










The experiences of staff managing an organisational wellbeing centre in a large regional hospital: A qualitative study

Joanne E. Porter ^a, Megan R. Simic ^a, Anita Raymond ^b, Maryam Ghasemiardekani ^c,
Grace Edgar^d, Roshan Vijayan ^d, Rachel Luddeni ^e, Debra Ann Stoneman ^f,
Samantha Armstrong ^{g,h} and Christopher Mesagno ^{i,j}

^aCollaborative Evaluation & Research Centre (CERC), Federation University Australia, Churchill, Australia; ^bExecutive Director Education, Quality & Research Chief Nurse, Latrobe Regional Health, Traralgon, Australia; ^cInstitute of Health and Wellbeing, Federation University Australia, Churchill, Australia; ^dStaff Wellbeing Centre, Latrobe Regional Health, Traralgon, Australia; ^eLatrobe Regional Health, Traralgon, Australia; ^fStaff Wellbeing Centre & Hospital Admission Risk Program, Latrobe Regional Health, Traralgon, Australia; ^gCollege of Sport, Health and Engineering, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia; ^hInstitute for Innovation in Mental and Physical Health and Clinical Translation (IMPACT), School of Medicine, Deakin University, Geelong, Australia; ⁱInstitute for Health and Sport, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia; ^jExercise and Sports Science, Federation University Australia, Ballarat, Australia

ABSTRACT

Background: The wellbeing of healthcare workers has become a key performance indicator for hospitals following the COVID-19 pandemic. In Australia, the implementation of a Staff Wellbeing Centre (SWC) in a hospital may have a positive impact on employee wellness.

Aim: This study aimed to explore and evaluate (1) the impact of a SWC on staff who provided the client service within a large regional hospital in Australia and (2) to identify factors associated with the service that could be improved.

Methods: A qualitative approach using a semi-structured interview process was utilised to evaluate the SWC as perceived by the seven staff that provided care and managed the Centre over a 2-year period. Data analysis was undertaken using a thematic analysis approach.

Results: Interview analysis identified five major themes; 'Taking the First Step', 'Unique Skill Set of Centre Staff', 'Diversity of Clientele', 'Right Help at the Right Time', and 'Making a Difference'.

Conclusion: Ongoing function of the SWC were recommended within this large regional hospital based on health and wellbeing benefits for health care workers and the positive experiences shared by staff who serviced the Centre. Ongoing evaluation of the SWC is necessary to gain more data on its effectiveness.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 5 June 2024
Accepted 27 June 2025

KEYWORDS

Staff wellbeing; nursing;
COVID-19; workforce; mental
health

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting post-pandemic aftermath has induced an emerging recognition for the health care workers, with holistic wellbeing of staff now a key focus for health service providers. Considerable concern about workers' health and wellbeing was expressed prior to 2019, with stress and burnout among clinicians ever increasing, and limited peer-reviewed research available to support leadership action from peak bodies and organisations [1,2]. Multiple consequences of prolonged stress on health care workers occur, influencing poorer outcomes for patients, reduced personal health care worker wellbeing, and decreased workplace productivity [1,3]. Support from hospital executive and department leaders for health care worker staff in the form of flexible working arrangements, psychological support and recognition of the impact COVID-19 on the individual may support staff's intention to remain in the organisation [3].

Whilst promotion of staff wellbeing is important, interventions to address wellbeing must be accessible and trusted by staff before engaging with a programme. Despite reported high levels of mental distress amongst staff, a mental health support hub set up in West Yorkshire, United Kingdom, during COVID-

CONTACT Megan R. Simic  m.simic@federation.edu.au  PO Box 663 Ballarat VIC 3353

© 2025 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.