

# Workplace compassion

Dr Sally Pezaro PhD MSc BA (Hons) PgCAPHE FHEA RM

Twitter: [@SallyPezaro](https://twitter.com/SallyPezaro)

Blog: <https://sallypezaro.wordpress.com/>

Facebook: [The Academic Midwife](https://www.facebook.com/TheAcademicMidwife)



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# Understanding the problem

## Consequences for staff

- Compassion fatigue
- Vicarious traumatisation
- Secondary traumatic stress
- Shame
- Guilt
- Anger
- Self-doubt
- Depression
- Substance abuse disorders, and/or other [anxiety disorders](#)
- Symptomatic display of unethical behaviour

## Consequences for services

- Recruitment and retention
- Increased medical error
- Increased infection rates
- Increased mortality rates
- Poorer patient experiences

## Sources

- Organisational (e.g. bullying, workplace aggression, poor job satisfaction.)
- Occupational (e.g. Obstetric emergencies, stillbirth, unexpected maternal mortality)

Pezaro, S., Clyne, W., Turner, A., Fulton, E. A., & Gerada, C. (2015). [‘Midwives overboard! ‘Inside their hearts are breaking, their makeup may be flaking but their smile still stays on. \*Women and Birth\* 29.3 \(2016\): e59-e66.](#)

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# Help seeking?



**NMC** Nursing & Midwifery Council



- Pezaro, S, Clyne, W and Gerada, C ["Confidentiality, anonymity and amnesty for midwives in distress seeking online support—Ethical?"](#) *Nursing Ethics* (2016): 0969733016654315.
- Pezaro, S (2018) [Securing The Evidence And Theory-Based Design Of An Online Intervention Designed To Support Midwives In Work-Related Psychological Distress](#) (Special Theme on Women in eHealth). *Journal of the International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth*. Vol 6, e8. 1-12.

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# What do service users see?

'I can see the senior midwives coming in to perform the procedures which she was failing to do, rolling their eyes.'

'The midwife was clearly stressed, she was really impatient with me.'

'They both spent a lot of time visiting me ... telling me how they do it better than the other midwife.'

'Midwives should be able to gain help without their workplace knowing.'

'If she was having a good day I would have felt calmer in the situation and probably wouldn't have needed an epidural.'

'They need to be supported from within; they can't be reliant on the birthing mothers to hold their hands and pat them on the back.'

Pezaro, Sally, Gemma Pearce, and Elizabeth Bailey. ["Childbearing women's experiences of midwives' workplace distress: Patient and public involvement."](#) *British Journal of Midwifery* 26.10 (2018): 659-669.

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**NHS** **70**  
**England** **YEARS**  
OF THE NHS  
1948 - 2018

**80%**  
 staff say the state of their health affects patient care.

**30%**  
 NHS sick leave is due to work place stress.

**25%**  
 staff have been harassed, bullied or abused by fellow staff.

Positive staff experience leads to:

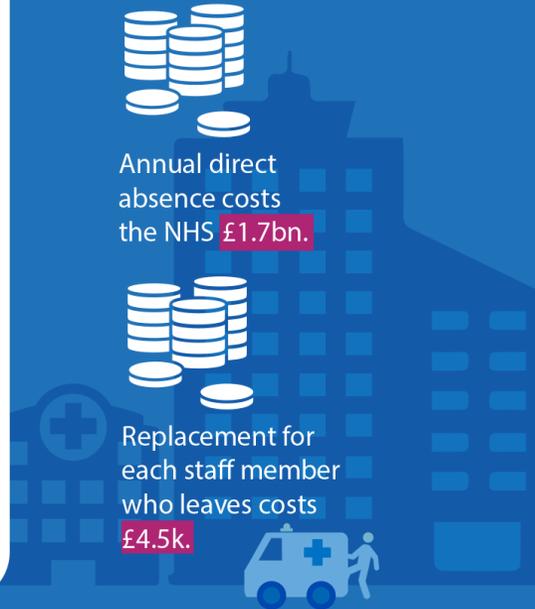
- Reduced absence sickness rates.
- Reduced staff costs.
- Improved performance.
- Improved moral.
- Increased staff retention.
- Increased productivity.



