

You belong here. You matter. We're listening!

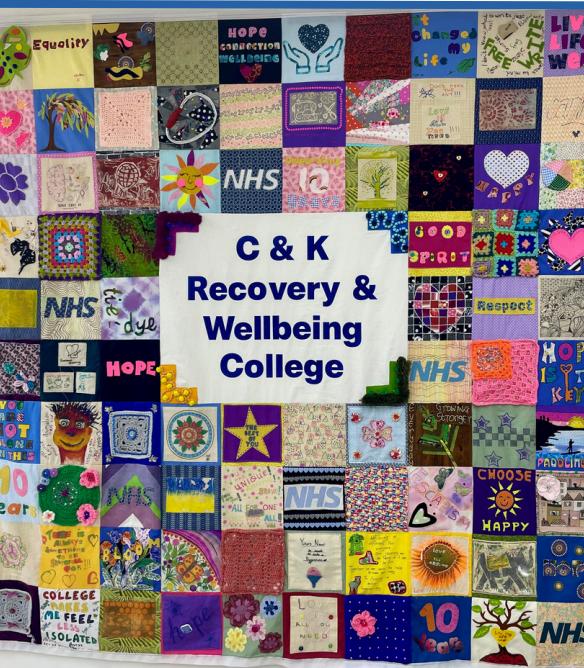
At the heart of our College is a commitment to creating spaces where everyone feels they belong and their voice truly matters. As we move into 2026 we will be ensuring our values guide everything we do:

- being inclusive and open to all
- working together through co-production and co-learning
- focusing on recovery and strengths.



From now until the spring, our focus will be on shaping our courses, with you the learner in mind! Listening to your feedback we'll be making sure our courses meet the highest standards of quality and relevance. You are the heart of the work we do and we will continue to shape a curriculum that meets your needs!

Together, we're building a community that bridges mental health services and everyday life—where goals are supported, possibilities are explored, and every voice counts.



Come and see our
Community Quilt in 2026!

Laura Mitchell Health & Wellbeing Centre

Tuesday 13 January 2026

Folly Hall Mills, Huddersfield

Tuesday 20 January 2026

Project Colt, Halifax

Thursday 22 January – 20 February 2026

Ravensthorpe Community Centre,

Tuesday 3 March – 28 April 2026

Why Your Feedback Matters

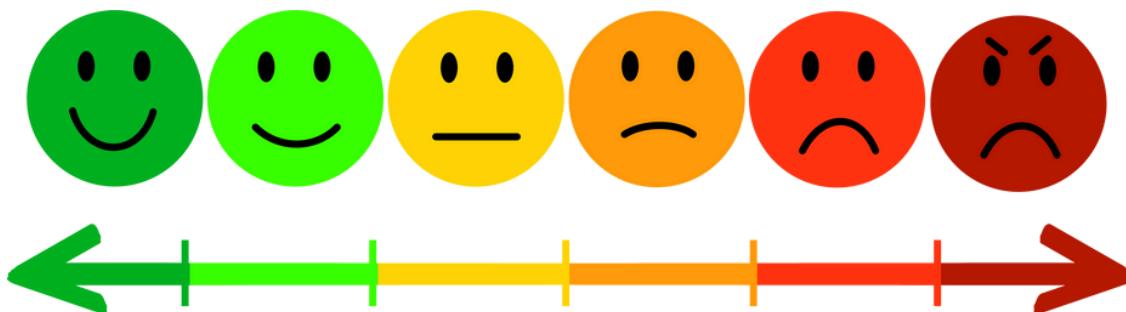


Here at the Recovery & Wellbeing College, we're passionate about making our courses the best they can be, for you and for future learners. That's why we ask for feedback after every course. Your thoughts help us understand what worked well and what could be improved.

We know life is busy, and filling in a form might feel like just another job on the to-do list, but your feedback really does matter. **If a course met your expectations, please tell us. If it didn't or you decided the course wasn't for you and didn't complete it, then we especially want to hear from you!** Honest feedback helps us learn and adapt so others don't have the same experience. We can't promise every suggestion will lead to a change as we have to balance everyone's views – but we do read and value every comment.

As you know, almost all our courses are delivered by people with lived experience, including volunteers, who give so much to the college community. When we share what went well, it can give our amazing facilitators a confidence boost and remind them that the time and energy they put in is making a difference to the lives of others - and that's a pretty great thing to do.

Digital forms are quick and easy, and paper copies are still available if you prefer. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts. We know it's not personal – it's progress. With your help we can make the Recovery College even better! So please make your voice count.





“Donate Your Dress: Help Create Angel Gowns for Bereaved Families”



When life takes an unexpected turn, some people find strength in the most beautiful ways. In this article one of our learners, Clare, shares her inspirational craft project that has given her a new purpose!



“After 20 years as a midwife, I was privileged to support thousands of families welcoming new life—though sadly, not all could take their babies home. I retired due to ill health two years ago, but midwifery is never far from my thoughts.

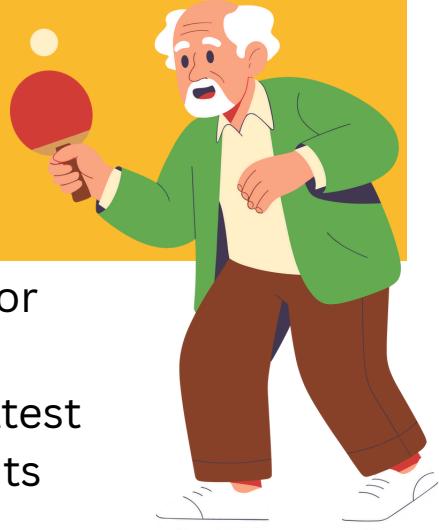
Having cared for families through devastating loss, I know how vital it is for every baby to be acknowledged as part of their family.

