | Facebook](#)

[Search – ITH Staff Health and Wellbeing Instagram](#)

[Occupational Health and Wellbeing Support Network](#)

Additional Benefits

At any one time one in four people will be experiencing depression, anxiety or issues relating to stress (Mind, 2020). We understand the importance of our workforce having access to a Mental Health First Aiders.

Poor mental health costs UK employers up to £56 billion each year. But for every £1 spent by employers on mental health interventions, they get back £5.30 in reduced absence, presenteeism, and staff turnover ([Deloitte, 2022](#)).

Embedding MHFA training within any organisation or community also encourages people to talk more freely about mental health, reducing stigma and creating a more positive culture.

Mental Health First Aiders are trained to:

- Spot the early signs and symptoms of mental ill health
- Start a supportive conversation with a colleague who may be experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress
- Listen to the person non-judgementally
- Assess the risk of suicide or self-harm
- Encourage the person to access appropriate professional support or self-help strategies. This might include encouraging access to internal support systems such as EAPs or in-house counselling services
- Escalate to the appropriate emergency services, if necessary
- Maintain confidentiality as appropriate
- Complete critical incident documents as and when necessary
- Protect themselves while performing their role

Mental Health First Aiders will:

- Listen
- Provide a supportive environment in which to discuss mental Health issues
- Support those seeking advice in making decisions that are right for them and their situation
- Provide information on the options available and refer the individual on to another support mechanism
- Attend training in relation to the role
- Attend regular meetings with the Mental Health First Aid lead to share experience and good practice
- Attend supervision when appropriate

External testimonials

The Mental Health First Aiders programme has had a profound impact on those who have attended, with the large majority reporting that they felt more confident to share their increased health and wellbeing knowledge in their own teams at work, as well as with family members and in some cases,

within their own communities. By disseminating health information and fostering health behaviours at the community level, the programme can contribute to overall public health improvement, which is an unexpected but positive outcome.

The Leeds Health and Care Academy

“I felt empowered to carry out this role and feel confident in offering support and knowing where I can find the tools to help others”

Mental Health First Aider