Annual direct absence costs the NHS **£1.7bn.**



Replacement for each staff member who leaves costs **£4.5k.**



# Why caring for the people who care matters

**NHS**  
England

**70**  
YEARS  
OF THE NHS  
1948 - 2018



Positive staff experience leads to:

- Reduced number of medical errors.
- Reduced infection rate.
- Reduced mortality rate.
- Improved safety.
- Improved patient experience.



Medical errors cost the NHS **£1.4m** a year.

## Why caring for the people who care matters

# What #ShowsWorkplaceCompassion?

260 Tweets analysed

<u>Leadership and Management</u>	<u>Values and Culture</u>	<u>Activities and actions</u>	<u>Personalized Policies and Procedures</u>
Embedded organizational culture of caring for one another	Common purpose in a team	Small gestures of kindness	Recognition of the emotional and physical impact of healthcare work
Speaking openly to learn from mistakes	Feeling valued	Provision of emotional support	Recognition of non-work personal context
No blame/no bullying management	Being heard		Work/life balance is respected
Inspiring leaders and collective leadership	Enjoying work		Respecting the right to breaks
Financial investment in staff	Engaged		Being treated well when unwell
Recognize humanity and diversity	Use of caring language		



Clyne W, Pezaro S, Deeny K, Kneafsey R. [Using Social Media to Generate and Collect Primary Data: The #ShowsWorkplaceCompassion Twitter Research Campaign](https://doi.org/10.2196/publichealth.7686). JMIR Public Health Surveill 2018;4(2):e41. URL: <http://publichealth.jmir.org/2018/2/e41>. DOI: 10.2196/publichealth.7686

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# Making change happen



This document is an interactive PDF. Elements have clickable content to help navigate to further information. You can use the buttons at the bottom of each page to navigate the contents or click through page by page.



[Towards commissioning for workplace compassion: a support guide](#)

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# Working examples

Co-creation of posters & lanyards reflecting staff values

'Your Voice Our Future' (YVOF), a dedicated crowdsourcing platform for staff to start honest conversations and be heard

Above and Beyond: a thank you scheme for staff to send personalized cards via staff engagement teams

Schwartz Rounds

Trust wide initiative known as 'Speak Easy' (3x per year)

'Invest in Yourself' microsite launched which is accessible for staff whilst they are out and about.

The Academy of Fabulous Stuff CIC developed and launched the Fab-O-Meter ([www.fab-ometer.com](http://www.fab-ometer.com)), Snapshot data

"tea & biscuits" sessions with one of the members of the leadership team on a rolling 6-week basis.

[Resource pack to support workplace compassion](#)

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# “Experience of Care: Patients and Staff Together”



# “Experience of Care: Patients and Staff Together”



The change



Co-creation approach



Adoption of a ‘scrap the silos’ mindset



Utilisation of data to measure any impact on both patient and staff experience



Identification of a discrete improvement initiative that can be completed in a short timeframe (maximum of 3 months)



[Resource pack to support workplace compassion](#)

