

Newcastle Occupational Health Service

Purpose: NewcastleOHS Performance Review 19th August 2022

Data Period 1st January 2022 to 22nd July 2022 – submission of papers 22nd July 2022

NHS People plan theme:

Responding to new challenges and opportunities

As we continue to adjust to the impacts of the COVID pandemic the Occupational Health service has now reset to meet the continued demands and requirements of the Trust. As a service we are fully integrated within the organisation and work within the patient services directorate. Our strategy is aligned to the national NHS People Plan, Integrated Care Board Strategy and the Trust Flourish principles.

We regularly link with regional colleagues in occupational health services and Chair the Occupational Health network meetings with the aim of sharing best current and a collective approach to new and emerging themes. This is in line with the NHS England GrowOH initiative as well as the Integrated Care Board (ICB) approach to collaborative working.

Nationally we are represented on the NHS Health at Work network and function as the Faculty of Occupational Medicine specialist adviser to NICE.



Looking after our people

Since our previous performance review in December 2021 the service has completed the seasonal 'Flu vaccination program in tandem with COVID booster/third dose vaccination. Planning for these vaccinations posed significant challenges as staffing across the organisation has been critical due to the impact of COVID 19 and associated sickness absence. The team drew upon substantial experience of delivering mass vaccination programs in the past whilst consulting with our regional and national peers to discuss options and possibilities. The well-lead steering group achieved a high quality and safe delivery model that has resulted in excellent uptake and service for staff.

Supporting our NHS people now and for the long term

The increased workload associated with COVID 19, and vaccinations has not impacted on the departmental functions and delivery of core services and service improvement.

- New initiatives and innovations

Rapid deployment to other meaningful work

This is particularly key in the current circumstance of supporting the organisation through extreme staffing pressures. Integration of the service within the organisation and attendance of key senior operational and

strategic meetings, has enabled implement immediate strategies to assist in supporting staff at work and returning to work including other meaningful work through deployment. Clinicians explore all options for staff returning to work at the earliest opportunity and work with human resources colleagues by signposting to the deployment hub for remote working and support for alternative directorates.

Management reports bespoke to referral

In July 2021, the team reviewed the management referral process and content of reports based on feedback gathered from our service users. A number of aspects have been reviewed; however, a key theme emerged regarding responses to specific questions outlined in referrals by managers. As a result, a series of sessions with clinicians took place in place to discuss in groups and 1-1 settings regarding this feedback and to review/update training for this aspect of the service. This has resulted in an action for report writing to enhance the OHS reports with excerpts from the referral and specific clinician responses to assist the referring manager and support the staff member. An audit and feedback gathering process is in place and a planned feedback survey in August 2022 will review the impact.

Brief interventions and self help

Joint decision making in health care is essential in promoting improved health outcomes for all. To further enhance the management referral process frequent referral reasons such as mental health, back pain, bereavement, and skin issues are now supplemented with a rapid 'brief information pack' to provide material to both individual and the manager prior to the consultation. This has been highly valued and often results in early access of resources such as the ICS health and wellbeing hub.

Duty Physiotherapy Role – The team have developed a prioritisation system and developed the role of "Duty Physiotherapy Role". This has involved creating protected time in daily diaries to call high priority referrals on the same day or on the next day. An evaluation of this service improvement has identified that 84% of high priority referrals were seen within 2 days of receiving the referral and 98% within 3 days. Early analysis also demonstrated that 96% of staff who accessed high priority appointments were either able to remain at work or return to work with support of adjustments suggested.

Newcastle OHS Post COVID Service

Recovery and rehabilitation for those experiencing ongoing significant symptoms post COVID-19 infection has been an emergent concern for those working in the NHS. NewcastleOHS bid for charitable funds to support the provision of a comprehensive COVID-19 recovery and rehabilitation support programme.

Belonging in the NHS, New ways of working and delivering care, Growing for the future





The clinical medical team has worked with sessional occupational physicians from General Practice. This has been a long-standing arrangement, however, has proved successful in subsequent recruitment to postgraduate doctor in training posts (specialist training 3 WTE regionally). This has then grown a local network of NHS trained and appointed Consultants across the ICB, including NHS Gateshead, County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust. Two post graduate doctors training in occupational medicine are currently lead occupational physicians for North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS and County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust, respectively.

The physiotherapy team has expanded through secondment opportunities and is increasing the skill basis for management referral activity. Five physiotherapy student placements from University of Teesside and Northumbria University have worked in the team, with positive formal evaluations. In particular, the students reported the opportunity to develop and manage an independent caseload was highly valued.