Calderdale Hospital is fundraising for a new bereavement suite, giving families a private space to create lasting memories before saying goodbye. Each year, 60–70 families at CHFT face late miscarriage, stillbirth, or neonatal death. The hospital offers excellent chaplaincy care, but I wanted to help in my own way.

I've been able to complete six gowns and also crochet many tiny blankets too. I would absolutely welcome any further donations of wedding dresses or christening gowns so that I could continue to make a small difference during such a traumatic, yet important time in supporting families making memories.”

If you want to donate a dress to Clare's project, please contact the Recovery College: ckrecovery.wellbeing@swyt.nhs.uk or 07717 867911

Let's Get Physical: Game, Set and Health!



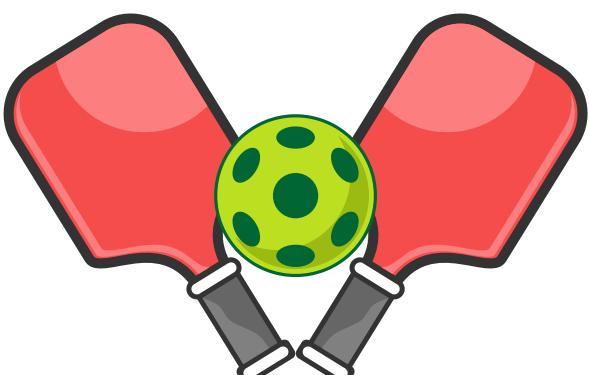
Racquet sports aren't just fun, they're a powerhouse for our physical and mental health. Whether it's tennis, badminton, squash, racquetball, table tennis, or the latest crazes - pickleball and padel, these games offer benefits that go far beyond the court.

These types of activities require us to respond to unpredictable situations, demanding strategic thinking, hand-eye co-ordination, and rapid decision-making, all of which strengthens neural pathways in the brain which can improve memory, attention and problem-solving skills. They also stimulate several regions of the brain and increase blood flow, which could reduce our risk of dementia as well as supporting good cognitive health overall.

Scientific studies show that racquet sports are also brilliant for our physical health, increasing our cardiovascular fitness, improving bone and muscle strength and enhancing our balance and co-ordination. In fact, research suggests that playing racquet sports could reduce the risk of heart disease by over 50% and even extend our life expectancy by up to nine years compared to people living a sedentary lifestyle.

In addition to all these benefits, engaging in these sports is a great opportunity for us to extend our social circle. Playing with others fosters connection, reduces loneliness and lifts our mood. Racquet sports are fun!! Some of the reasons that pickleball and padel in particular have become so popular is that they are inclusive and accessible, being easy to learn, low impact and suitable for all ages.

Whether you're a beginner or seasoned player, there's a racquet sport for you. So why not grab a racket - or paddle, invite a friend, and enjoy a game that's good for your body, mind, and social life!



To find out more check out your local leisure centre or visit:

<https://www.pickleballengland.org>

<https://www.ltapadel.org.uk/play>

Be the boss of your own health



When it comes to our health, it's easy to hand over the reins to medical professionals and hope they'll "fix" us. And yes, sometimes we absolutely need their expertise and treatment. But here's the truth: we are the real bosses of our own wellbeing.

If we think of our health as a garden, we choose what to plant and how to care for it. We might need guidance and support from others to make our garden thrive, but it's our everyday actions to water, feed and nurture the plants in it, which helps them to grow strong and healthy. The same applies to our health.

Let's imagine we're waiting for a shoulder operation, we may think everything is out of our control. However, eating well and moving more pre-op will reduce the risk of complications during surgery and aid faster recovery, plus doing rehab exercises post-op will also help with pain management. If we are experiencing poor mental health, learning some techniques to help manage symptoms will give us some relief, while waiting for an assessment or appointment.

Being the boss doesn't mean going it alone, it means asking questions, considering different options and taking small actions to aid our own recovery. Believe us, having a sense of control can be an extremely empowering thing!

So, go on and become your own...



What one thing will you do today to improve your health?

Stay up to date, follow us on our socials



So long, farewell.....

Editor-in-chief and Kirklees Co-ordinator, Rachel is heading for pastures new, but she couldn't leave without saying goodbye.....

As a kid, when people asked me what I wanted to do when I grew up, I never knew (actually, that's not quite true; I wanted to become a dancer with Pan's People on Top of the Pops but my parents wouldn't allow it). Throughout my working life, despite having several jobs in a variety of industries, many enjoyable, some not, I still never really found my perfect job. That was until the grand age of 47 when I joined the Recovery College and from day one, I felt like I'd struck gold!

I quickly discovered how the College allows people to make huge positive changes to their lives and it's felt truly amazing to play just a tiny role in that. There are so many incredible people I have met along the way, some of whom are almost unrecognisable from the people who bravely walked through the College door that first time to the confident, purpose-filled people they have since become. It has genuinely been an honour and a privilege to witness so many inspiring journeys.

However, for many reasons, I've decided that my own journey will now take me down a different path - as yet unknown. I know that the College will go from strength to strength as, I am sure will you, dear reader.

So, with a heavy heart all that's left for me to say is goodbye and thank you. To Matt, my wonderful colleagues, amazing volunteers and especially to all our incredible learners, past and present, who in courageously striving for a better life - gave me a better life too.

Contact us

ckrecovery.wellbeing@swyt.nhs.uk

07717 867911

www.calderdalekirkleesrc.nhs.uk

