













# The experiences of hospital staff attending an organization endorsed staff wellbeing centre in a large regional hospital: A mixed methods study

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the health and wellbeing of healthcare workers. To alleviate this, workplace wellbeing initiatives, such as the Staff Wellbeing Centre (SWC), can provide essential support, helping staff manage stress, perform their roles effectively, and foster colleague relationships.

**Aim:** This study aimed to explore the experiences of hospital employees accessing the SWC and identify the benefits and barriers to its implementation and sustainability from their perspective.

**Methods:** Using a mixed methods design, 64 hospital staff completed surveys post-appointment to share their feedback. Additionally, five participants volunteered for semi-structured interviews to elaborate on their experiences. Survey results were analysed with descriptive statistics, while interview responses underwent thematic analysis.

**Results:** Over 14 months, the survey data revealed high satisfaction with the SWC, with most clients recommending the service to colleagues, finding it beneficial and supportive. The thematic analysis highlighted three main themes: 'Why Should I Attend the Centre?', 'Building Rapport', and 'Benefits of Attending the Wellness Centre'.

**Conclusion:** The SWC emerged as a valuable support resource in the regional health service, with positive recommendations for further activities, emphasizing the importance of internal wellbeing initiatives to enhance staff support access.

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## KEYWORDS

Staff wellbeing; nursing;  
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## Introduction

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had a significant negative impact on the health and wellbeing of healthcare workers and hospital staff. Researchers have shown that up to 40% of healthcare workers reported anxiety, depression, distress and/or sleep disturbances that worsened as the pandemic continued [1]. Whilst interventions to support and protect the wellbeing of hospital staff have been implemented using various models and symptom-based care, little exploration exists into more whole of organization approaches and collegial factors that impact staff wellbeing [1]. Researchers have identified factors such as managerial and organizational support, stigma, workload pressure, confidentiality and awareness of services within the organization as potential barriers or enablers to the program or service success [2]. Workplace wellbeing and support initiatives within healthcare services have a positive impact on mental wellbeing of staff because they assist staff in coping with COVID-19 related stress, help them perform their role, and support in building relationships with colleagues [3]. Studies outlined the importance of an organization-supported program that was responsive to staff and their perspectives [4,5] rather than using an assumption-based model. These models, however, outlined the uncertainty of continuation beyond COVID-19, focusing now on ensuring the models could be sustainable beyond the pandemic and built into the organizational wellbeing culture.