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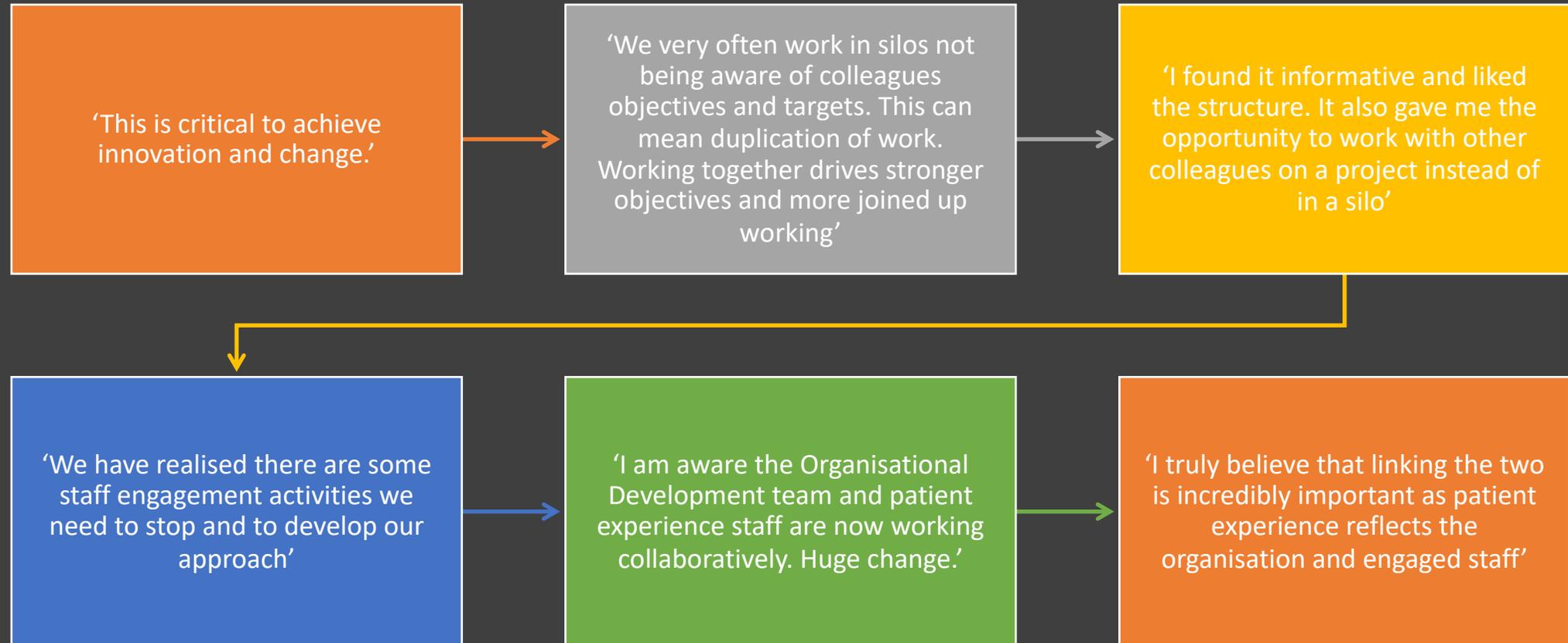
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# The impact



# Covid-19: Supporting nurses' psychological and mental health

- Talk to colleagues, they may well relate!
- Be aware of your peers and whether they have eaten/drank/rested
- Consider buddying systems (noting staff skill mix), huddles, shared breaks and scheduled team 'off-load' sessions
- Check in more than once and be approachable and authentic
- Respect individuality, give recognition, and seek out opportunities to reframe negatives and boost each other's wellbeing
- Be neutral, non-judgmental 'compassionate witness'
- Remind peer about how they are safe here and now
- Brainstorm and problem solve solutions together
- Show understanding and validate concerns
- Praise and give positive feedback
- Evaluate whether staff spaces are conducive to rest and recuperation



Watson, P (2020) Caring for yourself & others during the COVID-19 pandemic: managing healthcare workers' stress. Compassion in Action Webinar Series. Schwartz Center Boston. March 24, 2020. , <https://www.theschwartzcenter.org/media/Schwartz-Center-Watson-SFA-Final-PDF.pdf> Accessed 08.04.2020.

Maben, J. Taylor C. and Bridges, J. 2020. Guidance to support nurses' psychological well-being during Covid-19 crisis. University of Surrey and the University of Southampton © Published online 14.4.20

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# Asking the right questions...

What are/have been your greatest challenges, hassles or frustrations? What are/ have been your greatest rewards or successes? What does it mean to be in this team?

If you don't know how to respond say something like "that must've been incredibly hard. I can't imagine how I feel in that situation"

If you want more information say something like: "it sounds like you've experienced something that nobody should have experienced can you help me understand how that's impacting you now"?

Watson, P (2020) Caring for yourself & others during the COVID-19 pandemic: managing healthcare workers' stress. Compassion in Action Webinar Series. Schwartz Center Boston. March 24, 2020. , <https://www.theschwartzcenter.org/media/Schwartz-Center-Watson-SFA-Final-PDF.pdf> Accessed 08.04.2020.

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# Resource Guides

- [Report and recommendations on workplace support for midwives experiencing domestic abuse.](#)
- [Resource pack to support workplace compassion](#)
- [Support guide towards commissioning for workplace compassion](#)
- Royal College of Midwives [equality and diversity report on work-related stress.](#)
- Maben, J. Taylor C. and Bridges, J. 2020. [Guidance to support nurses' psychological well-being during Covid-19 crisis.](#) University of Surrey and the University of Southampton ©

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Be  
**EXCELLENT**  
each <sup>to</sup> other

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YOU

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