

Healthy Minds Network

The network has gone from strength to strength during the pandemic. We have taken all our face-to-face sessions onto teams delivering sessions twice a month covering various themes associated with positive mental health. These have included for example sleep and mental health, OCD awareness (during OCD awareness week), food and mood (what food does to your mental health) and how to stay healthy in both body and mind among many more.

To compliment this work, we also have an active Facebook group with over 350 members both office based and frontline. Also, so that nobody has to miss a session we have been recording the sessions to the Leeds city council Facebook page for people to watch at their leisure. Some sessions have been attracting over 1000 views which is amazing.

We have also been working closely with the occupational health team to deliver sessions through our men's / women's health workshops that have been greatly attended. These sessions are on different topics each month in line with the public health calendar.

At the start of the pandemic, having listened to staff, we set up coffee and chat events, laugh and giggle sessions designed to give people the chance to come away from work for an hour and have informal discussion, as we were finding that people were lonely working from home, and this helped immensely. This work also included targeted front line sessions scheduled at a time convenient for the services.

We also have in place weekly 'how are you feeling' sessions which have been a lifeline for some people during this time and is well attended. We also have a 'how you feeling' session for managers' twice a month.

A new starter social group has been created for those joining the Council during the pandemic. A place to come together and meet others within the Council who had started but didn't know anyone.

We also have a monthly newsletter that goes out across the organisation letting people know what's happening and what sessions are on for the next month.

We also held an online 'healthy minds event' this year where Tom Riordan opened the proceedings following which we had a full day of speakers. More than 100 people attended this event for mental health awareness day.

The current position of the network is strong with an effective and active team. We are now planning for 2022 and envisage that next year's sessions will be better this year with more people accessing the extensive support and guidance available.

A key future challenge of the network is to address the request to undertake some face to face sessions, as following a survey, this was a theme that came out. We will be trying to do some hybrid sessions also within our plan of action.

All in all, I think the future for the healthy minds network looks really positive and I am very excited about the opportunities ahead and carrying on the amazing work through 2022.