Cultivating Wellbeing:

Unpacking the Health and Well-Being Benefits of Growing Edible Plants for NHS24 Employees



of EDINBURGH



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Affiliations

Design HOPES, The University of Strathclyde, The University of Edinburgh, NHS Highland, NHS 24, Public Health Scotland, Campy Growers

Research Context

Designed in consultation with senior staff at NHS24, Public Health Scotland and a local community garden, Campy Growers.

Cultural contextual factors considered: patient care and service delivery are paramount making **time a critical resource**. NHS24 staff are on 8-week rotation. Staff work anti-social hours so joining external clubs can be challenging, therefore **on demand content** is desirable.

Intervention

Home growing group intervention implemented to support the health and well-being of NHS Scotland Staff.

Based on established well-being benefits of nature-based interventions and nature in the home

Implementation

Staff provided with kits with all the necessary materials to begin growing their own plants at home in their own time.

Staff kept diaries, answered surveys & took photos of their growing journey

Mechanism of Impact

Thematic analysis of diary entries across bio psycho social-spiritual framework of health.

Behavior change survey analysis using COM-B framework

Iterative consultation with senior staff

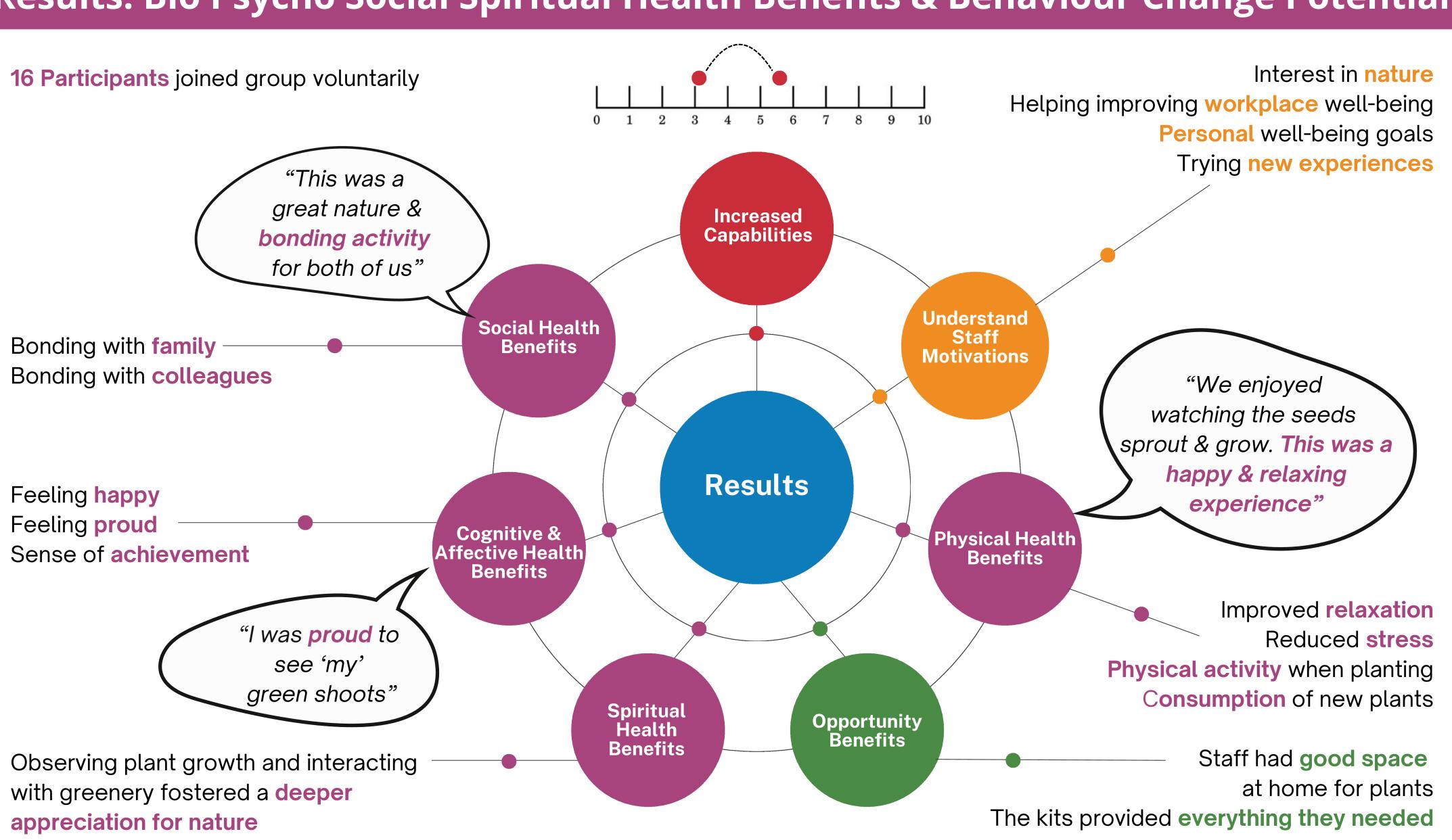
Outcomes

Staff reported increased:

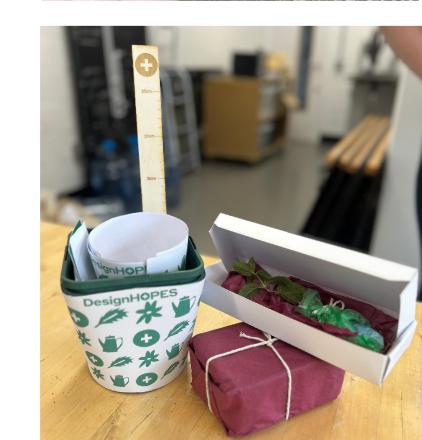
- Growing capabilities
- Connection to nature
- Feelings of relaxationFeelings of happiness
- Social connections with family & colleagues
- Change to dietary intake



Results: Bio Psycho Social Spiritual Health Benefits & Behaviour Change Potential









MRC Evaluation: Going beyond intended outcome

Time was the key challenge identified due to busy work demands. Recommend flexible options to accommodate diverse schedules.

Diaries and photos provided valuable data but required high time commitment.

Explore easier data collection

methods to reduce burden

How does intervention interact with context?

How can intervention be refined?

Ripple Effects and Consequence Other Impact?

Participants involved family in planting, watering, and decorating, extending the interventions benefits to

others

resource & outcome consequences of the intervention?

What are the

By leveraging community garden resources to create low-cost kits, the benefits to staff and their families proved highly worthwhile

Can it be replicated in other work places?

This pilot demonstrated the study's **feasibility**, with minor tweaks making it adaptable to other contexts

Conclusion

The intervention demonstrated clear **health and wellbeing benefits for participants**, alongside increased confidence in growing plants.

Many participants expressed a strong intention to continue growing, highlighting the potential for sustained behaviour change.

To ensure long-term impact, partnerships with gardening and nature-based organisations are recommended to provide ongoing support and resources. Feedback from this pilot phase will inform the development of a scalable model tailored to other workplace environments.

Stakeholders from NHS24 and Public Health Scotland remain actively engaged in refining the programme for Stage 2, where these enhancements will be implemented to maximise success and reach.

