

# A follow-up survey of eight-week mindfulness programmes for staff

Jo Cromarty and Paul Bernard

## Background

- Mindfulness based cognitive therapy (MBCT) programmes for staff have been running since 2010
- Earlier evaluations, including a three month follow-up, have been very encouraging
- This study looks at participants' experiences and views at longer term follow-up
- Findings add to the existing literature about the use of mindfulness with NHS staff <sup>1,2</sup>.

## Methods

- Graduates of 22 eight-week programmes were invited to take part in an anonymous on-line survey
- The time between completing the programme and taking part in the survey ranged from 9 months to five years.

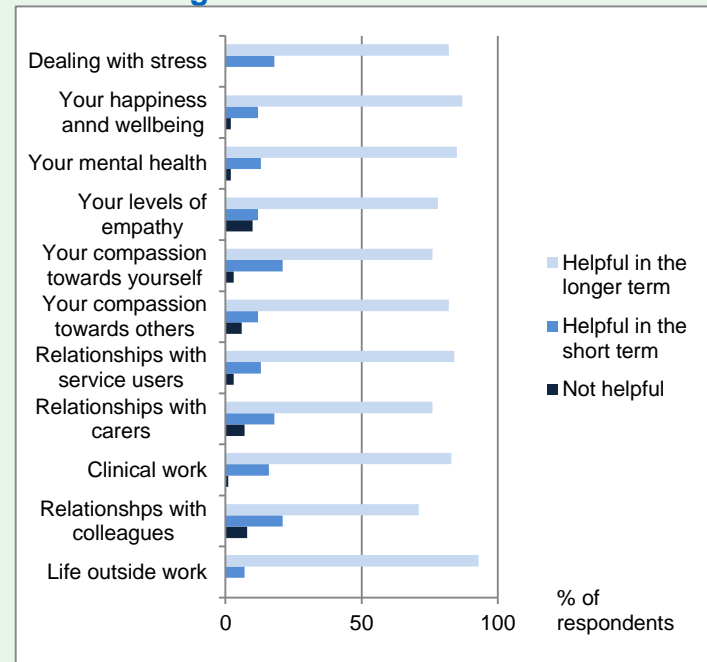
## Results

- 129 responses (61% response rate)
- The quality of the training was rated as *very good* by 87.5% and *good* by 12.5%
- 73% rated the training as *very important* to them, 25% as *important*
- Of those who had attended a follow-up day of mindfulness, 90% rated it as *very helpful*, 9% as *helpful*
- 32 individuals reported less stress-related sickness absence since the programme; one individual reported more
- 124 individuals supported the idea of the staff mindfulness project being made permanent; 2 did not.

## Do you still sometimes use the following mindfulness practices?

Type of practice	Yes
Long formal practices	54%
Shorter formal practices	90%
Three minute breathing space	93%
Informal practices	98%

## Has learning mindfulness been helpful to you in the following areas?



## Illustrative quotes

“It has helped with concentration in busy offices and focusing on one task at a time...”

“The training has had a profound effect on me both personally and professionally. I have not been off work with stress/anxiety since the end of 2013.... The mindfulness days are really helpful too. Please keep them up”.

“Mindfulness has become invaluable tool since I began the course. During the later stages of the course, my husband died suddenly and I was in a state of complete despair. Mindfulness supported me in being able, I feel, to look after myself... I am sure without this I may have crumbled”.

“The course has been life changing; it has helped in both my clinical and personal life. It has helped me to cope with my son's serious neurological illness, as well as an increasing workload”.

“The mindfulness project is one of the things that sets TEWV apart from many other Trusts”.

## Conclusions

Most respondents rated the programmes highly. About a quarter reported having less sickness absence since attending. Nearly all respondents continued to use some form of mindfulness practice. The majority reported longer term benefits in their professional and personal lives. Nearly all would support the continuation of the staff mindfulness project.

### References:

1. de Zoysa et al (2014) Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Mental Health Professionals: a Long-Term Quantitative Follow-up Study. *Mindfulness*, 5 (3) 268-275.
2. Marx et al (2014) The eye of the storm: a feasibility study of an adapted Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) group intervention to manage NHS staff stress. *The Cognitive Behaviour Therapist*, 7, e18.

making a

difference

together