

## Review of Nature Well-being sessions at Southmead Hospital



Southmead Hospital Trust has done considerable work to identify and improve green spaces on its site and has published a map to support staff to use these spaces. A key challenge is often motivating staff to use them on a regular basis and develop a sense of connection to the spaces.

A series of trial lunch time sessions were run on the Southmead Hospital site in 2020 exploring the benefits of mindfulness interventions in outdoor spaces to support staff to take breaks in green spaces on site and use the natural surroundings to enhance their well-being.

Open sessions were planned and promoted to staff across the site that they could book on in advance. These were offered as engaging, fun and accessible nature connection activities where participants would use their senses to ground themselves in the green space and take notice of the things growing and living there. Creative activities were also used to explore making natural collages from natural found materials. Many of the activities had a strong focus on simple breathing techniques combined with looking, listening or exploring natural textures to enable staff to step away from their current work challenges.



Those attending were asked to fill out a short tick box table before and after the session to gauge the impact on them as well as any further comments they wished to make.

### Q. How are you feeling now?



	Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Extremely
Calm		X	X	
Happy		X	X	
Focused on the present		X	X	
Connected to natural surroundings		X	X	
Connected to others		X	X	

Average responses – before X and after X session

Responses varied with some staff showing more of a significant change from not at all to extremely on some responses with other staff staying more in the middle of the response range but overall everyone showed an increase in their responses between the start and end of the session.

### **Some of the comments from staff**

‘I recently attended a wellness in nature session and wanted to let you know what a wonderful intervention it is. I feel it is so important to engage with the nature around us especially in this busy setting.’

‘Loved it even in the rain. Gentle thought provoking experience.’

‘Great to take a breath.’

‘A good strategy to help take the mind off everything else for a while.’

‘Helpful to reconnect with nature and get out of the ward environment.’

‘Useful experience to remember to slow down and breathe and rest the mind.’

- All those attending said they would like to do something like this again

- All those attending said they would recommend it to their colleagues with many of them keen to try something with their team.

### **Learning & Further Development**

Based on feedback from those that attended and further enquiries from staff it is clear that continuing a regular drop in session as well as offering small teams their own sessions would be worthwhile. It is also clear that trying to make the sessions accessible to staff in different locations on different working patterns would be important and therefore different timings and locations could be explored.

The role of well-being leads across sites and teams would be valuable in both promoting the project and also in spreading the impact through training them to lead a range of similar activities in the future. In addition simple guides and resources could support groups and individuals to explore self-led activities in a more flexible way.

