

Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)

Building a great place to work

Person Centred Voices



Survey findings from nursing and midwifery workshops

April 2026

Contents

Introduction	1
What makes a good day at work?	2
Impact of the workshops	4
Personal reflections of participants	6
About Person Centred Voices	7
About the ALLIANCE	9



Introduction

From October 2025 to March 2026, a total of 479 people completed a survey following attendance at a **'You Make a Difference - Intelligent Kindness'** session led by Tommy Whitelaw, National Lead at the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE).



During this period, 35 talks and workshops were delivered reaching 3,043 people across health, social care, education, and wider support settings. The sessions focused on compassionate, person centred approaches to care and support, grounded in lived experience and aligned with key national priorities, including What Matters to You?, Intelligent Kindness, Civility Saves Lives and the importance of active listening and self-care.

The purpose of the survey was to understand participants' experiences of the sessions, identify what resonated most strongly, and evaluate the influence of knowledge on attitudes, behaviours and practice going forward. The strong response rate provides rich and meaningful insight into the reach and impact of the programme across a wide and diverse audience.

The findings that follow reflect participants' views on what worked well in the sessions, what felt most meaningful, and how the messages shared may shape future interactions, cultures, and approaches within health, social care and wider support settings. The survey also explored perceptions of impact and posed the question:

When people have a good day at work or placement, what are the things that make it good?

What makes a good day at work?



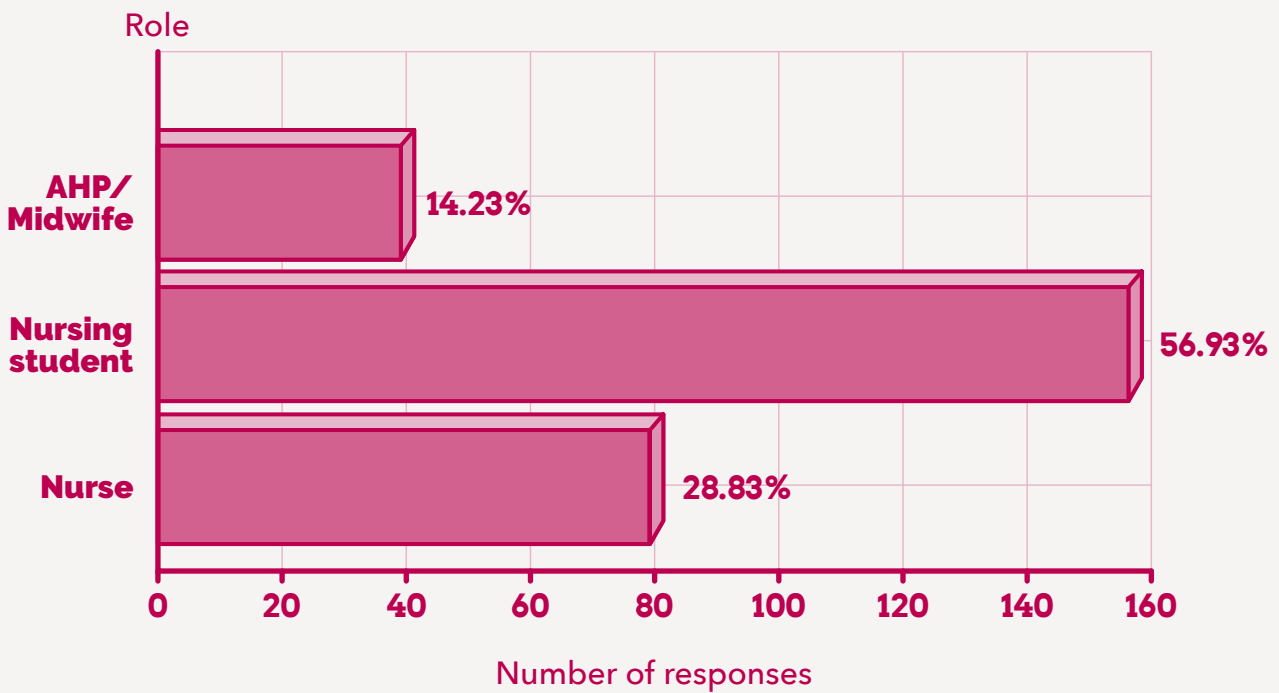
When asked, 'when you have a good day at work or placement, what are the things that make it good?', the strongest, most consistent theme was the individual's impact on patient experience, leading to a sense of deep fulfilment. Across almost every response, people described a good day as one where they improved someone's day or wellbeing and provided comfort, dignity and person centred care.

