

Sustain, Recover, Develop

Context

We cannot always choose our circumstances, but we can always choose our responses.

The leadership challenges faced by many parts of the NHS are the most difficult that leaders have faced in their whole careers. Those hoping for a 'quiet spell' as the vaccine begins to do its work are suddenly finding their inbox full of waiting list demands, ICS set up demands etc. - the 'back-to-back world' of Zoom and Teams is not about to loosen its grip just yet.

A new set of overarching leadership challenges therefore present themselves:

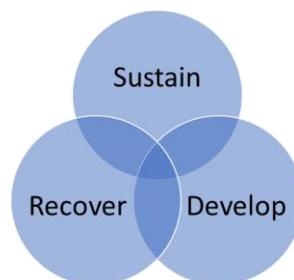
- What will keep me going?
- What will keep the team going?
- How do I recharge/repair those parts of mind and body that have become depleted/damaged?
- How do I ensure others can recharge/repair also?
- When do I turn this *experience* into *learning*?
- When do we turn this experience into learning?

This is a list, but each item is connected to every other – like a spider's web – as you pull on one, the others feel it too. Getting the balance right is difficult and one thing is certain; it will not happen by accident.

We at Staff College believe that by increasing your awareness and working with others *on a plan* you can be the leader who makes the best *choices amongst difficult circumstances*.

Sustain, Recover, Develop

Leaders will need to understand and act in three domains:



Sustain: the ability of leaders to keep mind, body and soul moving forwards whilst supporting and enabling tired teams.

Recover: carving out time to attend to 'repairing' damage to themselves, their team's morale and to look after individual members.

Develop: providing space for themselves and their teams to learn from their experiences and build on new ways of working.

The role of Staff College

The Staff College: Leadership in Healthcare (Staff College) has long drawn on the military's approach to leadership development to help inform its programmes for the health service and wider public sector. However, the military also have experience in helping groups and individuals to recover from the demands of battle. This is often conducted in the theatre of operations, to allow troops to recover sufficiently to be able to withstand subsequent combat. Staff College has looked at the military's approach to recuperation and recovery.

Staff College also has practicing medics as part of its faculty, which along with close working relationships with existing NHS commissioners allows us to integrate different perspectives and offer practical but challenging development interventions.

We help leaders become aware of the 'difference that makes a difference,' primarily through our provocative, experiential approach and encourage them to do something about it.

The Sustain, Recover, Develop Leadership Intervention

Aim: To create the opportunity for leaders to plan for sustaining, recovering and developing in challenging conditions

In order to: Make the best choices amongst difficult options so as to best balance the need to sustain, recover and develop

Intervention format

This intervention is being offered as:

- A bespoke programme for an organisation, aimed at leaders working in services most affected by the pandemic.
- A bespoke programme for an intact team

Where possible, this will be delivered as a face-to-face programme incorporating social distancing measures. Otherwise, it can be delivered virtually.

Indicative content

The programme would be built around the needs of those attending but would probably include areas such as:

- Diagnostic work – where are you, your team, your organisation in terms of the needs for sustain, recovering, developing?
- Learning lessons, listening and the facilitation of sensitive conversations
- Normalising discussions about difficult subjects
- Enabling teams to effectively complete tasks through looking after the individuals
- Mission analysis, decision making and planning

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop deeper awareness of how responding to the pandemic has affected your personal values, principles, assumptions, patterns of behaviour and influence
- Understand how to sustain self and team in the longer term
- Develop the ability to make sense of complex situations, plan and make timely decisions
- Understand how to lead the dynamic demands of task, team and individual
- Develop the ability to facilitate sensitive conversations and learn lessons from multiple perspectives
- Learning from the past, doing things differently for the future