

Self Care Forum Self Care Innovations Award 2023

Award Application Form and Eligibility

The Self Care Forum is inviting applications of good practise and innovations in self care, personalised care, and social prescribing that have made a difference to individuals, groups, or organisations.

Who can apply?

This invitation is open to everyone, whether you are an individual, a community champion, an employer, GP practice, Local Authority, school, college, business, or services organisation (public, private, or charitable). For a guide, see examples table below.

£500 bursary

The winner will receive a £500 bursary to spend on a self care related initiative and the top entries will be included on the Self Care Forum website to share best self care practise and excellence. The winners will be announced during the UK's National Self Care Week (13 – 19 November) as part of its launch and promotional activity.

Closing date for admissions: **31st July 2023.**

Examples of possible initiatives	If specific health-related conditions were targeted, they might include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022's Self Care Week activities • Signposting to services • Protecting mental health and wellbeing • Promoting self care to the shielded population • Self care for the elderly or other specific groups • Self care introduced by employers • Local authority population or community initiatives • Pharmacy initiatives • GP initiatives • Self care education by schools, universities, or community groups such as Scouts, Guides etc • Empowering vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term conditions • Obesity • Diabetes • General health • Nutrition • Exercise • Mental Health • Self-treatable conditions/minor illness

Please use the form below to tell us about your self care initiative.

If you are typing directly into the form, do not worry if the box extends beyond the page – it will continue onto the next one.

Title and contact details.

Title of Initiative (please ensure this is a good description of your initiative in no more than 6 words)

Fedcap's Health and Wellbeing Service

Name of Organisation and Region (please state context, ie general practice, community care etc)
Fedcap, UK-wide not for profit organisation
Name of person/team/individual being nominated
Fedcap's Health and Wellbeing Service
Contact name for entry
Melissa Bridgwood
Contact email for entry
melissa.bridgwood@fedcapemployment.org
Timeframe and dates of initiative
Ongoing, established 2017.
Date of submission
31/07/2023

Problem(s) and how you tackled them.

<p>What was the problem you were trying to tackle? (max 200 words)</p> <p>Health and economic inequality are closely linked – prior to 2012, the gap in average life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas of the UK was reducing year on year. However, during the last decade this has stagnated, and in some areas, we're seeing a reversing trend. Unsurprisingly, reducing this life expectancy disparity is now a high priority for the NHS.</p> <p>Good employment is one of the determinants of health, yet poor health can be a barrier to achieving and sustaining employment. Although unemployment rates across the UK are low, there are more people who are out of work due to health-related reasons than ever before – having risen by 400,000 since 2020 to 2.5 million people across the UK. At Fedcap, we have developed a Health and Employment Integrated Model that successfully breaks down health barriers among those who are struggling to achieve and sustain employment because of their health – our Health and Wellbeing Service. Health improvement is achieved through education and promotion of self-care practices to empower ownership of our customers' health and care to cultivate a growth mindset and build confidence - ultimately leading to support into good employment, a determinant of overall population health and wellbeing.</p>
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Please give a brief description of your self-care innovation (max 250 words)

An experienced employability provider, Fedcap recognised the challenge of the ever-increasing complex health barriers to employment being reported by our customers and responded innovatively. We developed a 'Work First, Health Enabled' approach through our dedicated Health and Wellbeing Service which operates across three of our welfare to work contracts: Restart Scheme, Fair Start Scotland and Work and Health Programme. Our service works with employment advisers who support customers through their journey into work, starting with a three-way triage appointment between the customer and their employment and health advisers.

Using evidence-based interventions, our team of 10 health professionals from clinical backgrounds including counselling, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and General Practice, support our customers to overcome health barriers by empowering them to manage their condition through good self-care practices. Using a person-centred approach, we tailor support to the individuals' needs for up to 12 months pre-employment, and a further 12 months once they are in work. Through a blend of 1:1 and group interventions, we educate our customers about how to manage their conditions, identify positive coping strategies to increase confidence and self-efficacy to manage their health on their own. Interventions may include mindfulness, sleep and routine hygiene, increasing social inclusion by encouraging community integration, education around healthy eating and exercise, and graded exposure and CBT-based exercises to support with managing mood.

At the core of everything we do is empowerment; increasing our customers' self-efficacy to care for themselves using their unique self-care toolkit to sustain work, and keep them healthy for life.

What challenges or barriers were you faced with and how did you solve the problems or overcome the barriers? (max 250 words)

Considering the complex barriers individuals may face when out of work for a long period of time, consistent attendance to appointments can be challenging. To optimise attendance, we provide the option of face-to-face, virtual and phone appointments. Anxiety is often the main barrier to accessing our support, so being flexible with options of virtual and in-person workshops allows for individuals to have autonomy over their choices when they consider engagement with our 24 psychoeducational self-care and condition-specific workshops. For our health service, we have an open-door policy, meaning that if someone does find attendance challenging, they will always be able to come back to the service while on our programme to access support, for as many appointments and as many times as is beneficial to them.

