Dr Paul Wilkinson – Clinical Dean

What does wellbeing mean to you?

As a psychiatrist I am very aware of the importance of good wellbeing. It is also important to say that wellbeing does not just mean the absence of mental illness: it means thriving in life. And ‘life’ is such a broad thing, including (among other things) friendships, family, work, leisure, health (physical as well as mental). Thriving does not mean being perfect in these things – as that is impossible. It is about doing well given all the things around us that we can’t control, setting realistic targets, feeling good about what we do well and being kind to ourselves when things do not go so well.

What do you do to support your own wellbeing?

I find it important to think about physical, psychological and social factors in maintaining my wellbeing: looking after my body (exercising frequently and eating properly); looking after my mind (thinking about things realistically and talking with people close to me if I’m stuck in negative thoughts; and paying attention to the positive relationships in my life, so they stay as positive relationships. And it is so important to make time to have fun – so here is a picture of me on a chairlift up a mountain with my bike about to do one of the things I enjoy the most.