

Recovery Objective 3: Promoting Individual & Organizational Wellness

Objectives: To support employees to achieve optimal physical, mental, emotional, and social health post-pandemic and to facilitate organizational wellness during and after MLHU’s pandemic response.
To identify recent culture shifts that employees recommend maintaining and/or desired culture shifts.

Key Recommendations	UPDATE on IMPLEMENTATION - As of December 2021
Health and Safety	
<p>1. Provide regular communications to staff on health and safety topics of concern (e.g., COVID-19 exposure, psychological safety in the workplace. PTSD) through email, team meetings, and/or virtual Town Halls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation was included on MLHU’s provisional strategic plan • Information, updates, and links to resources related to health, safety, and wellness have been included weekly in MLHU’s virtual Town Hall meetings since early 2020 • 13 emails were circulated to all staff in 2021
<p>2. Provide appropriate levels of de-escalation training for all staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vaccine Clinic Leadership Team and some Client Service Representatives received online crisis intervention training; additional in-person sessions are scheduled for early 2022 • Further investigation into training providers and training opportunities are being reviewed • Security personnel have been employed to promote staff safety at the Citi Plaza location, as well as at vaccine clinic locations • Regular communications have been sent to all employees, as well as regular town hall updates providing information about how to handle escalated clients and advising that abusive language and treatment of MLHU employees will not be tolerated
<p>3. Establish measures of compliance with safety policies and support compliance, where needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee-reported incidents are reviewed and tracked to determine incidence rates and reported to the JOHSC every three months • Active screening compliance is reviewed daily and staff not in compliance are followed up with • Staff immunization rates for COVID-19 and influenza vaccination are tracked for compliance, robust follow up with staff not currently in compliance; data is available upon request • Mandatory Health and Safety Training is tracked in Dayforce and reported to the JOHSC every three months
<p>4. Regularly reinforce ergonomic safety education and introduce additional tools and resources for ergonomic safety for staff working remotely and in office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support provided to vaccination clinic staff including onsite reviews and consultations • Content on office ergonomics at home has been shared at various townhall meetings, through all staff e-mails, and is available on the Be Well website and the HUB • Staff have been reminded that they can consult with Occupational Health and Safety when concerns or discomforts arise
Recognition	
<p>5. Ensure opportunities for individualized recognition and celebration of key work-related (e.g. retirement) and personal milestones are available and meaningful to employees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and teammates have created opportunities to recognize and celebrate employees as possible in consideration of pandemic restrictions and workload

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual and in-person gatherings (within guidelines), KudoBoards, and other acknowledgements and celebrations have been offered as possible over the year for important life events (e.g., retirement, birthday, maternity leave, engagement/wedding) This recommendation will be more feasible to implement once staff are repatriated to their 'home' teams and pandemic restrictions are lifted As per usual practice, Staff Day included recognition and gifts for key years of service
6. Seek out opportunities to value and recognize staff contributions in all MLHU programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recommendation was included on MLHU's provisional strategic plan Since mid-2021, staff recognition has been included in MLHU's weekly Town Hall meetings; recorded Town Hall meetings are available online for those who can't attend them live Staff have been made aware of the process for recognizing each other, through email and Town Hall communications Recognition training for all leaders is being explored
7. Promote a sense of pride in individual and organizational work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodic communications from the senior leadership and BOH members to all staff have been provided with the intention of promoting pride in individual and organizational work; these communications have occurred through one-on-one and team meetings, Town Hall meetings, all-staff emails, Staff Day celebration, and MLHU's internal response to negative media attention
Mental Health and Wellness	
8. Provide regular communications and evidence-based mental health resources to managers to support them in promoting mental wellness in themselves and their staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MLHU's Employee Family Assistance Program provider, Homewood Health provides monthly newsletters focusing on a variety of mental health topics; these are provided to staff on a monthly basis through the Be Well Highlights and the Be Well website Homewood Health also offers quarterly vitality newsletters, specifically geared to leaders Homewood Health also offers webinars that are available to all staff to attend on various mental health topics, which are promoted to employees by Be Well
9. Provide regular communications and evidence-based resources to front-line staff to support their mental wellness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MLHU's Employee Family Assistance Program provider, Homewood Health provides monthly newsletters focusing on a variety of mental health topics. These are provided to staff on a monthly basis through the Be Well Highlights and the Be Well website Homewood Health and Be Well's wellness partner Employee Wellness Solutions Network offer webinars on a regular basis that are shared with staff through the Be Well Highlights and the Be Well website In addition to the above, mental health topics and support for fostering good mental health are shared at Town Hall and in content shared through the weekly wellness Wednesday communications
10. Offer additional optional EFAP-provided group session(s) for all staff to debrief the pandemic experience, with open sessions and options for separate sessions for various groups/roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group EFAP sessions were provided to the Case and Contact Management Teams, including specific sessions for leadership of these teams Crisis Debriefs were also utilized when staff and/or leadership expressed a need for additional support for their teams

