 

**Civility Saves Lives – an Overview**  July 2023

***“ Civil work environments matter because they reduce errors, reduce stress, improve patient outcomes and quality of work “***

1. **Introduction**

The aim of the Civility Saves Lives (CSL) campaign is to create positive workplace relationships and environments where the culture is improved by raising awareness of unprofessional and unproductive behaviours, understanding the negative impact that rudeness (incivility) can have, and promoting the value of civil, caring and compassionate interactions.

CSL is identified as a priority approach within the NHSGGC Workforce strategy plan. The organisation is working to broaden the range of CSL activities implemented over recent years to raise awareness and expand the learning of this initiative, developing it into a mainstream, recognisable and understood concept across all teams and functions.

The approach is relevant for all staff across all areas of the organisation, clinical and non-clinical. The principles emphasise the responsibility of us all to work together, make conscious decisions about how we behave, so that everyone feels respected, valued, supported and empowered to carry out their work.

**CSL Vision in NHSGGC :**

***Awareness*** - That all staff are aware of the benefits and initiatives they can agree in their own departments that promote encouragement and support between colleagues, and that they are also aware of the impact of incivility on patient safety, staff wellbeing and performance.

***Agency*** - That we have an established approach (completely independent of formal HR process) to address incivility when it happens, that is available to all staff and is compassionate and positive, recognising we are all human and can make mistakes with our behaviour.

1. **Background and evidence**

The Civility Saves Lives movement was initially founded and developed by Dr Chris Turner, Consultant in Emergency Medicine West Midlands. Dr Turner drew on compelling research evidence that incivility in healthcare settings can have severe consequences for patient safety, with other high costs including staff wellbeing, attendance, turnover, productivity, quality of work in all workplace settings.

Some of the evidence includes:

* Being embarrassed or humiliated by an interpersonal incident can reduce an individual’s ability to think by up to 80% for up to several hours.
* In critical incidents around 70% of fatal or near fatal events have a preceding incidence of incivility in the previous few hours.
* In a survey, up to 90% of respondents had personal experience of incivility and 98% had witnessed it as part of a team.
* As a consequence, other impacts were that people spent less time at work, more time avoiding people, were less productive and around 12% left their job.
* It reduces team performance by around 25% and enthusiasm for staying on by around 50%. If staff are in an educational capacity the ability to learn is significantly reduced if they are stressed.

In its simplest form, civility is about how we treat each other at work. Civility Saves Lives works at the end of the spectrum of behaviours where they may be found to be rude, disrespectful, offensive or undermining but would not involve formal procedures.

Fundamentally, incivility or rudeness is defined by how it is interpreted by the recipient, regardless of the intent, and although it is often considered lower-level behaviour, it has consequences for those on the receiving end and those who witness it. Repeated incidents cause severe disruption and stress in the workplace. Conversely, when members of staff work in an environment of positive encouragement and support, their performance, productivity and wellbeing are enhanced.

Improvements can be achieved through relatively simple efforts by staff in each team and department to:

1. Be more aware of our own behaviours (positive and negative) and the impact that these behaviours have on each other, on our performance and ultimately on patient care and safety.
2. Collectively agree to do the small things that can make a big difference in creating a positive workplace.
3. Collectively agree on how we tackle incivility when it occurs, in a way that is positive by ‘calling it out with compassion’ and respect, doing this completely separately from, and well before, any formal HR process is needed.
4. **CSL activity in NHSGGC**

A CSL plan to progress the campaign is in place. Activity undertaken to date in NHSGGC includes:

* Hosting the national Civility Scotland event in 2021, sharing learning and experience across other health boards.
* Introductory presentations to sector, directorate and other senior management teams.
* Staff engagement workshops delivered to approx.100 colleagues from across disciplines in acute and partnerships.
* Tailored sessions provided to individual teams and services in response to specific requests for intervention support.
* CSL principles are included in trainee, FY1 induction, and other group education platforms.
* CSL incorporated into board-wide leadership development programmes, including Ready to Lead, Medical Manager programme, local leadership programmes and tailored team and leadership development interventions.
* Awareness raising about CSL has been incorporated in the acute and corporate Investors in People cluster development plans.
* A Civility Saves Lives webpage has been set up to host information, resources and useful links. The webpage will continue to be developed over coming months.

