

Case Study



The Wallich



Healthy Working Wales Silver Corporate Health Standard Award

About us

As Wales's largest homelessness and rough sleeping charity, The Wallich operates under three core objectives: getting people off the streets; keeping people off the streets; and creating opportunities for people.

The Wallich wants to create a Wales where people stand together to provide hope, support and solutions to end homelessness.

Running 70 diverse projects, across 18 local authorities, The Wallich works with more than 9,000 homeless and vulnerable people every year across Wales with the support of volunteers alongside more than 400 employees.

Highlights

- We have continued to deliver frontline services through a combination of face-to-face and online delivery.
- Safe areas and distancing has been marked in our premises, we have undertaken stringent risk assessments of all areas and cleaning procedures have been issued to all services.
- We issued working-from-home tools and accommodated flexible working hours for parents to undertake home schooling.
- During 'Carers' Week', policies supporting individuals caring for family members and the PHW 'How are you doing?' campaign were promoted.
- We provided access to wellbeing experts on a 1-2-1 and group basis and a comprehensive resource library to support mental wellbeing including advice, self-help guides and resources like podcasts and mindfulness videos.
- Initiatives to encourage physical fitness are promoted including walking challenges and workout videos.
- Achieving the HWW Silver Corporate Health Standard has meant that health and wellbeing was already embedded in the organisation and is at the forefront of everything we do.
- Our pandemic response has resulted in us becoming more resilient as an organisation, adapting to the needs of our client group whilst supporting the wellbeing and safety of our workforce.

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What we've been up to

In the past 3 months, our teams have still been here for people experiencing homelessness



24 key services open
24/7



Enabling all residents to isolate safely during lockdown



Securing and distributing 100,000 PPE items



Supporting more than 3,500 people in housing need



Connecting 345 people to the internet (previously digitally excluded)



Delivering 13,000 hot meals to people experiencing homelessness in temporary accommodation across Wales



Accepting 25 referrals to our BOSS Project from individuals released from prison (since March)



Supporting 74 people to access peer support or counselling by telephone



Designing and distributing printed Activity Packs for residents to help combat boredom

(March – May 2020)



Moving frontline online

We had to act quickly to move our staff from frontline to online ensuring that we:

- Kept people safe
- Prevented Covid-19 transmission within our The Wallich communities
- Reassured our staff and clients
- Kept our critical services running

Remote working

The Wallich kept 24 critical services open during lockdown as many residential services require face-to-face support. Other employees worked from home and adapted to supporting clients remotely. We encouraged the use of technology for regular contact with staff and service users. In addition, 345 residents have been connected to the internet who were previously digitally excluded.

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Social distancing solutions

Safe areas and distancing has been marked in premises, we have undertaken stringent risk assessments of all areas and cleaning procedures have been issued to all services. A personal protective equipment (PPE) supply was rolled out with the organisation working alongside Welsh Government and other partners to secure and distribute a meaningful supply.

Flexible working

All staff received full pay whilst working from home or shielding with no loss of contractual sick pay if diagnosed with Covid-19 or told to self-isolate.

The charity issued working-from-home tools to support people to adjust to a different way of working. We accommodated flexible working hours for parents to undertake home schooling, and provided online resources for colleagues, service users and children.

During 'Carers' Week', policies supporting individuals caring for family members and the PHW 'How are you doing?' campaign were promoted.

Mental and physical health & wellbeing

We have a comprehensive resource library that supports mental wellbeing including advice on managing individual mental health, self-help guides and online resources such as podcasts, videos on mindfulness, reflexology and live group sessions. Websites such as the Mental Health Foundation were promoted and meaningful interactions encouraged.

The Wallich encourages staff to participate in initiatives such as National Walking Month, #TRY20 challenge, scavenger hunt challenges along with providing videos of strength and cardio online workouts. The Bridgend teams have carried out a 10,000-step a day walking challenge.

Lessons learnt

Having achieved the HWW Silver Corporate Health Standard meant that health and wellbeing was already embedded in the organisation and at the forefront of everything we do. We were able to quickly respond to the challenges of the pandemic by adapting the policies and practices we already had in place which enabled us to provide our workforce with appropriate support mechanisms in a timely manner. We have become more resilient as an organisation, flexing to the needs of our client group whilst supporting the wellbeing and safety of our workforce.



Initiatives to encourage physical fitness are promoted including walking challenges and workout videos