

# Developing, implementing and evaluating a ‘Healthy Conversations’ training programme across Sheffield City Council

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## Background

In line with Sheffield City Council’s Corporate Plan and the Care Act (2014), SCC is developing its wider role in promoting wellbeing, helping people to be healthy and preventing ill health. SCC’s vision is to maximise all opportunities to support good health and wellbeing and ‘turn the council into a public health organisation’. SCC has developed and adapted the Making Every Contact Count approach into a ‘Healthy Conversations’ tailored training programme.

## Aims

- To develop and implement an innovative and locally tailored MECC Plus ‘Healthy Conversations’ training programme for community based staff employed by SCC
- To increase staff skills and confidence to offer targeted support to people in vulnerable communities or population groups in Sheffield, enabling them to take control of their own health, wellbeing and general lifestyle choices
- To examine the impact of the ‘Healthy Conversations’ programme on council staff

## Method

- 340 staff in SCC have undertaken a half day MECC Plus ‘Healthy Conversations’ training programme
- 102 participated in the formal evaluation (**Cohort 1:** Community Support Workers, Social Workers, Care Managers. **Cohort 2:** Occupational Therapists /Therapy Assistants, Community Support Assessors. **Cohort 3:** Libraries Home Hub, Older peoples Independent Living Wardens, City Wide Care Alarms. **Cohort 4:** Housing Officers)
- Pre and post training questionnaires were administered
- Assessment of staff wellbeing at baseline, 3 and 6 months post training
- Focus groups 3 and 6 months post training to determine staff’s opinions on the course, how they used Healthy Conversations training with the customers they support and whether training had any impact on their own health and wellbeing

## Results

- Pre training, 65% of participants in the formal evaluation had no previous knowledge of the MECC approach
- The majority rated the training as either ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’
- Course content was tailored to meet the needs of the staff teams and their different customer bases

## Impact

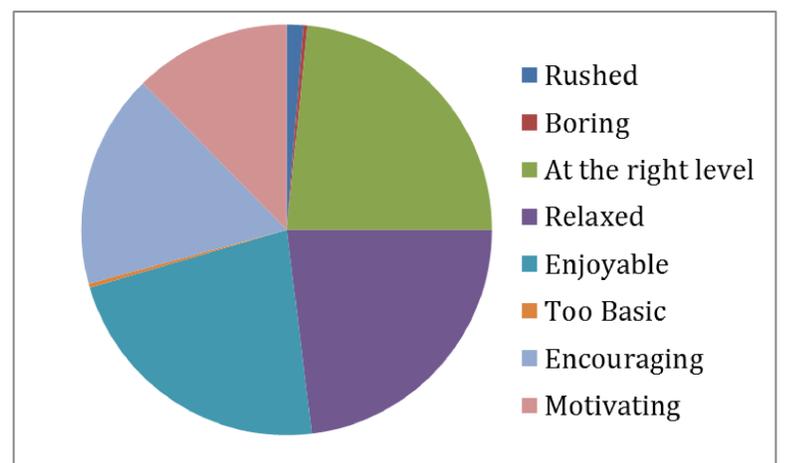
- Post training, staff would feel more comfortable talking to customers about their health and wellbeing
- An increased confidence to discuss issues with customers and a reinforcement of their existing knowledge
- Some felt the training had raised awareness of their own health and wellbeing

*‘Feel a lot more confident, you’re not getting into territory that you shouldn’t be in. You have the council’s permission ‘*

*‘So I’ve started saying ‘.. what’s stopping you?’ I’ve started challenging (customers) why they are not making that change’*

*‘It’s about looking in your own backyard and seeing what is needed there’*

## Staff feedback – training pace and style



## Discussion

- MECC is not a ‘one size fits all’ approach - training needs to be bespoke
- Training is likely to be most effective when targeted towards staff teams with extended customer contact
- For training to have sustained impact it needs to be rooted in a broader strategy of positive customer engagement to promote wellbeing, that has the backing of key stakeholders willing to commit staff time and organisational support