

Looking After You — Confidential Coaching for the Health & Care Workforce

Case study

Executive summary

- Easy access, confidential, individually tailored and evidencebased coaching for the health and care workforce.
- Nationally commissioned by NHS England (Mar 2020–Mar 2024); the centrally funded national programme ceased in March 2024, while continuing to show strong results.
- Lead provider: TPC Health codesigned with NHS England; managed two delivery partners and supplied coaches across all services.
- Delivered 38,000+ coaching sessions to 13,000+ NHS staff.
- Three services with two subservices:
 - Looking After You Too - 1:1 wellbeing coaching plus a peer wellbeing (group coaching) offer.
 - Looking After Your Team - coaching for leaders/managers (1:1 and team) plus a Teams Away Day service.
 - Looking After Your Career - 1:1 career coaching for development and retention.
- Dedicated culturally responsive offer for staff from ethnically diverse backgrounds, delivered by ethnically diverse coaches across primary and secondary care; 4,500+ sessions delivered.
- Access model: simple mobilefriendly online booking, immediate availability (same day or within 24 hours), 08:00–22:00 and weekends, virtual video or telephone, and a clientled “dose” of support.
- Outcomes (independent IES evaluation): lasting, statistically significant improvements in wellbeing, resilience and burnout; gains in leadership, teamworking and inclusion; retention benefits and reduced intention to leave. 99.5% overall satisfaction; 99.8% felt listened to/supported; 99% felt able to move forward.
- Recognition: HSI Awards 2021 - Workforce Initiative of the Year.

The challenge

The pandemic accelerated existing pressures on the primary care workforce - high demand, rapid service transformation, and the emotional toll of complex cases. As systems moved into recovery, teams still faced capacity constraints, ambiguous roles, and retention risks. Commissioners needed a scalable, highquality, confidential support offer that could flex to local needs and demonstrably improve wellbeing, performance, and retention.

The intervention: the Looking After You service

A proactive health coaching model that blends coaching with informational support to help individuals develop selfmanagement skills and take early action before problems become entrenched. The service was selfreferral and rapid access, offered at flexible times (including outofhours) via video or telephone.

Core offers

- **Looking After You Too (LAY Too):** 1:1 wellbeing coaching and a peer wellbeing (group coaching) offer.
- **LAY Too (Ethnically Diverse):** a dedicated, culturally responsive pathway delivered by ethnically diverse coaches across primary and secondary care; 4,500+ sessions delivered.
- **Looking After Your Team (LAY Team):** support for leaders/managers (1:1 and team), including virtual Teams Away Days and practical strategies for healthy teamworking.
- **Looking After Your Career (LAY Career):** structured 1:1 career coaching to progress, navigate options, and make decisions for retention.

Delivery principles

- **Confidentiality:** session content was never shared with employers.
- **Accessibility:** simple online booking platform (mobilefriendly) with clear user journey.
- **Rapid access:** immediate appointments where possible - same day or within 24 hours.
- **Flexible hours:** 08:00–22:00 on weekdays and weekends to suit shift patterns.
- **Virtual by default:** secure video (computer or mobile) or telephone delivery; reasonable adjustments on request.
- **Clientled:** staff determine the amount and type of support they need.
- **Quality & safety:** accredited coaches with NHS/clinical backgrounds; reflective practice, supervision and governance; clear escalation pathways where needed.

Implementation at national scale (2020–2024)

Commissioned by NHS England (via Capita) in April 2020 to support primary care during Covid19, the programme scaled nationally for four years. TPC Health first codesigned the service with internal NHS colleagues through a rapid but comprehensive coproduction process, then became the lead provider, managing two other providers and supplying coaches to all services. The offer evolved with need - introducing peer wellbeing (group coaching), Teams Away Days, and a targeted pathway for ethnically diverse colleagues. The service operated at every staff level with outofhours scheduling to aid uptake and equity of access.

Coproduction & design principles

Coproduction with primary care workers revealed the need to:

- work “in the moment” on current needs;
- acknowledge the demands and stress primary care staff face;
- build psychological safety and engage with strong emotions without overreacting;
- help people develop practical coping strategies;
- supportively challenge people to manage what’s in their control;
- support selfmanagement and access to other resources.

These principles directly informed the access model (immediate, flexible, virtual) and the coaching approach (proactive health coaching blended with informational support).

Outcomes and impact

Independent evaluation by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) found sustained, statistically significant improvements across the four strands:

- **LAY Too (Wellbeing):** improved resilience and wellbeing; reduced burnout.
- **LAY Too (Ethnically Diverse):** improved wellbeing and inclusion; pathway delivered 4,500+ sessions across primary and secondary care.
- **LAY Team:** positive impacts on team leadership, management, and healthy teamworking.
- **LAY Career:** improved retention, fewer staff seeking alternative employment, and stronger perceptions of employer support.

Userreported experience was consistently high: 99.5% satisfaction across services; 99.8% felt listened to/supported; 99% felt able to move forward after sessions.

Equity and inclusion

A dedicated ethnically diverse colleagues pathway matched staff with ethnically diverse coaches and was offered across primary and secondary care. This improved trust, safety, and inclusion, and helped address access barriers faced by minoritised staff groups. Flexible scheduling and a simple booking journey further reduced inequalities in access.

Testimonials

“I left each session with a concrete list of approaches... it’s brilliant to experience coaching in this way.”

“Just the right balance of informal but challenging...I feel more hopeful about my future career.”