

Mental Health & Wellbeing EXCHANGE

Wednesday 6th May 2026
10.00-12.00
Microsoft Teams



AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- Nicola Flether - Damar Training
 - Discussion & Reflections
- Kate Day - DH Associates
 - Discussion & Reflections
- Michelle Edwards - 1ST2 Achieve Training
 - Discussions & Reflections
- AoB
- Next Steps



Nicola Fletcher

Head of Apprenticeship Delivery





OUR JOURNEY

Well-being Exchange

Where we started

About Us

- ITP, based in Manchester
- Celebrated our 45th anniversary last year
- I'm Head of Apprenticeship Delivery, with a key role in wellbeing
- Known for a friendly, family-oriented culture

Culture

- Shift from decisions made by a few → to a more inclusive approach
- Greater openness in sharing thinking and plans
- Focus on bringing people on the journey, not just presenting outcomes

What have Damar done?

- Created a dedicated Wellbeing and Fun Taskforce
- Intentionally linked fun with wellbeing across initiatives
- Avoided being tokenistic by not reacting to every awareness day or theme
- Focused on understanding our people, culture, and demographic needs first
- Built around **three pillars of wellbeing**:
 - Financial
 - Physical
 - Psychological
- Ensured inclusivity by offering something for everyone
- Recognised wellbeing must be embedded, not isolated initiatives

What have Damar done?

- Invested in managers
- Sleep insights webinar
- Book club
- Introduced birthday day off
- Introduced wellbeing day off
- Personalised cards from managers
- Right to flexible working introduced early (before it was mandated)
- Menopause support
- Financial health checks
- Unexpected wellbeing treats sent in the post (kept fresh annually)
- Introduced “Professional Standards” guidance
- Annual colleague pairing

What made the difference

- Leadership
- Consistency
- Listening

What we've seen

- More open conversations across teams
- Wellbeing embedded in everyday work
- Stronger colleague connections
- Positive impact on retention and attraction
- Increased sense of connection reported by colleagues

Closing Reflections

- For us, success has come from being intentional and people-focused
- Listening have been vital
- Consistency is key
- Create a space for people to feel safe, connected and have some fun along the way

Questions





Kate Day

Director of Operations

GMLPN Mental Health &
Wellbeing Exchange Chair





Wellbeing & Inclusion

Inclusion – Why this matters

- Many apprentices face barriers (social ,financial, mental health)
- Wellbeing directly impact, retention, performance and success.

Needs Attention – The common failures - inclusion

Relying on learners to self-identify needs - Expecting apprentices to tell you they need support rather than proactively identifying needs

Relying too heavily on previous assessments of need - Taking information from schools, or prior providers without reassessing needs in your context

Lack of specialist SEND expertise - Not having access to proper SEND assessment when needed

Staff not trained properly - Staff can identify obvious needs but not trained on how to assess, plan, and review support effectively

Support plans not reviewed systematically - Plans exist but aren't regularly reviewed or adapted based on progress

Not knowing when to taper or remove support - No graduated approach; support continues unchanged regardless of progress

Inclusion strategy not fully implemented - Strategy exists on paper but not embedded in practice

The toolkit identifies the following groups:

- 

1 disadvantaged learners and apprentices who face challenges
eligible for free school meals in the past 6 years and those from low-income families
- 

2 learners and apprentices with SEND
learners who receive high needs funding; this includes learners and apprentices who receive additional support with their learning and those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- 

3 learners and apprentices who are known (or previously known) to social care
such as those who are under the age of 18 and in care, and care leavers
- 

4 face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being
including those who were previously not in employment, education or training (NEET)
- 

those without level 2 English and/or mathematics.
Define specific conditions that must be met for completion

Inclusion – Starts with knowing your learners from day 1. Learning confidence and wellbeing.

- Mental Health
- Physical Health
- Financial stability
- Sense of belonging
- Emotional readiness

Learning Confidence & Wellbeing

- Menopause
- Lack of confidence/Fear of failure
- Isolation
- Balancing work study and life
- Financial pressure – Low wages/travel costs
- Digital Skills

What does good look like?

