

iMatter Team Story: Public Health, Afton House, Ailsa Hospital

Story Title: Unused Courtyard Becomes Health and Wellbeing Haven

Background

It is not actually as straight forward as it seems to relate a story as iMatter is just one part of the jigsaw that forms our approach to our People Strategy.

iMatter gives us an opportunity at a team level to discuss the things that matter to us and we use this to run alongside other ways of us engaging with staff (e.g. via 1:1s, team meetings etc). We see this as an important way of creating a positive working environment, positive working experience, which ultimately results in a good attendance level etc.

More specifically, we are always striving to find ways to communicate the right information, in the most accessible way at the right time. As the result of iMatter discussions managers are now using blogs (distributed via our team weekly news update) to keep staff up to date on issues. The aim is to make the information very readable and understandable to all staff. In addition, there is an open door policy should staff wish to follow up on any issues in the blog, or have any other queries.....too often we send emails, when it is actually easier to talk.

We have a longstanding commitment to staff engagement within our department, and in the past, in conjunction with the NHS staff survey, we have used the Work Positive Tool as part of a departmental stress risk assessment and from this we developed and actioned a plan. This work seeded the idea of using a central courtyard in our building (which we share with the Transformation and Sustainability Team) to develop the area into one which could be planted and utilised to give staff access to outside seating etc and ultimately to promote the wellbeing of our staff. This courtyard was bleak, grey, dull and considered to be wasted space.

As part of the two iMatter Action Plans we have developed, teams within Public Health have celebrated the initiative, and actions to develop the courtyard have been included in future iMatter plans . This work is demonstrated in a presentation e.g. successful bid to endowments, enthusiastic Courtyard Group being set up, people making contributions of seating and plants to the area, the group working at weekends to transform the courtyard, putting up a Christmas tree, holding a bring and share lunch in the courtyard, growing herbs (for some people experiencing planting for the first time).

In addition to this initiative, which has been augmented and driven by iMatter, we also operate a programme to facilitate good staff engagement and this includes the following:

- A calendar of dates arranged for the year so that all managers have monthly routines with their staff, 6 monthly review and 12 monthly PDR (along with discussions around PDP and objectives for the following year)
- Regular team meetings and development days are held to ensure there is good communication with all staff in relation to national and local issues
- An open door policy is in operation, whereby staff can regularly access managers
- There are regular bring and share lunches, staff going on walks together around the grounds surrounding our buildings (Greening the NHS Estate work has been extensive at Ayr and Ailsa Campus)