A new post of Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (PWP) has added another dimension to the mental health team offer to staff. By expanding the range of mental health interventions available we will address some of the accessibility and potential inequalities that may exist for those employed in the Trust. The ambition is to include group work on specific subjects such as Uncertainty, Acceptance and Commitment training (ACT), and mindfulness. We have also recognised the significant impact of bereavement and neurodiversity in the current workforce and have developed bespoke interventions.

Working in partnership with Northumbria University and Sunderland University, we have established a student nurse placement in Occupational Health. We are working with the GrowOH program to seek support for a regional Occupational Health Nurse development program building on the skills and experience within the North East and North Cumbria ICB. Within OHS we have had 2 nurses successful in their specialist degree and anticipate new nurses participating in 2023. We have collaborated with Linda Tinkler to support our team to access the available funds for nurses and other allied healthcare professionals. Building on all of the above Newcastle OHS as a team has done well in the staff survey and is ambitious to support regional working and development.

Strategic aims for Newcastle Occupational Health Service – mapped to Integrated Care Board (ICB) strategy

			
1 Improve outcomes in population health and healthcare	2 Tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access	3 Enhance productivity and value for money	4 Help the NHS support broader social and economic development
<p>Continue to raise standards so services are high quality and delivered effectively making sure everyone has access to safe quality care whether in the community or in another setting.</p>	<p>Maximise the use of evidence-based tools, research, digital solutions and techniques to support our ambition to deliver better health and wellbeing outcomes in a way that meets the different needs of local people.</p>	<p>Working with partners in NHS, Social Care, and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations at scale on key strategic initiatives where it makes sense to do so. Harnessing our collective resources and expertise to invest wisely and make faster progress on improving health outcomes.</p>	<p>Focus on improving population health and well-being through tackling the wider socio-economic determinants of health that have an impact on the communities we serve.</p>

Actions to date to support these aims :

Through engagement with the service improvement models available in the Trust we have:

- Delivered efficient vaccination programmes – on commencement vaccinations, COVID-19, Influenza vaccinations, Smallpox vaccination
- Supported the working age population through self referral and management referral to a accredited occupational health practitioners
- Focused on accessibility of the service – implementing self-selection of appointments through innovative technology (Bookwhen/10to8)
- Updated and refreshed the OHS website to include easy access forms and information
- Worked collaboratively with our ICB OH partners to share best practice and reduce duplication to enhance cross organisational efficiency where possible eg. Sharp injury management and on commencement immunisation records and EPP status
- Innovated with workforce information specialists to implement robotic process automation (RPA) enabling accurate and timely updates to national immunisation databases
- Championed the Trust offers of support for staff including Citizens Advice helping hands, Togetherall™ and other Flourish initiatives
- Applied for funding from the Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) and NUTH charitable funds to expand the proof-of-concept project Healthcheck

Newcastle Occupational Health Service - mapped to Trust Flourish Principles

Newcastle Improvement

SEQOHS – successful full reaccreditation with no action points April 2022

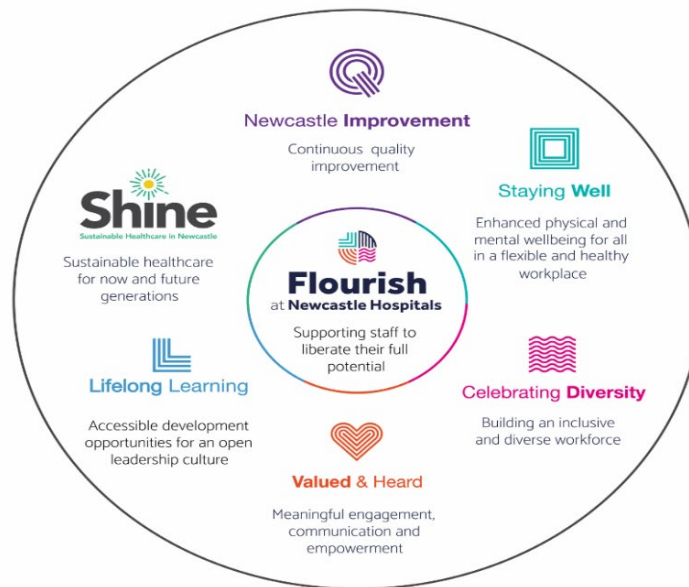
Attendance of update training by senior team November 2021.

"Thank you for providing the information for your annual renewal. Your evidence on Clinical Governance, feedback, audit, and the complaints process show continual monitoring and action plans and gives evidence of continued quality improvements.

I am satisfied that you continue to work to the standards as set by SEQOHS and congratulate you on your continuing commitment."

