

The Training and Workforce Team- Royal College of Psychiatrists

Project Team

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Share your story

In this section we will describe our change ideas, the team engagement, and learning related to these and the feedback gathered from team members across our feedback teams meetings.

The Snap Cup

[Snap cup...Great way to give feedback - YouTube-](#) play from 1 minute in.

Snap cup is a quirky way of showing appreciation of another person's achievements. It was featured in the Legally Blonde movie. On a weekly basis a member of the project team collects anonymous messages of appreciation from the team. These are shared in the team meeting and after each one we snap our fingers. They are also put in the team chat for the purpose of those not at the meeting.

This idea came out of the Appreciative Inquiry process where team members ideas centered around theme of feeling (their work was?) appreciated particularly from across the College but also from within the team.

Engagement

The team engaged with this idea consistently throughout the project. It has been very well received and our most successful change idea in terms of engagement and feedback.

Submitted snap:

"I want to thank Clare for managing the careers work on her own without drama while waiting for our fabulous new coordinators to start- she kept things going and kept calm under pressure!"

Learning

We learned that the team really liked the opportunity to show appreciation of their colleagues. It also provides an additional opportunity for team members to learn what their colleagues are working on.

Feedback from team members

*“It **motivates** you to do better knowing that your **input is being seen and appreciated**. If initiatives like this could be made standard practice in all professional settings, **productivity** would significantly improve”*

*“I really like the snap cup, I think it’s a bit of **lighthearted joy** and ...it’s allowing people to give anonymous shout outs with no pressure. I definitely think it **sets the scene for new starters** and creates an **atmosphere of support**.”*

- Reduce the frequency of snap cups to once a month.
- People who work in isolation may not receive snaps as others do not know what they are doing.
- Define what should constitute a snap cup.

This feedback will be discussed by the project team in our next meeting.

Team Updates

This change idea involved introducing a new structure for our weekly team meetings whereby we have a mixture of fun meetings and meetings where a team member presents a work update. We already had a rota system where each member of the team took a turn to lead on the team meeting and could choose what to present/lead on. During the pandemic, these tended to be more informal team building activities, though we have run a variety of team meeting models. This mixed model idea came out of suggestions in the Appreciative Inquiry that it would be helpful to learn more about what colleagues are working on as well as having opportunities for informal team activities to get to know one another better and strengthen our identity as a team.

Learning

- We learned that team members liked the opportunity to hear what their colleagues were working on.
- Going forward more planning could take place to ensure an even mix of the different types of meeting and we could also define what a team update might include.

Feedback

“It has been really useful to have team updates in an informal quick manner. We all know broadly what each other is working on but these updates bring it back to the front of my mind, and provide opportunities for further collaboration.”

- There has been a good balance of work and fun updates.
- There needed to be more of a mix of fun and work updates.
- It is nice to see what others are working on.
- It takes pressure off deciding what to do when hosting team meetings.
- Define this more, for example talk about top 3 things you are working on.
- Allocate hosting a meeting to a sub-team not an individual.

- Reduce the frequency of team meetings and have a twuddle where we talk specifically about what we are working on this week.

The Pebble in your shoe

This change idea was implemented after the project team asked the wider team if they wanted to have a new brainstorming session to come up with new change ideas or if they would like the opportunity to share the little things that irritate them about work. The team voted for the latter. A [survey](#) was created and a link shared with team members who were encouraged to complete it when they identified something at work that was irritating them, a pebble.

The thought process behind this was that if you don't tackle the little things that irritate people at work, then changing the bigger things won't make a great difference to people's joy in work.

The concept is that by identifying your pebbles, the team member will be in a better position to take action, and gain support to resolve them if needed. Pebbles were distinguished from larger issues, or 'boulders' that could be raised in 1-1s.

The project team meet to go through the pebbles and allocate a member of the team to contact the person who submitted it. The idea is to empower the person to take steps to resolve the pebble rather than the project team doing this for them.

Engagement

It took time and persistence to successfully get members of the team to engage with this. Compared to the other two change ideas this has had less engagement.

Learning

The project team have considered that the small number of team members completing the survey might be because these team members simply aren't being irritated by small things at work.

Feedback

- It has been cathartic to write down issues.
- It is a good opportunity to 'have a grumble'.
- We need to refine how this works.
- We could change the method of collecting pebbles from a survey to a whiteboard/spreadsheet/specific team chat/T&W channel in teams.
- We should enable team members to see colleagues' pebbles so that they can share ideas of how to address them

Other learning from change ideas

From running the change ideas, we learned it requires attention and a constant drive to keep engagement up.

Getting buy in from the team early on is important.

All ideas need to be continuously pushed and embedded into team life or they will be forgotten.

Not all ideas will work and that doesn't mean they are bad ideas.

Other team feedback

- It is positive that enjoying work is something that the College / team care about

- The project does not look at root causes of dissatisfaction or address the bigger issues relating to burnout.
- We don't always have to enjoy work, and it is not always the employer's job to make work better.
- Not all issues that affect the improve well survey weekly scores are work related

What changes have you seen in the team?

Examples of how team members have engaged with the collaborative has been provided in the previous section on change ideas.

Discussions around enjoyment of work and wellbeing have taken place more frequently than before the collaborative. Publicly praising team members has become normalised within the team meeting setting, where this would have happened on a 1:1 basis previously.

What are your reflections on taking part in the project?

