

# Staff Wellbeing Funding Guidance

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## *Guidance for Staff Applying for Charity Funding*

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### About This Guidance

As an independent NHS charity, we support initiatives that improve staff wellbeing, morale, and experience across the Trust.

Charitable funding must be used appropriately and in line with Charity Commission guidance. This means we can fund additional wellbeing support—but not replace the Trust’s responsibilities as an employer.

This document explains:

- What we can fund
- What we cannot fund
- What we look for in applications

Funding is designed to **enhance—not replace—core NHS provision**.

Our aim is to ensure funding is used fairly, responsibly, and delivers meaningful benefit to staff.

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### What Do We Mean by “Above and Beyond”?

The NHS Trust is responsible for:

- Health & safety requirements
- Basic workplace facilities and maintenance
- Core staffing and service delivery
- Occupational Health services

The Charity supports:

- Wellbeing programmes and activities
  - Therapeutic or recovery-focused support
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## What is Staff Wellbeing Funding?

Staff Wellbeing Funding supports projects that improve the **mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing** of NHS staff.

This includes initiatives that:

- Help staff manage pressure and build resilience
- Support recovery and wellbeing
- Improve the working environment

Strong applications demonstrate **clear wellbeing benefit and lasting impact**.

### What We Can Fund

#### 1. Wellbeing Spaces

- Staff wellbeing rooms
- Quiet/reflection spaces
- Outdoor or garden areas
- Relaxation or sensory environments

*(Must support active wellbeing use—not just refurbishment)*

#### 2. Emotional & Psychological Wellbeing

- Peer support initiatives
- Reflective practice sessions
- Trauma-informed support
- Facilitated wellbeing sessions
- Structured therapeutic support

#### 3. Physical & Lifestyle Wellbeing

- Exercise, yoga, or movement sessions
- Mindfulness and relaxation

- Fatigue and sleep support
- Healthy lifestyle initiatives

#### **4. Nature & Creative Wellbeing**

- Green space activities
- Outdoor reflection sessions
- Arts, crafts, or creative programmes
- Sensory engagement activities

#### **5. Skills & Personal management techniques**

- Stress management and resilience training
- Coping strategies and self-regulation

#### **6. Pilot or Innovative Projects**

- New wellbeing approaches
- Time-limited pilots (typically up to 12 months)
- Projects with evaluation and potential for wider rollout

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### **⚠ What We Cannot Fund**

#### **Core NHS Responsibilities**

- Salaries or permanent posts
- Overtime, agency, or staffing costs
- Core Occupational Health services
- Routine operational/service delivery costs
- Basic facilities the Trust should provide

#### **Mandatory or Statutory Requirements**

- Mandatory training
- Health & safety requirements
- PPE, uniforms, or essential equipment
- Legal obligations of the Trust

#### **Gifts, Treats, Rewards and Financial Benefit**

- Vouchers, prizes, or incentives
- Staff appreciation or reward schemes
- Cakes, snacks, or catering unless part of an approved programme
- One-off morale boosters
- Individual hardship payments

### **Unstructured or Low-Impact Activities**

- Informal social events & One-off activities with no wellbeing focus
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## **Additional Guidance**

### **Can staff costs be included?**

Yes – but only where:

- They are directly linked to a funded wellbeing project
- They are temporary and project-specific

We cannot fund:

- Permanent posts
- Core staffing or service delivery
- Ongoing commitments that are not sustainable

The Charity Fund the **project** and the costs related to delivering that project, not individual staff salaries.

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### **Can we apply for spaces or equipment?**

Yes – if clearly supporting wellbeing.

We will not fund:

- Standard facilities expected from the Trust
  - General refurbishments without clear wellbeing purpose
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## Can we fund events for staff?

We may support:

- Structured programmes with clear wellbeing outcomes
- Facilitated therapeutic or reflective sessions

We will not fund:

- Social events or celebrations
  - Food-based or “treat” initiatives – unless an agreed Trust wide programme
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## Do projects need to benefit everyone?

No. Projects can target:

- Specific teams
- High-pressure or vulnerable staff groups

However, they must:

- Be fair and proportionate
  - Deliver meaningful benefit beyond individuals
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## Do projects need to be Trust-wide?

Not always. We support:

- Large Trust-wide programmes
- Smaller targeted initiatives

Both must demonstrate **clear need and impact**.

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## Do projects need evidence?

Yes. Applications should include:

- A clear need or rationale
- Expected outcomes
- How impact will be measured

*(Evaluation is required for grants over £25,000)*

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## **Before You Apply**

Ask yourself:

- Does this improve staff wellbeing meaningfully?
- Is this beyond what the Trust should provide?
- Is it fair, inclusive, and proportionate?
- Can we measure impact?
- Is it sustainable?

If yes, your project is likely suitable.

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## **i Important Information**

As a charity, we must:

- Comply with Charity Commission rules
- Demonstrate public benefit
- Ensure fair and transparent allocation of funds

We cannot fund NHS employer responsibilities, even where they are beneficial to patients.

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## **Contact Us**

**If you are in doubt as to whether Charity funding would be available, or would like to talk through your idea, please contact the Grants Team.**

[nuhnt.charitygrants@nhs.net](mailto:nuhnt.charitygrants@nhs.net)