In addition to the above activities, more recent progress / planned actions include:

* CSL Champions Groups\*\* have been established within acute and corporate services, aligned with each of the 6 Investors in People Clusters, with the aim of engaging colleagues across local teams and services, raising awareness of civility and creating positive workplaces. HSCPs are also in the process of identifying the most effective methods for expanding awareness in a structured way.
* An overarching NHSGGC CSL Group has been established, which includes representatives from local CSL groups, as a forum for sharing updates, strategies and developing CSL practice across the organisation.
* Continued engagement with senior teams and services across all parts of the organisation
* Trained Civility Leads will be identified within individual teams to support compassionate conversations which help to tackle instances of incivility in a positive way
* A robust training package for Civility Leads has been developed in preparation for delivering with the first cohort
* As an initial pilot, work with a small number of teams where the need for more in-depth support to create positive workplaces has been identified. The role of Civility Leads will be an integral part of this
* Periodic communications across the organisation to enhance awareness raising
* Further development of promotional and resource materials

1. **More about Civility Champions \*\***

Identifying Civility Champions helps to promote local ownership of CSL, allowing us to take a planned approach, and participating in Champions Groups provides opportunity to share experiences and ideas, as well as providing a picture of progress across areas.

Role of Civility Champions

* Civility Champions can be from across any profession, band, service
* Numbers are not be restricted as it is likely Champions cohort will grow over time
* Have an enthusiasm and interest in getting involved in supporting positive ways of working
* Link with managers in their own service to discuss local approaches to raising general awareness
* Engage colleagues within their service area, share communications about CSL and spread awareness of the importance of civility and kindness, and the impact of rude behaviour
* Encourage colleagues to raise awareness of CSL
* Encourage teams to think about the small things, initiatives, gestures, activities that make a difference in creating a positive workplace

Role of local Civility Groups

* Discuss progress of CSL, share learning, explore the most effective approaches for raising awareness
* Highlight local teams or departments which may benefit from a more focused approach/ intervention to support relationships and team working
* Consider the role of Civility Leads and how they are identified *\*see information below re Civility Leads*
* Explore communication strategies and resources
* Update/ maintain links with other relevant groups, eg IiP Workforce groups, to share progress, examples of positive impact
* A small number of representatives from the group are part of the GGC CSL Practice Group

**\*\* Are you interested in becoming a Civility Champion for your area, and / or joining your local group?\*\***

Please contact your sector/ directorate/ partnership Organisational Development Advisor or email directly to : [Julie.Pearson@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Julie.Pearson@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)

1. **Civility Leads**

In addition to awareness raising, part of the recommended Civility Saves Lives approach is to address uncivil or rude behaviours by ‘calling it out with compassion’. This is an early, informal, and confidential conversation which is undocumented and out-with any formal HR process. The aim is to restore workplace relationships at the most appropriate and effective level before the situation becomes more serious or requires escalation.

To support this approach, the ‘Civility Leads’ role is being established as part of the organisation’s model. The Leads will be identified/ nominated within local teams as trusted colleagues at peer level who are willing to undertake the role of Civility Lead.

The role may involve acting as a provider of feedback on behalf of the receiver of rude or uncivil behaviour, or they may support the receiver to prepare for having the conversation themselves with the source of the poor behaviour. The conversation approach is supportive and compassionate, aimed at making the person aware of the adverse impact of their behaviour.

Key points :

* The initial plan will be to pilot the Civility Leads role in a small number of areas where the need for more targeted support/ intervention has been identified
* Leads will undergo a robust programme of training to support them in this role
* The training package has been developed to include a 1 day facilitated course
* A set of Civility Leads Principles has been developed and agreed in partnership, which outlines clearly what is within the scope and remit of the role and what is not
* A skills/ peer group will be established to enable Leads to meet regularly and receive ongoing support

1. **Link to the National Civility Saves Lives Website:** [**Home | Civility Saves Lives**](https://www.civilitysaveslives.com/)
2. **For additional information on CSL or to discuss in more detail, please contact :**

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