Many respondents described the importance of good staff morale and a supportive team with shared purpose and values and a sense of fun; while positive feedback from patients, families, or colleagues and feeling recognised and respected significantly influenced how good a day feels.

Another major theme was the importance of being able to do the job 'properly' and with enough time and staffing to ensure high quality, person centred care is prioritised. Examples of warm human interactions reflect the central value of meaningful connections.

And, lastly, people also reported feeling good when they build skills and feel productive, indicating that achievement and development also contribute strongly to the sense of a good day at work. The graph below illustrates the range of the respondents' professions within health and social care settings in Scotland.

Health and social care professions of respondents



When I feel I've genuinely connected with someone and supported them in a way that respects their individuality, dignity, and preferences.



When I feel like I've made a difference to someone's journey and hopefully put a smile on their face.



Being able to support my colleagues and make them believe in themselves and their skill set.



I always find the greatest happiness in knowing I've made a difference to somebody's day. I love knowing that I help people to feel seen and understood, and taking the time to get to know someone is such a privilege that I will never take for granted!



Every day I ask people what matters to them. I base my session around this. At the same time we set goals, we play music that means something to them, we do fun activities that helps progress their mobility. Allowing people a memorable experience and seeing their face light up... small conversations, making the biggest of differences.

Impact of the workshops

99%

of respondents said the workshops would support them in their role

65%

of respondents reported feeling much more equipped and confident in their role

35%

felt they gained useful insights and tools that will support them



Amazing course, **should be made mandatory** bi-annually for anyone working in health and social care.

The feedback from the sessions demonstrates an overwhelmingly positive, transformative impact on students, practitioners, carers, and healthcare staff across disciplines and experience levels, with 99% of respondents saying the workshops would support them in their role.

Participants consistently described the sessions as deeply emotional, inspiring, and practice-changing, often citing them as the most impactful learning experience of their careers or education. Tommy's personal storytelling, authenticity, and visible vulnerability were repeatedly identified as central to the workshop's effectiveness.



Core messages from the workshops that resonated strongly:

- Seeing the whole person, not the diagnosis
- Actively asking and acting on “What matters to you?”
- The power of kindness, empathy, listening, and small everyday actions
- Recognising the central role of families and carers
- Reconnecting staff with their purpose, values, and humanity, particularly amidst workload pressures and burnout.

Overall, the feedback evidences a workshop that reinforces the humanity within healthcare, strengthens compassionate practice, and delivers lasting emotional and professional impact.

“

Informative and emotional and highlights how important seeing the whole person is.

“

I will never forget to ask what matters to the person and act on it.

“

Made me feel like I can go out there and make a difference.

“

Every nurse should attend a session like this, not only students but as a refresher for qualified nurses too.

“

A beautiful reminder of the impact we can have on people’s lives.

“

Reminded me why we are in the profession.

“

A talk that will always stay with me in my heart.

Personal reflections of participants

In addition to the main survey questions, participants were given the space to submit supplementary personal reflections of their experience of the day.

A substantial majority took this opportunity to describe the significant impact the session had had on their sense of hopefulness and motivation in the role, and how it acted as a powerful and timely reminder of why they entered the profession. The below are a selection of these reflections.

“
It reiterated the importance of kindness, positivity and laughter.

“
Tommy's story inspires us all to do better... his kindness and passion re-ignite hope.