Our team courageously put themselves forward for the Enjoying Work project, in spite of busy workloads. There have been several planned and unplanned staffing changes to the team over the past seven months, with the ending of fixed term contracts, maternity leave and a case of unexpected long-term sickness. This changing team dynamic and new team members starting remotely during the pandemic was one of the reasons we wanted to participate in the project. We hoped that the project would give us an opportunity to focus on the positive aspects of our work and celebrate these, as well as recognising the challenges of working through a pandemic. We also recognised we didn't know our new team members as well as we might do working in the office. New starters were also reporting a sense of isolation and there were reports that the wider College perhaps didn't fully understand our areas of work, which came out in the Appreciative Inquiry session. We wanted to try to address these areas as they seemed to be impacting on joy at work.

We are proud of how much resilience the team has demonstrated and of how we successfully educated new joiners about the project and quickly got them on board. We did this by giving a presentation about the collaborative to new joiners so that they were up to date with the knowledge held by the rest of the team and could begin engaging with the project.

Hayley: I became project lead in January 2022 and I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the collaborative. I have enjoyed collaborating with my project team members and implementing the change ideas. It has been great to have positive engagement and feedback from the wider team. I am passionate about keeping the project going in the longer term and sharing learning with other College teams who might like to get involved.

Nikki: I led the collaborative from June 2021 and asked Hayley to take on a lead role in January 2022. I found it was slow to get going due to changing team members, the collaborative itself becoming established and understanding the QI processes. Being part of the collaborative has been a great learning opportunity for myself and the team and I've really enjoyed hearing the views of others in the team and getting ideas and tips from other organisations. Hayley's involvement has been vital. As a coordinator who was new to the team, and interested and enthusiastic about the collaborative, she was able to engage team members in the project without it feeling like I was making them participate at the Head. She understood quickly what we were hoping to achieve and

has been able to give the project the time it's needed to maintain and increase engagement.

What challenges have you faced in this work?

Getting started with the project was hard. It took some team members a while to understand what this project was trying to achieve. It also took a while for the project to become established. Our coach changed part way through which was also a bit disruptive but manageable.

Communicating with the wider team and keeping engagement up was a challenge at times.

Motivating the team to contribute to change ideas was a challenge as was encouraging the team to engage with the project without cynicism. Some team members didn't think the project was necessary as they were already happy at work.

Our biggest challenge in the early stages of the project was team engagement with the Improve Well Survey. Completion rates were low for many months. The project team showed creativity, persistence and patience in promoting engagement with the survey. We put reminders in the team chat, shared an outlook calendar reminder, and even created a survey which asked staff about their views and barriers relating to completing the survey. We wanted to understand what might be causing the low completion rates. Timing of the reminders and forgetfulness were reported as barriers.

Some team members said that the surveys were too frequent and lacked context.

Others felt that the survey was not detailed enough and that it should have allowed for detail as there may be lots of variables affecting how they are feeling that week. It may have been useful to have a question asking if they felt supported. The project team decided to start asking the team to complete the survey during our team meetings. This has worked extremely well and we are very pleased to report that our team's survey completion rates have been consistently good for a while now.

College Values

The Royal College of Psychiatrists are extremely proud of their College Values, which inform everything that we do. They are:

Courage, Innovation, Respect, Collaboration, Learning and Excellence.

We are proud to have demonstrated all of the values throughout our project journey. The team showed courage by putting themselves forward to be part of the project in spite of busy workloads. This demonstrated self-belief that we would be able to run the project well. Our team have demonstrated innovation as we have embraced the quality improvement methodology and hope that our work on the project will lead the College to implement some of our ideas. Respect has been demonstrated during the appreciative inquiry and idea generation where team members were respectful of each other's ideas in all group discussions. Collaboration has taken place throughout the project as we have regularly sought feedback from team members regarding the change ideas. We also gave the team opportunities to put forward new ideas. Project team members worked together on creating a presentation to give at the recent learning set. The team have demonstrated the learning value by positively embracing the snap cup and team updates which has been a new way of working. Excellence has been evidenced by the project team in

working together to try to make the collaborative a positive and successful project for everyone involved.

Advice for anyone starting and Enjoying Work project

Include the wider team in as much of the decision making as possible and in every step of intervention development.

Take the time to understand what might be preventing the team engaging with certain steps, or activities.

Obtain feedback from team members throughout the project.

Reflect regularly on how things are going.

Show gratitude for team engagement.

Try it, don't be disheartened if not everything works or if it takes a while to see changes.

Even small positive changes are worth the effort as they contribute to a bigger whole.

Looking at the future:

The project team have met to discuss how we will continue to implement the Enjoying Work project after it officially ends in May. We discussed the success of the change ideas. The snap cup has been embedded into everyday practice as team members are more eager to praise colleagues. The team updates change idea continues to feed into the running of team meetings and now includes regular team updates.

As engagement with the snap cup has lessened since the return to office working we plan to adjust this change idea, collecting snaps twice monthly rather than weekly. The lesser engagement may be because it is easier to provide recognition in person now that we are back in the office.

We will continue with the team updates but this will be defined in order to make it as useful and clear as possible to team members. A member of the project team is going to draft and share an update on how this change idea works with the wider team and ensure everyone understands it.

Due to poor engagement we will stop running the pebble in your shoe change idea.

The project team have decided to meet quarterly across the year to discuss progress with existing and new change ideas. In the next few months, we will run a brainstorming session with the wider team to generate new change ideas. We have yet to agree on whether we will continue to collect data and how we will evaluate the project going forward. We look forward to the next phase of the project.