We also make our office spaces as inviting, friendly and welcoming as possible – with designated WeCare areas where we offer food, personal hygiene, and household items for our customers to take at no cost. We take respect and dignity seriously, so we try to make these areas as private as possible, allowing people to take what they need. We also consider financial transparency, which means our customers are aware that travel costs are reimbursed following completed appointments and, depending on circumstances, childcare costs can also be compensated. This helps to reduce any financial or practical barriers to receiving the health support that they need.

Did you collaborate with other partners or organisations, if so, who were they?

As part of our UK-wide Health and Wellbeing Service, we've formed a range of strategic partnerships, from local GP surgeries and Community Mental Health Teams to third party organisations and services. Partnerships are formed to reduce barriers to access healthcare and support for our customers, and the types of organisations that we partner with are often tailored to the needs of the current customers that we are supporting, but are maintained to provide continual support for future customers who might have similar needs. By forming partnerships with other services, we can prevent siloed working of services, which results in streamlined and efficient person-centred care for our customers. It also gives us effective pathways to make access easier, empowering our customers to advocate for themselves when accessing care while on our programme and in the future. Our partnerships range from national charities such as RNIB, to smaller local services like IncludEm in Dunfermline.

Case study: A customer in our Reading Office had struggled to access alcohol support. Their Health Adviser prepared them for and accompanied them to a health assessment at Turning Point Addictions Support. Having this existing partnership with Turning Point, allowed a warm handover, meaning the customer was in an environment to feel confident to communicate their needs - increasing their self-efficacy to attend the support offered by the organisation, as well as advocating for themselves when accessing other services in future. The customer has recently started work, supported by Fedcap in conjunction with Turning Point.

Impact and outcomes

Who was the initiative directed at and what were the benefits to the targeted group or individuals? (max 250 words)

Any of our customers on a welfare to work programme are welcome to access the Health and Wellbeing Service. However, the referrals we receive to the service are for those people who have either a specific physical or mental health concern, e.g. anxiety, depression, COPD,

chronic pain, or a wellbeing concern such as issues with sleep hygiene, weight management or confidence.

Our customers who access the Health and Wellbeing Service benefit in a number of ways. Firstly, increased understanding of their own conditions and how to manage them through 1:1 support and group workshop interventions which help them to build confidence in their own abilities to manage their conditions and care for themselves. Customers benefit from increased social inclusion through forming peer support networks at our in-person local workshops, as well as through support accessing services that we partner with. They also benefit from direct improvements in their health resulting from the interventions that our Health Advisers use in sessions such as goal setting, mindfulness, CBT practices and behaviour change techniques – all tailored to the health and wellbeing needs of the individual. Finally, they benefit by having a team of different specialisms in their Health and Employability teams, who understand health in the context of employment, to help them to find and sustain suitable work – resulting in reduction of economic and health inequalities often experienced by customers.

Were there further benefits to you, your colleagues, your organisation or to a wider area such as the NHS? If so, what were they? (e.g improved job satisfaction, smoother running of facility, happier service users, better use of scarce resources, cost saving)

In 2018, we conducted a research pilot to measure the impact of our integrated Health and Wellbeing Service in achieving the objective of reducing health barriers to moving customers into sustainable employment. Of our group of 332 customers in the pilot, the results showed twice as many customers went into work after accessing the Health and Wellbeing Service as part of their employability journey, as opposed to those who did not. This demonstrates how successful this integrated service has been in supporting our customers to access work using this 'Work First, Health Enabled' approach.

Our colleagues across Fedcap also benefit from our in-house health expertise internally through our monthly WeCare sessions – staff wellbeing sessions facilitated by our Health and Wellbeing Team. These sessions are available for all colleagues to join, where we aim to support our colleagues with their health and wellbeing, both in and out of the workplace, through psychoeducation and promotion of self-care techniques – with 36 sessions and nearly 3,000 attendees over the last three years.

Evidence

Please quantify the benefits of your initiative. (e.g. cost improvement, numbers of people helped, time saved)

- 641 customers have moved into work after accessing the Health and Wellbeing Service since 2022
- 88% of customers demonstrated health improvements, validated by our health outcome measures
- We have provided 430 health and wellbeing workshops online, with 3,385 attendees.
- After attending a health and wellbeing workshop, 371 customers on one of our welfare to work programmes, Restart, moved into work.