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An external consultant conducted small group sessions with managers in Fall 2021 to debrief challenges experienced as a leader, using the “Joy In Work” framework • In 2022, additional small group sessions will be offered to all staff to support further transitions and reflection on the pandemic experience
<p>11. Consider strategies to mitigate or address stress, burnout, and/or post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) during times of organizational transition and redeployment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation was included on MLHU’s provisional strategic plan • SLT made decisions and took steps to reduce the number of transitions experienced by staff with redeployment and repatriation (e.g., maintaining redeployment status in anticipation of future redeployment needs; increasing the workforce through significant external hiring to address workload challenges and support repatriation) • As part of negotiations with ONA in May 2021, MLHU offered additional benefits coverage for mental health providers and services. These additional benefits supports have been extended to all employees. According to data from our benefits provider, the per capita dollar usage of these mental health supports has quadrupled from 2020 rates since implementing this benefit increase • Efforts have been made to provide as much notice as possible regarding redeployment and repatriation • Healthy Start Leadership Team met with an external consultant prior to communicating with staff in November 2021 regarding strategies to support staff transition in anticipation of divisional restructuring in 2022
<p>12. Ensure managers schedule intentional, regular, meaningful, and appropriate self-care/wellness check-ins with each employee (e.g., breaks & lunches, planned vacation, workload), assess needs, and implement strategies to support improved wellness where needed (e.g., during staff transitions).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most managers and directors met regularly with their supervisees, with reminders and intentional efforts to have meaningful regular check-ins about wellness • Family Home Visitors were provided with extra support from the EFAP provider during their transition in Nov/Dec 2021 • To support wellness, the submission, review and approval of employee vacation plans was mandated
<p>Connectedness and Cohesion</p>	
<p>13. Dedicate time and intentional effort to ongoing and new opportunities to enhance employee sense of connectedness and belonging within their own teams and beyond (including when returning to ‘home’ teams after COVID), for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create optional ‘Get to Know You’ area (HUB/Dayforce) with personal and work-related information • Use team building strategies, including team planning and goal setting • Promote social connections and interactions among staff through virtual / in-person gatherings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some teams have been able to implement some team building strategies; however, this recommendation will be prioritized as teams are re-established as the pandemic subsides • Most teams incorporated opportunities for connectedness at the beginning of their meetings • The EHID division held a virtual division meeting which included an exercise to promote connectedness; Healthy Start held an in-person division meeting in the fall • The IDC/COVID-19 team has prioritized wellness for 2022 and assigned a COVID team Be Well representative to ensure the program offerings of Be Well are being taken advantage of by the team
<p>14. Continue offering optional Be Well activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 20 activities were offered by the Be Well Committee in 2021 (e.g., 4-week virtual exercise sessions, yoga, virtual coffee breaks, podcast club, virtual Be Well Health Fair, virtual workshops, virtual fitness challenge)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Be Well activities has varied depending on the activity; interactive activities, such as online games have seen higher uptake, and a number of activities (e.g., online exercise and webinars) are recorded for staff to view at any time and uptake on these recording cannot be tracked
<p>15. Explore the need and options for a mentorship program within and across teams.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal progress has been made on this recommendation at this time
<p>16. Be collectively intentional in language, decisions, communications, processes, and actions to support a culture of unity and cohesion in the organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Leadership Team has worked intentionally to implement this recommendation consistently (e.g., all-staff communications, Town Halls, updates on changes and phases in pandemic response, etc.) • No formal plan or evaluation has been developed for this recommendation • Implementation of recommendations from the Diversity and Inclusion Assessment will assist with this goal; some recommendations have already been implemented and in Q4 2021 a new HR Equity Specialist was hired to focus on moving this work forward
<p>Other</p>	
<p>17. Continue to strengthen and demonstrate a culture of mutual trust across the organization (e.g., in words, actions, decisions, communications, processes, priorities).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All questions at Town Hall – regardless of how challenging they are – are read aloud and responded to at each Town Hall meeting • Considerable effort was invested in building a trusting, collaborative relationship with union partners through weekly touch-base meetings with HR and being responsive to all union concerns, with appropriate escalation; when the union trusts leadership, that trust is relayed to employees • When negative media stories about MLHU culture circulated, MLHU responded with transparency and support, providing as much information as possible; while the majority of people experience the workplace positively, SLT acknowledged this is not the experience of every employee, reiterated MLHU’s commitment to addressing concerns that are brought forward, reminded all employees of the process for communicating concerns, and shared resources with all leaders to ensure awareness of how to address and escalate concerns that they become aware of • Implementation of recommendations from the Diversity and Inclusion Assessment will assist with this goal; some recommendations have already been implemented and in Q4 2021 a new HR Equity Specialist was hired to focus on moving this work forward
<p>18. Continue to prioritize the mental and physical health of staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As noted above, as part of negotiations with ONA, MLHU offered additional benefits coverage for mental health providers and services • Mental and physical health are key themes of wellness initiatives • Significant numbers of external staff have been onboarded to try to keep on top of workload issues • Each weekly Town Hall meeting has a moment for wellness, including information and resources for promoting mental and physical health • Offered ‘All Feelings are Welcome’ sessions with staff at the end of 2021 with a leader who is trained in mental health service delivery

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<p>19. Continue to strengthen and demonstrate a culture of mutual compassion and kindness across the organization (e.g., in words, actions, decisions, communications, processes, priorities).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the 12 Days of Gratitude, encouraging staff to connect, reflect and discuss kindness and gratitude of themselves and others from December 6-21 • An expectation of zero-tolerance for bullying or harassment was reinforced after the negative media attention regarding workplace environment, with supporting policies redistributed to staff and leadership, and resources shared to ensure clarity regarding processes for reporting and managing workplace harassment • Implementation of recommendations from the Diversity and Inclusion Assessment will assist with this goal; some recommendations have already been implemented and in Q4 2021 a new HR Equity Specialist was hired to focus on moving this work forward
<p>20. Ensure program/operational expectations and staffing resources are aligned (by increasing resources and/or adjusting expectations).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 temporary staff were added to the organization in 2021 • A new level of front-line leadership was introduced into the organization during COVID, and this level of management has been approved for permanent implementation where appropriate across the organization • Advance hiring was implemented to allow permanent hiring for temporarily funded roles for several teams where turnover/recruitment needs are high • Additional recruitment into both permanent and temporary roles will continue in 2022