



The NHS has one of the highest levels of workplace stress and with the benefits that green space can bring, the value to healthcare providers in using the green space on their doorstep is huge.

Why focus on workplace wellbeing?



According to the NHS Staff survey of 2017, **36% of NHS staff** reported feeling unwell as a result of stress at work.

845,966 sick days due to stress, anxiety or depression were taken by doctors, nurses and other front-line staff in 2014/15 (study of 100 English Hospitals).



Estimates from Public Health England put the cost to the NHS of staff absence due to poor health at **£2.4bn a year** – accounting for around **£1 in every £40** of the total NHS budget. Stress alone accounts for around **£300-£400 million** of sickness absence (NHS Employers).





How green space benefits workplace wellbeing

Green space reduces stress:

Spending time in nature has been shown to speed up recovery from stressful events - increasing the rate at which blood pressure, cortisol levels and muscle tension fall.

Van Den Berg et. al. 2003

Green space improves wellbeing:

A lunchtime walk of around 15-20 minutes in nature can enhance the restoration of autonomic control during night time sleep.

Gladwell et all 2016

Wellbeing scores of patients reporting low mood have been shown to increase after just 6 weeks of volunteering in nature, with further improvements after 12 weeks.

Rogerson et. al. 2017

People are more active when outdoors:

People living closer to green spaces are more physically active, and less likely to be overweight or obese.

Coombs et. al. 2010

Regular physical activity contributes to prevention of more than 20 diseases.

Department of Health 2005





Green space at work

The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare has designed a series of intervention-based workshops with individual health care organisations and businesses to enable staff to access green spaces to benefit their health at work. We work closely with senior managers within the organisation to design interventions and to ensure that they are well publicised and utilised. Monitoring and evaluation of the interventions to determine their success and impact will also be carried out.



Broomfield Hospital, Essex



Broomfield Hospital has been supporting staff to access green spaces. Frisbee golf is available at lunchtime and is really popular, as is table tennis. Twilight walks and lunch time walks enable staff to exercise in their breaks.

There is a wildflower garden and vegetable garden on site which are both in frequent use. Seating has been created in the garden to support use during breaks. Workshops about the benefits of nature in the workplace are also being run by hospital staff.



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info@nhsforest.org



How we can help

- **Workshops:** CSH runs workshops with NHS Trusts to engage staff, discuss the benefit of using green space for the wellbeing at work and to demonstrate and design activities that can be undertaken to harness the benefits of spending time in nature. We will focus on behaviour change, with a focus on identifying what barriers exist to green space engagement and how these can be overcome.
- **Evaluation:** We will conduct an evaluation to identify how engagement can be best placed. Continuous monitoring to track activity uptake can also be provided.
- **Active Lunch hours:** We can design and enable the use of a range of outdoor activities in your staff's lunch hour. These can be on site or using the local environment.
- **Promotion:** We provide an initial promotional strategy for your trust to engage staff through activities on workplace wellbeing and green space.
- **Empower staff:** We will set up and manage a volunteer coordinator who will encourage continued staff engagement.
- **Case studies:** We can provide innovative and enthusiastic case studies and motivational speakers from the healthcare and green space sector.

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