WARRINGTON AND HALTON HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
INTRODUCING FINANCIAL WELLBEING IN REWARD

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

- Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (WHH) serves a population of around 500,000 across Warrington, Runcorn, Widnes and the surrounding areas.
- The trust employs approximately 4,200 staff and works across two sites with three hospitals.

THE CHALLENGE

Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (WHH) is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of its staff and has been delivering financial wellbeing courses as part of its healthy worker programme and preceptorship nurse training.

WHH’s stress and mental health wellbeing group analysed sickness absence data and found that a high percentage of stress related absence is due to, or compounded by, personal money worries. Occupational health reporting also shows a strong correlation between staff wellbeing and personal financial matters. The trust receives staff queries about financial support and requests for pay advances. Local trade union colleagues have also approached the trust for financial support for members.

As a result, the trust wanted to explore what more they could do to help staff with personal finances and decided to introduce financial wellbeing products and services as part of its reward offer.
WHAT THEY’VE DONE

WHH explored the services offered by Neyber to see if they would suit the needs of its workforce. Neyber offers financial wellbeing products and resources to help build employee financial knowledge, confidence and resilience. This includes an employee platform offering financial education and affordable loans.

WHH’s staff engagement and wellbeing committee, consisting of manager and trade union and employee representatives, met with Neyber to discuss the services they offer. In line with the trust’s Fit to Care programme, the committee felt it was right to provide staff with alternatives to high interest pay day loans and decided to offer Neyber’s financial wellbeing services.

The range of resources and services Neyber offers are hosted through an online platform giving staff access outside of work. The platform includes:

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<tr>
<th>Articles on financial wellbeing</th>
<th>Real life customer experiences</th>
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<td>Tools and resources</td>
<td>Affordable borrowing</td>
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<td>Podcasts from Neyber</td>
<td>Downloadable resources</td>
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WHH’s engagement team worked to set up affordable borrowing plans through the payroll. Although there was an initial spike in administration, there is a relatively small proportion of staff using the product so administration costs have been absorbed. Agreements are made directly between the staff member and Neyber so WHH has no liability for loan repayments if a member of staff leaves the organisation. Reporting and auditing processes are in place to monitor uptake and leavers.

WHH launched the scheme through the following communication channels:

- payslip leaflet attachments
- staff benefits handbook
- health and wellbeing days/events
- awareness days focused on health and wellbeing
- social media
- team briefs
- induction.

CHALLENGES

WHH did not want the offer to encourage staff to take out loans and get into debt. By communicating the offer as financial wellbeing, education and resources alongside the affordable borrowing offer, they were confident they could address some of the issues identified in their occupational health and staff sickness absence data.

The trust’s finance and payroll teams worked together with Neyber to overcome challenges with financial systems so loan repayments could be made within agreed
timeframes. Staff loan repayments are transferred to Neyber immediately after each payroll run.

OUTCOMES

Statistics show that 5.5 per cent of WHH staff have taken out a loan with Neyber and more than 10 per cent of staff have accessed the Neyber financial wellbeing platform since it was launched. The platform allows the trust to signpost staff to tools and information about financial wellbeing, education and affordable loans.

NEXT STEPS

The trust is carrying out monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the financial wellbeing offer through sickness absence and occupational health data. There are plans to expand the number of financial wellbeing courses offered through Neyber. WHH is also exploring the feasibility of a savings scheme through payroll deductions.

TOP TIPS

- Understand what your workforce needs by using evidence and data.
- Engage key stakeholders including employees, trade union colleagues and senior management.
- Make sure you understand the detail so you can explain the key points to other stakeholders for example that there is no liability for loans should staff leave your organisation.
- Be prepared for an initial increase in administration after the launch or promotion of the scheme.
- Work closely with finance colleagues to ensure systems can facilitate payments to your provider.
- Ensure ongoing staff communication plans are in place.
- Evaluate your offer to ensure it is valued by staff.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more details please contact Candice Ryan, head of communications and engagement at candice.ryan1f@nhs.net.

Find out more about reward in the NHS including the Total Reward Engagement Network through our reward web pages and view further case studies and tools in our reward resource library. Find out more about health and wellbeing through our web pages.

You can contact the reward team on 0113 306 3000 or by emailing us at reward@nhsemployers.org.