Introduction

The NHS, and most of the public sector, is facing unprecedented changes which present additional strains and stress on both the organisations and, particularly, the individuals. Other than Cold and Diarrhoea & Vomiting, Stress & Anxiety is the largest factor for sickness absence. In addition, there is significant clinical evidence to suggest that much musculoskeletal sickness absence (the next major cause of sickness absence) also have Stress related causes.

Avon Partnership NHS Occupational Health Service is delighted to be working with LightenUp, the only NHS endorsed health and wellbeing programme which provides strategies to improve quality of life at work and at home and overall personal wellbeing. This programme is now available to staff within Avon Partnership Trusts (UHB, NBT & WAHT) and other customer organisations.

Commissioned by NHS Gloucestershire and feature Dr Dawn Harper, a local GP and co-presenter of the TV programme “Embarrassing Bodies”, the sessions cover:

1. Making Change

   This looks at the process of making changes in our lives, what is the best way of achieving our goals, what are the barriers to change and how we can overcome them.

2. Transform your thinking

   How do we look at the world, do we sometimes think negatively about...
things? What is cognitive behavioral therapy and how can CBT help us understand how we view things and perhaps change to see things more positively and help us to cope with change?

3. Healthy Lifestyles

Following on from the session on how we make changes, this workshop looks at the principles of a healthy lifestyle, and how we can improve our health and well-being.

4. Doing your day

We all hope to have a work life balance and this workshop is an opportunity to look at what we do in our daily lives, how we can prioritise our tasks and manage our time more effectively.

5. Identifying & Managing Stress

This session looks at what causes stress, how we can recognise it and how can we look after ourselves. It brings together all the things covered in the other sessions.

Each session, in optimum group sizes of 12 to 15, is led by trained facilitators who are experts in helping delegates identify where they need to make changes to their lives. The programme is geared to deliver long-term health and wellbeing benefits leading to improved personal and career development.

The sessions will be challenging and stimulating, but at the same time deliver real results because they have been developed with expert input from clinical psychologists, physiotherapists, dieticians and senior HR and training professionals.

The programme has been subject to rigorous testing and evaluation and fine-tuned with the help of participants. We are motivated by the fact that delegate feedback and other evidence helps to prove that those taking part in our programme make long-term changes to their lives which have a lasting positive impact on their overall health and wellbeing and work productivity.

Because of the highly flexible nature of the programme, it is being incorporated into a series of sessions delivered at lunch-time or another time most suitable to staff and the organisation.