GMC training survey 2022 overall satisfaction level for clinical supervision 98%

Shine principles
Integrated into
team huddles



Staying Well
See staff
survey results
for the team

Celebrating Diversity
Integrated into the
recruitment process
using a diversity
champion on panels

Lifelong learning

- Participation in Trust strategic leaders program.
- Participation in GrowOH leadership programs.
- Completion of the Public Health Specialist qualification in Occupational Health -2 nurses
- Achieved PhD - clinical psychologist
- MSc Northumbria University - physiotherapist
- Regional post graduate doctors in specialist training – completion of specialist training and securing NHS Consultant posts
- Established student nurse development program within OHS with regional Universities

Valued and Heard

- Staff and referring managers feedback survey results
- 'What matters to you' conversations starting within the team - we plan to obtain feedback from our team both clinical and non-clinical regarding and specifically regarding their thoughts on service delivery and improvements

Activity Information

NewcastleOHS referrals by month with annual year on year comparison shows that pre COVID-19 pandemic, each month there has been an increase in the number of referrals from NUTH managers and human resources colleagues. From March 2020 the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an unprecedented number of referrals to Newcastle OHS. The spikes in referrals map to the waves of increase in COVID infection

	2019	2020	2021	2022						
				Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
NUTH	6861	20589	9114	1305	740	1119	874	723	559	402
EXTERNAL	631	2026	741	114	87	81	65	56	32	29
Grand Total	7492	22615	9855	1419	827	1200	939	779	591	431

*COVID-19 PANDEMIC MARCH 2020 TO DATE

Key Performance Index (KPI) – time to appointment - less than 8 working days.

Reasons for Management Referral

Mental Health and Musculoskeletal conditions continue to be the main reason for referral to OHS. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is anticipated that the employee demand for mental health support will increase.

Top 10 Reasons for Management Referral

Reason	2022 1 st January 2022 to date
MENTAL HEALTH CONCERN	833
MUSCULOSKELETAL	643
PHYSICAL-OTHER	470
COI COVID CONCERN ONGOING	155
REQUEST FOR OTHER ADVICE	92
PHYSICAL-PRE OR POST SURGERY	71
PREGNANCY RELATED	71
SKIN-INCLUDING PPE ISSUE	45
GASTROINTESTINAL	35
BEREAVEMENT	31

Self-Referral Musculoskeletal Services

Eighty per month now recovered to pre pandemic levels

Daily triage for rapid assessment of high priority conditions

Face to face treatment in place

Development of gym sessions – ongoing rehabilitation sessions

Self-Referral Mental Health Support Services

Referrer		Grand total from 1 st January 2022 to date
NUTH	REFERRAL INTERNAL	78
	REFERRAL INTERNAL PSYCHOLOGY	60
	SELF REF COUNSELLING	201
	REFERRAL INTERNAL COUNSELLING	63
EXTERNAL	REFERRAL INTERNAL	8
	REFERRAL INTERNAL PSYCHOLOGY	11
	SELF REF COUNSELLING	4
		425

Newcastle OHS Post COVID Service

Years	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Grand Total
2020			*	6	15	10	11	6	1	5	7	*16	77
2021	27	18	25	13	18	*9	21	22	24	30	24	13	244
2022	*22	50	38	25	25	12	6						178
													499

*COVID-19 onset/waves

Reason 2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Grand Total
BRIEF INTERVENTION POST COVID	1	47	38	29	27	15	17	174
Grand Total	1	47	38	29	27	15	17	174

Outcomes	Total
Returned to Work	177
Returned to work with adjustments	116
Redeployed	10
Unable to return to work	2
Unknown at this time	194

On commencement / Health Screening

NUTH committed to be an inclusive employer. Chart displays number of Health Questionnaires processed each month/year.

Number of HQ processed	Years	1 st January 2022 to date
	2021	2022
Jan	1082	349
Feb	668	367
Mar	525	281
Apr	620	663
May	849	690
Jun	610	637
Jul	507	362
Aug	426	
Sep	339	
Oct	419	
Nov	509	
Dec	329	
Grand Total	6883	3349

Needlestick/Sharp Injury Support and reporting

Incident Date	2019	2020	2021	2022
Jan	62	47	49	41
Feb	60	64	54	44
Mar	47	43	41	45
Apr	48	28	30	44
May	54	33	36	54
Jun	39	29	48	41
Jul	53	40	34	33
Aug	46	34	44	
Sep	44	32	33	
Oct	52	44	47	
Nov	63	44	33	
Dec	39	38	33	
Grand Total	607	476	482	302