Do you have formal or anecdotal evidence of success? (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, informal feedback?)

When Katara joined the Restart Scheme, she was struggling with her mental and physical health and was looking for support to look after herself, particularly when she experienced low mood and high anxiety. She was referred to Fedcap's Health and Wellbeing Service where she worked on developing a healthy daily routine, confidence and motivation. After receiving support from Anita, her Health and Wellbeing Adviser, Katara no longer stays at home due to avoidance behaviour and is looking after herself. She feels more assertive and can confidently engage in conversations with others. Katara is also engaging in her hobbies as well, such as art and crochet. Working part-time as a cleaner, six days a week, Katara's hours are increasing as she is progressing towards full-time hours. She has a better mindset about her life and Fedcap's Health and Wellbeing Service is delighted to have been part of her journey. A photo of Katara and her adviser, Anita, is attached below.

Below is an anonymous statement we received from one of our Fair Start Scotland customers in their discharge survey feedback:

"Ashleigh changed my life - if not for her - I can't put it any more simply than I would not be here. I've went from thinking my life was done to having a job, friends and liking myself again. I didn't think that was possible. I'd tried pills and the doctor, but nothing worked. She believed in me."

What was the cost of this initiative in terms of time, money, and/or other resources? Please be as specific as you can

Rather than signpost our customers externally, we have invested in an in-house team of health professionals who are put through rigorous internal training to best respond to the employability landscape, harnessing the health and employment integrated approach we strive to deliver. We also invest financially in paying their professional registration fees with the relevant governing

bodies (e.g. BABCP, HCPC etc.), provide bi-weekly clinical supervision and Continuous Professional Development.

We also respond to the needs of our customers by investing in relevant health technology - for example, through our partnership with Brain in Hand – an app that provides practical coping strategies for daily living to those with neurodiversity challenges. We have invested in 30 licenses to provide our customers with this technology to support their independence and to access the service with as few barriers as possible.

And, finally...

Are there any lessons you learned or top tips that you would like to share? (max 200 words)

Many of the customers that we support have accessed, or are currently accessing support from other services and find that a difficulty they experience is that these services work in silos, meaning that many of the complexities and barriers that a customer faces to achieving a positive destination are missed. Communication and partnership working between and within services is the key to supporting an individual to achieve good employment, and ultimately good health. Using a biopsychosocial model – considering all determinants of health – creates a true person-centred approach to supporting individuals with their health and social needs. Integrated working helps to build trust in services that are there to support people with health conditions – as well as confidence in their own ability to access this support, and eventually to learn to care for themselves. By using warm handovers, developing strategic partnerships with other local and national services that specialise in relevant areas and considering all aspects of an individual's health and support needs, is how we can successfully support individuals into good work - and good health.

Did you use any of the Self Care Forum's resources? If so, please specify.

Self Care Forum's Facts Sheets are used regularly in 1:1 meetings and local workshops with our customers on programme, as well as the central page for external resources and reports when carrying out CPD with our health and wellbeing colleagues.

Please provide the social media addresses of all those who were involved in the initiative.
[About us](#) | [Fedcap \(fedcapemployment.org\)](http://Fedcap(fedcapemployment.org))

Why do you think this initiative deserves to win the award? (Max 100 words)

As we are seeing increasing numbers of people who are economically inactive due to poor health, further exacerbating the ever-decreasing life expectancy of those experiencing economic inequality, we believe that our service and approach to promotion and education of self-care is a

critical part of the solution - and we've already demonstrated significant positive results. Our Health and Wellbeing Service provides invaluable clinical expertise, maintains a work-focused approach, valuing the importance that work plays in good health and self-care, bridging the gap between health and employment and working towards reducing health and economic inequalities simultaneously.

Do you have an image, materials or weblinks to supplement your application? Please supply no more than 2 images which may also be used to promote your application if successful. Ensure images are square (ie height/width dimensions are the same).



Your application may be chosen to be uploaded to the “best practise” page of the Self Care Forum website to share self care excellence so that others might use the learnings in your application. We will also include your email address so that people may get in touch with you. If you would prefer that your application and/or email address was NOT chosen then please make it clear in the box provided below.

We look forward to receiving your application. Please email your completed form to:

selfcare@selfcareforum.org

About the Self Care Forum

The Self Care Forum supports organisations in helping their communities and service users better understand how to self care. It is the leading independent provider of best practice around self care and the ‘go-to’ place for top quality resources, current opinion, and self care interventions in the UK.

It is a charity and aims to improve public health by promoting self care at national policy level. It creates resources, runs the UK-wide National Self Care Week, and supports robust research evidence.

For more information about the Self Care Forum please go to the website. www.selfcareforum.org.