- Supportive line managers/mentors/Trainers
- Regular check ins (not just apprenticeship focused)
- Flexible learning approaches
- Temporary adjustments
- Bolstered support
- Graduated approach
- Involving learner

Practical actions

- Build wellbeing into onboarding
- Training in inclusive practices
- Provide mental health resources
- Adjust workloads when needed
- Peer support networks

What expected standard actually looks like

Initial Assessment

Every learner assessed for support needs during onboarding

Multiple methods used - not just self-declaration (e.g., initial assessment tasks, observations, screening tools)

Specialist input sought where needs are identified that require expertise  **Information from prior providers** used to inform but not replace assessment

What expected standard actually looks like

Review and Adaptation

Regular reviews (at least 3 monthly, more frequently if needed)

Evidence of adaptation - support changed based on progress

Graduated approach - support tapered as learners become more independent

Clear triggers for increasing or decreasing support

Learner involvement in reviewing their own progress and support

What expected standard actually looks like

Support Planning

Individual plans for every learner with identified needs

SMART targets that are actually specific and measurable

Clear strategies for how support will be delivered (not vague "additional support")

Reasonable adjustments identified and implemented

Staff training needs identified and addressed

Activity – The evidence test

Find three apprentices identified as having SEND or additional learning needs.

For each one, locate:

Initial assessment record showing how the need was identified (not just "the learner said")

Specialist assessment if needed (e.g., dyslexia screening, external SEND assessment)

Individual support plan with SMART targets

Review records from the last three months showing adaptations made

Evidence of staff training for the person supporting them



Michelle Edwards

Head of Quality and Curriculum





Welcome to
1st2 Achieve Training
We Believe, You Achieve!





Welcome to
1st2 Achieve Training
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How Leaders Support Staff Health and Wellbeing

- Staff wellbeing is a leadership priority
- Healthy staff = better outcomes
- Focus: workload, mental health, development, culture

Leadership Commitment

- High importance on wellbeing
- Support professional & personal needs
- Positive culture

Managing Workload

- Manageable caseloads
- Time to plan
- Reduces stress

Flexible Working

- Flexible time
- Extended holidays
- Work-life balance

Mental Health Support

- Access to counselling
- Encouraged to seek help
- Supportive environment

Professional Development

- Ongoing training
- Focus: teaching, SEND, AI
- Builds confidence



Supportive Culture

- Positive environment
- Strong relationships
- Staff feel valued

Listening and Improving

- Monitor wellbeing
- Respond to feedback
- Continuous improvement

Impact on Staff

- Reduced stress
- Better balance
- Higher satisfaction

Areas for Development

- More training needed
- Improve consistency
- Better monitoring

Key Takeaways

- Leadership drives wellbeing
- Multiple support strategies

Conclusion

- Leadership drives wellbeing
- Multiple support strategies
- Well-being benefits all



**MENTAL
HEALTH
AWARENESS
WEEK**
11-17 MAY 2026

ACTION

For yourself,
for someone else,
for all of us.

NEXT MEETING

Date TBC

Agenda items / topic / do you have anything to share?

GMLPN MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING CHAMPION



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GMLPN
Greater Manchester
Learning Provider Network



GMLPN Mental Health & Wellbeing Champion Role

As Further Education staff, we recognise we have a responsibility to create an environment that promotes and proactively supports learner and staff mental health and wellbeing.

The role:

- Having, or committing to having, a mental health and wellbeing policy accompanied by a clear implementation action plan which is monitored regularly and reviewed annually.
- Creating an open and inclusive ethos which includes respect for those struggling with their mental health.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and challenging mental health stigma through onboarding processes, embedding within provision and curriculum, and by promoting wellbeing through tutorial programmes.
- Encouraging and collecting learners' views on mental health and wellbeing.
- Providing appropriate mental health training for staff e.g. Mental Health First Aid Training.
- Ensuring a consistent and positive approach to staff wellbeing.
- Providing targeted individual mental health support where appropriate or alternatively signposting to external support services.
- Providing relevant information to staff, learners, employers, parents and carers.
- Establishing effective links with local health system and voluntary sector mental health providers.
- Promoting the benefit that physical activity and sport has on mental wellbeing.
- Attend GMLPN events and webinars focused on mental health & wellbeing.
- Share good practice and resources across GMLPN.
- Be available to help other network members if they need advice and support.

Your organisation needs to be a member of GMLPN in order to become a GMLPN Mental Health & Wellbeing Champion.

[Click here to sign up to be a
GMLPN Mental Health &
Wellbeing Champion](#)



This champion role has been adapted from the work GMLPN undertook in partnership with AoC, funded by the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership.



Mental Health & Wellbeing

EXCHANGE

Thank you!