“
The workshop reminded me why I became a nurse and the importance of my role.



“
Left with the power to be better, do better and achieve more for our patients.

“
A great reminder about the importance of actively listening to personalise care.

“
A very moving talk, a great reminder of why we do what we do and not to get wrapped up in the hustle and bustle and see the patient and not the diagnosis.

“
Truly inspiring talk that was filled with emotion and a clear message: to never forget to listen to the people we care for and what matters to them the most.

About Person Centred Voices

Person Centred Voices collaborates with the NHS, HSCPs, care homes, universities, and colleges across Scotland to promote positive, compassionate health and social care environments. Led by Tommy Whitelaw, sessions explore how to create more compassionate, supportive, and human-centred environments—whether delivering or receiving care, advice, or support. Drawing from his deeply personal journey as a full-time carer for his late mum, Joan, Tommy shares heartfelt insights that highlight the real impact of kindness, empathy, and connection in health and care settings. His story is a call to action—reminding us that every interaction matters.

The sessions are built around key themes that align with the Chief Nursing Officer for Scotland's Vision for Nursing:

- Intelligent Kindness - the power of empathy in action
- What Matters to You? - understanding people's values and priorities
- Civility Saves Lives - fostering respectful, collaborative cultures
- Self-Care - sustaining ourselves to better support others
- Active Listening - truly hearing and valuing every voice

Tommy invites participants to reflect on transformative questions; reflecting on what works well, and what can be done differently in the future.

For more information and to arrange a session please contact personcentred@alliance-scotland.org.uk If you would like to read more stories of compassionate care, head to [Humans of Scotland](#) or view the [Linktree here](#) for a collection of case studies and films from across Scotland that showcase progress toward compassionate, person centred care. You can also view our series of nursing and midwifery films on YouTube at [Humans of Scotland - Nursing and Midwifery Stories series](#).



These findings highlight the importance which health and social care staff and students place on delivering person centred care and of taking the time to build the workplace cultures which support the workforce. Person Centred Voices has been making a difference for over a decade and shows what can be achieved when we place lived experience at the heart of health and social care.

Sara Redmond, Chief Officer of Development, the ALLIANCE



Tommy's work has consistently demonstrated that our staff and students want to go to work to make a difference to people's lives. They want to work in a place where they can provide the best possible care and support and where they feel listened to, valued and recognised. PCV shines a light on the importance of creating and nurturing that culture of respect, where voices are heard and experiences valued. Our sincere thanks to all who took part in the survey.

Irene Oldfather, Director of Strategic Partnerships, External Affairs and Outreach, the ALLIANCE

About the ALLIANCE

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector membership organisation for the health and social care sector. We bring together over 3,500 people and organisations dedicated to achieving our vision of a Scotland where everyone has a strong voice and enjoys the right to live well, with dignity and respect. Our members are essential in creating a society in which we all can thrive, and we believe that by working together, our voice is stronger.

We work to improve the wellbeing of people and communities across Scotland by supporting change in health, social care and other public services so they better meet the needs of everyone in Scotland. We do this by bringing together the expertise of people with lived experience, the third sector, and organisations across health and social care to shape better services and support positive change.

The ALLIANCE has three core aims.

We seek to:

- **Empower people with lived experience:** we ensure disabled people, people with long term conditions, and unpaid carers are heard and that their needs remain at the heart of the services and communities.
- **Support positive change:** we work within communities to promote co-production, self management, human rights, and independent living.
- **Champion the third sector:** we work with, support and encourage co-operation between the third sector and health and social care organisations.



The ALLIANCE is committed to upholding human rights. We embed lived experience in our work and aim to ensure people are meaningfully involved at every level of decision-making.

Working together creates positive, long-lasting impact. We work in partnership with the Scottish Government, NHS Boards, universities, and other key organisations within health, social care, housing, and digital technology to manage funding and develop successful projects. Together, our voice is stronger, and we can create meaningful change.

