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Improving Staff Experience and Mental Health
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Background

- We felt that building resilience as a coping strategy would impact positively on staff wellbeing and performance at work
- Good staff experience is critical for a positive patient experience (West, 2011, Maben 2012)
- Mental health -highest reason for absence in the trust
- Training was rolled out from 2012 across the Trust
- Between 2012-16, 400 staff of all grades and occupations were trained with excellent evaluation results
- The next stage – successful business case to roll out to frontline nurses in leadership roles – so far 550 have been through the training

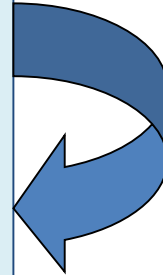
What is Resilience Training?

MINDFULNESS

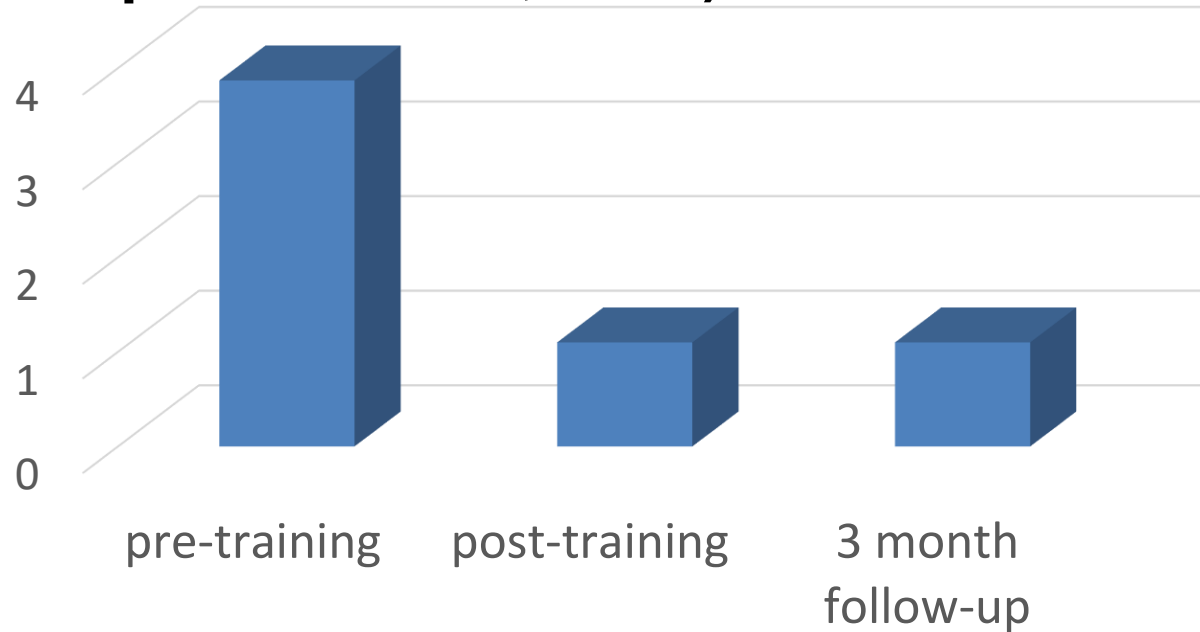
- Present moment awareness training
- Untangling from internal barriers to values-based action
- Strengthening your resilient self

VALUES-BASED ACTION

- Defining your values
- Mindfully engaging in values-based actions
- Using values as a guide to goals and daily behaviour



Reduction in nurses' psychological distress (general health questionnaire; GHQ)



Lost much sleep over worry? Been feeling unhappy and depressed? Been feeling constantly under strain?

Why these results are important?

- A score of 4 or more can indicate a clinically relevant level of psychological distress
- Higher scores on this measure a strong predictor of absenteeism in NHS staff
- Pre-training, 40% of these nurses had GHQ score ≥ 4 ; reduced to 10% at post-training; 13% at follow-up
- Nurses attending the training not only improved – **they ended up with better than average levels of mental health**

Themes that staff fed back

- More able to pause before responding to stressful events or episodes; able to take a momentary step back; having moments of choice about what to do next
- 'Permission' to look after oneself; being sure to engage in self-care activities even during hectic times
- Greater awareness of others' well-being; showing individualised concern to both patients and colleagues
- Prioritising tasks; recognising in each moment what is best use of own and others' time; what matters most?

Summary and further steps

- The resilience training programme is an effective and efficient way of improving the mental health and staff experience
- We're beginning to understand why it works – being able to pause and be less reactive; clarification of personal values
- Our work has been recognised as a centre of excellence for this type of staff resilience training (see recent articles published in *Counselling at Work*, and *HCPJ Journal*)
- To roll out the training to 'hotspot' and hard to reach areas
- To continue taster sessions and top up groups

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Thank you

