



Lincoln / Newark / Gainsborough

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

Staff & Students



LINCOLN COLLEGE

STAFF AND STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY 2022 – 2025

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1 VISION

- 1.1 To have an extraordinary whole-organisational approach to the Mental Health and Wellbeing of all Lincoln College staff and students. Our leadership, policies and procedures will seek to minimise the triggers for poor mental health, promote wellbeing and equip our College community to build confidence, resilience and knowledge, enabling them to be mentally healthy and exceptionally well prepared for work.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, the national and global concerns about mental health, and the continuing pressures people face living, working and studying in this world means that promoting good mental health and all round wellbeing remains our absolute priority.
- 2.2 This strategy will in part aim to implement the recommendations of the Thriving at Work review of Mental Health and Employers (Stephenson/Farmer 2017¹); we aim to move to a position where, *“all of us become more aware of our own mental health, other people’s mental health and how to cope with our own and other peoples mental health when it fluctuates”* (Stephenson/Farmer).
- 2.3 The capacity, recognition and wellbeing of our people is the first of the four cornerstones of our organisation. This strategy will enable all staff to be clear about the Colleges agreed priorities and responsibilities and the role they can play to assist with embedding these within the organisation. This is especially critical given the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on employees' mental health and wellbeing.
- 2.4 Good mental health is *“a state of [mental] well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and effectively, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”* (Stephenson/Farmer).
- 2.5 Good mental health is essential to students’ academic success and to their participation in a high quality and rewarding student experience. Empowering students to participate in maintaining or improving their mental health provides the foundation not only for academic success, but also in terms of self-esteem, personal resilience and self-confidence, with increased ability to sustain life long positive mental health.

3 CONTEXT

- 3.1 Mental health and wellbeing affects everyone and individuals may fluctuate between thriving, struggling, being well, and being ill and possibly off work.
- 3.2 Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year. The latest official data shows that 32.5 million working days were lost to work-related ill health in 2019/20, with stress, anxiety and depression accounting for almost 18 million of these.

¹ [Thriving at Work Stevenson Farmer Review](#)

- 3.3 There is increasing demand for counselling services and increasing awareness and demand for a range of mental health support across student populations. 75% of chronic adult mental illness starts before the age of 24. There is a need to rethink mental health provision and to adopt a whole system approach that will address prevention, self-care, early intervention and support for those experiencing problems.
- 3.4 Lincoln College has seen a marked increase in students presenting with mental health concerns to personal tutors and the Counselling Service has seen significant growth in demand for its services.
- 3.5 Employee stress related sickness absence remains fairly static year on year at around c. 1116 working days lost c. 23% of all sickness absence.

4 STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The ultimate aim of this strategy is to improve the mental health of Lincoln College staff and students. To create a community which is informed about and recognises good mental health, alongside good physical health as an important requirement for successful learning and contribution.
- 4.2 To foster an environment where mental health is treated with the same importance as physical health, and a climate where people feel able to talk about their feelings, including suicidal feelings and seek help.
- 4.3 To establish a co-ordinated whole college approach engaging all sections of the college community to advance our mental health agenda. Our aim is to bring together existing initiatives for both staff and students to ensure that there is a holistic strategy to tackle these issues.
- 4.4 To provide a positive and supportive environment, where our students will be academically and socially engaged, committed to learning, and oriented towards personal growth.
- 4.5 To ensure that this strategy is successful, it must identify via the Mental Health Action Plan (MHAP):
 - The range and type of interventions and developments that are necessary to sustain good mental health;
 - The areas of the College that have a role to play in supporting the good mental health of all our students and staff.
- 4.6 To achieve a cohort of Lincoln College Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) that support both staff and students. Our goal is to always have at least 1 in 10 employees trained to at least Level 2 in MHFA.
- 4.7 To build resilience in our staff and students to reduce the number of absences related to mental ill health (staff and students) and equip our community with techniques that they can use to avoid reaching a crisis point.

5 PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 5.1 Lincoln College aims to deliver effective communications to staff and students from first point of contact and throughout their journey that:
- Highlights the importance of positive mental health and how to develop/maintain it;
 - Tackle the stigma that is often associated with discussing or disclosing poor mental health.
- 5.2 The College will do this by ensuring that respectful communications are upheld and discrimination, harassment and bullying behaviours are not tolerated. The College outlines reasonable expectations of its staff and students through its conduct policies.
- 5.3 The College will continue to train key staff to understand the enablers of positive mental health and sources of further support and guidance. This will enable staff to effectively record, monitor and signpost staff and students.
- 5.4 The College will be considerate of the impact of its policies and procedures, including academic regulations, on student mental health in addition to other impact factors. Please refer to the Mental Health and Disability Policy and Procedures for further guidance.
- 5.5 The College will be considerate to the impact of its estate on employee and student mental health by ensuring that this is included as a standing agenda item on the College's Health and Safety committee meetings.
- 5.6 The College will enable students and staff to take responsibility for their own wellbeing and develop practices that support positive mental health through organised events in the common room or through further staff development opportunities.
- 5.7 The College will continue to develop and roll out adult resilience training and supportive techniques to both staff and students.
- 5.8 The College's Mental Health Working Group will continue to explore further opportunities to promote positive mental health and share these with the College community.

6 THE MENTAL HEALTH CORE STANDARDS

- 6.1 Lincoln College is committed to the six mental health core standards as referenced by the Thriving at work paper (Stevenson/Farmer).

Core Standard 1. Produce, implement and communicate a Mental Health at Work Action Plan that promotes good mental health of all staff and students and an open organisational culture.

Core Standard 2. Develop mental health awareness among staff and students by making information, tools and support accessible.

Core Standard 3. Encourage open conversations about mental health and the support available when staff and/or students are struggling, during the recruitment process and at regular intervals throughout employment/study, offer appropriate workplace adjustments to staff who require them.

- Core Standard 4. Provide staff with good working conditions and ensure they have a healthy work life balance and opportunities for development.
- Core Standard 5. Promote effective people management to ensure all staff have a regular conversation about their health and wellbeing with their line manager/supervisor and support line managers and supervisors in effective management practices.
- Core Standard 6. Routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing by understanding available data, talking to staff, and understanding risk factors.

7 THE MENTAL HEALTH ENHANCED STANDARDS

7.1 Lincoln College will aim to deliver the following mental health enhanced standards.

- Enhanced Standard 1. Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting.
- Enhanced Standard 2. Demonstrate accountability.
- Enhanced Standard 3. Improve the disclosure process.
- Enhanced Standard 4. Ensure provision of tailored in-house mental health support and signposting to clinical help.

8 MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING CHARTER

8.1 We recognise that our college has a responsibility to create an environment that promotes and proactively supports staff and student wellbeing. That is we have reaffirmed our commitment to staff and students by signing up to the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter](#), created by the Association of Colleges, in conjunction with mental health experts.

8.2 The 11-point document includes commitments to:

- Promoting equality of opportunity and challenging mental health stigma;
- Providing appropriate mental health training for staff;
- Providing targeted individual mental health support where appropriate.

9 RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Suicide Mitigation and Response Policy
- Student Mental Health and Disability Policy and Procedures
- Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Flexible Ways of Working Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- [Menopause Support Hub](#)

10 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA)