



# Flash of brilliance

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Service: East Kent Referral Unit



Kent Community Health  
NHS Foundation Trust

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## Aim: What were you trying to achieve?

In line with the national guidance on flexible working, it was important that colleagues working in the trust's East Kent Referral Unit had equal opportunities to work flexibly. The team has a service level agreement of handling 80 per cent of calls within 20 seconds, with a less than 5 per cent abandonment rate. It was important these levels were maintained to meet patient needs. The service needed to be accessible from 8am until 10pm, seven days a week.



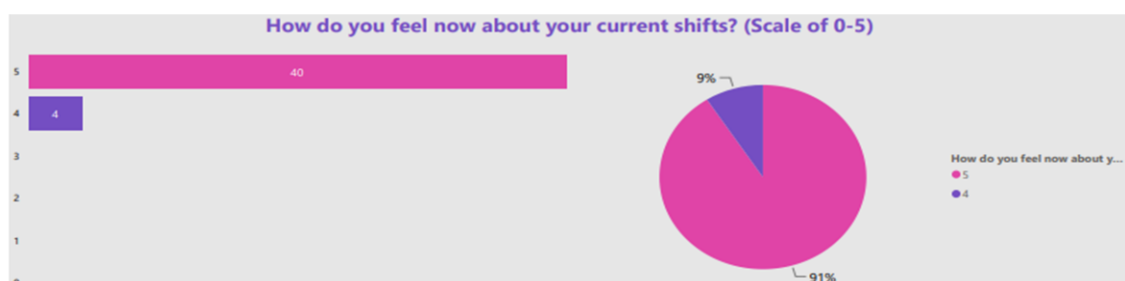
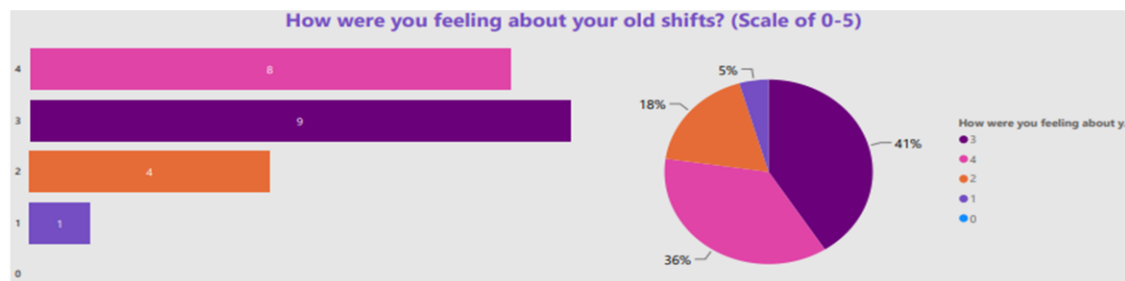
## Change ideas: What changes did you make?

A rotational shift pattern between 8am and 10pm, over seven days a week, was in existence. Colleagues were allocated shifts within these time frames each month. There was no set pattern for each person. All colleagues were invited to review their hours, if they wished. This provided them with the option to choose different shifts and to have the opportunity to work longer hours over fewer working days. Colleagues put forward their preferences. These were then looked at, in line with the needs of the service. A trial took place pilot with these requests hours, to see if they worked for those using the service, colleagues who had chosen set shift patterns, the team and the unit.



## Measures/results: What was the impact of the changes?

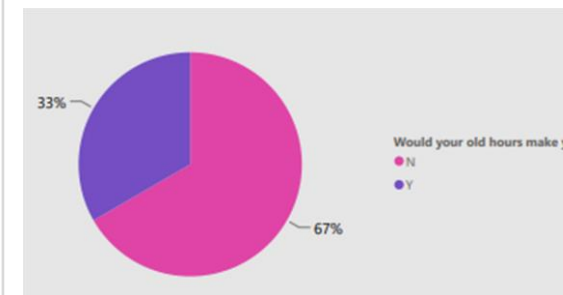
Colleagues were very happy with the changes and they felt they had been listened to. They said it gave them a better work life balance and improved morale. After three months the shift pattern changes were reviewed again and below are the results from the feedback analysis.



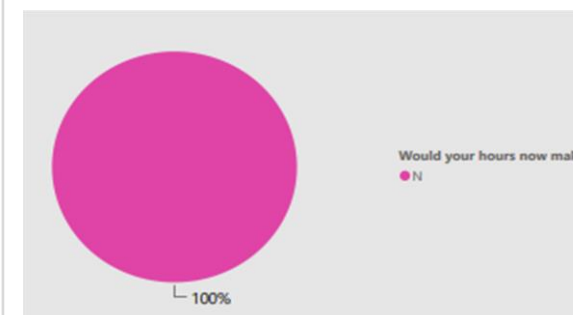
## Lessons learned and what's next?

The main results here show that if you are able to meet the needs of your service users and staff, this can help improve team morale. The results show that it helps with staff retention too, which is high on the agenda at Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT).

### Would your old hours make you think about leaving?



### Would your hours now make you think about leaving?



The results from this team will be shared with the KCHFT Flexible Working Group to help with adoption of some of these principles within other services, to help with retention across the trust.