

# Staff Health and Wellbeing



## Manager's Toolkit

# Contents

- 03 Background
  - 04 Self-Care
  - 05 Making Wellbeing a Priority
  - 06 Supporting Emotional and Mental Wellbeing
  - 07 Supporting Physical Wellbeing
  - 08 Supporting Social Wellbeing
  - 09 Supporting Financial Wellbeing
  - 10 Next Steps
  - 11 Organisational Support
- 



# Background



Managers are in a unique and important position to be able to support the health and wellbeing of their staff. The actions and behaviours of a manager can have a huge impact upon employee wellbeing, with a good manager being able to create a supportive environment in which staff feel valued, respected and cared for.

Managers are often the first to spot the signs of a staff member struggling and if equipped with the right skills and information, can ensure the correct support is put in place to help. Additionally, ensuring good working relationships will help to encourage staff to ask for help from their manager or speak up about issues impacting upon their wellbeing.

It is equally important that managers acknowledge the need to be positive role models for staff by looking after their own health and wellbeing, appreciating the need to practice self-care. You can't pour from an empty cup. The nature of the role can often be very stressful, with many managers having a tendency to sacrifice their own wellbeing needs.

This toolkit will aim to provide an overview of information and resources that you may find useful when considering and supporting the wellbeing needs of yourself and your staff.

# Self-Care

It's vital that you prioritise your own wellbeing needs and practice self-care.

The role of a manager can often feel lonely or isolated, with increasing pressure to ensure that you are doing the best for those you manage.

In order to be able to do the best for your staff, you need to be looking after yourself. Learn to notice when you need to take time for yourself to reset and recharge.

Just as you would encourage your staff to, it's important to lead by example and adopt healthy work habits. Avoid overworking and make sure you're taking your breaks and annual leave.

Whilst it's great when your staff feel comfortable to disclose their struggles and share their problems, it's important to remember that you alone are not responsible for finding a solution for these. Ask for help when you need it and utilise support from services such as Occupational Health and HR.

Attend training and development sessions when you can to enhance your knowledge and skillset. This will help to grow your confidence in building relationships and making wellbeing conversations a standard practice.

And finally, remember to also utilise the resources and services available to all NHS Forth Valley staff to support your health and wellbeing.





# Making Wellbeing a Priority

Creating a workplace environment where wellbeing is a priority benefits everyone.

There are many different ways that you can make sure staff know that their wellbeing matters to you. One of the most effective methods is to encourage open communication, having regular wellbeing conversations with your team.

To promote honest dialogue about wellbeing, it's important to involve your team. Ask them how they would like their wellbeing to be discussed. Would they prefer it be a regular item on team meeting agendas? Would they like it incorporated into their 1:1s? Or would they prefer dedicated wellbeing 1:1s or group meetings? Remember that what works for one staff member, might not work for another - everyone will have their personal preferences.

Once you've established the format for each staff member, agree upon some initial actions and a meeting frequency. And start to plan how you might start a wellbeing conversation with staff...think about the questions you may ask.



## Example

Rhoda is a clinical manager in a busy ward area. She's keen to explore ways in which she can improve the wellbeing of her team. She's asked her team how they would like to discuss this and has arranged a variety of group and 1:1 sessions based on individual preference. Prior to these meetings, Rhoda has encouraged her staff to complete the [NES Wellbeing Planning Tool](#) to start the conversation.

Rhoda has prepared three initial questions to ask:

1. How have you been feeling this past week?
2. Is there anything impacting upon your wellbeing?
3. What one thing can I do to improve your wellbeing today?

Following on from each meeting, Rhoda clarifies with her team if and how they would like any information recorded and whether she can signpost or provide specific support. Rhoda and her team decide to theme each meeting, focusing on different wellbeing aspects such as sleep, finances and healthy eating. They make an action plan, with agreed timeframes and action owners. Rhoda gathers regular feedback from her team about the meetings/1:1s and adjusts her wellbeing plan as needed in response to this.

# Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

There are many different factors that can affect an individual's emotional and mental wellbeing. It's estimated that 1 in 6 workers are experiencing a mental health problem (Mind, 2022). However, mental and emotional health is a spectrum, with natural highs and lows. Health and Social Care staff are often exposed to stressful and emotionally demanding situations and can therefore experience more fluctuations in their mental health. The pandemic has only heightened this.

Talking can be one of the most powerful tools in helping to support mental and emotional wellbeing. It is therefore important that as a manager you feel confident in having conversations about mental health, normalising and encouraging speaking up and asking for help. There are some tools and resources that can help with this:

- Mind have created a [guide for managers](#) that offers conversation starters and case studies.
- Mental Health at Work have a [range of toolkits and information guides](#) about a variety of mental health topics, ranging from loneliness to anxiety.
- ACAS (The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) have a [short video](#) with their top five tips for supporting staff's mental health.
- Check In, Check Through, Check Out. Useful questions to support each other through the day. These can be used for personal self-reflection or by teams and with colleagues incorporating them into everyday practice. Going Home Checklist: suggestions on what to do at the end of the working day – here is a [NHS Forth Valley version](#).



Remember, you do not have to support staff alone. Services such as Occupational Health can help to advise and support you. If the situation is acute or urgent, please advise the member of staff to contact 111 or their GP in the first instance for help.

# Physical Wellbeing

There are many different ways in which you as a manager can support the physical wellbeing of your staff members. The following are some tips, ideas and resources to help promote physical wellbeing within your team...

- Ensure that staff members have safe working environments. This can range from appropriate and adequate safety equipment; regular Display Screen Equipment (DSE) checks; up-to-date risk assessments and personalised plans as needed. The Health and Safety department can be contacted to assist with any queries.
- Try to encourage staff, especially desk-based workers to take regular breaks away from their workspace. You can circulate information about desk exercises, such as this [short video](#) from BUPA.
- Get a step ahead with meetings and try holding a walking meeting. Paths for All offer a free [Workplace Walking Course](#).
- Ensure that adequate workplace adjustments and supports are in place as required for staff members. Occupational Health and the Disability Equality and Access Service can both provide assistance and guidance with this. Both accept either staff self-referrals or management referrals.
- Look on the Staff Support and Wellbeing Website's Physical Wellbeing section for more information guides including topics such as supporting Menopause and promoting Healthy Eating. Perhaps your team can start a walking or sports group or host monthly healthy snack days.



# Social Wellbeing

Social wellbeing is about relationships and a sense of community, therefore it's easy to see how applicable it is within the workplace. As a manager, there are lots of different ways you can support social wellbeing within your teams.

The pandemic resulted in a change to the way in which we work, with flexible working options such as home-working becoming more and more common. And the increase in virtual alternatives has revolutionised the way we work, with most meetings occurring on MS Teams without a second thought. Whilst it's great to see such developments within the workplace, it's important as a manager to remember that such changes can impact upon the social wellbeing of your staff members.

In addition to being mindful about how we communicate with our staff, it's important that we create a sense of belonging and inclusion within our teams. Some ideas to improve social wellbeing can be as simple as encouraging peer-to-peer support, giving staff permission to take the time to connect and check-in with each other. Set up regular social events within the team (these can be both in and out of work, but just remember to try and offer a variety of options). Or why not create a space for staff to get together during breaks - this can be in person or virtual.

Think about interactions and opportunities for communication and feedback. This [short video from Mental Health UK](#) provides some background about the importance of social connection and this [short video from Simon Sinek](#) may give you some ideas about what you can do.

Even simple things such as starting a meeting with five minutes for social interaction as opposed to diving straight to the first agenda item. Try asking what staff are grateful for today, what song they'd use to describe their day, or even what their favourite joke is. It might feel unnatural at first, and you'll find your own authentic way to incorporate something similar, but give it a shot and see if you notice a difference.



# Financial Wellbeing

Money worries can have a hugely negative impact upon staff wellbeing and as the cost of living continues to rise, it's understandable that financial concerns will become more and more common among staff.

As a manager, it's important to create a culture and environment where staff feel able to express any money worries and ask for support if needed. Encouraging open conversations where you show empathy and understanding can help to break down any stigma.

Signposting staff to resources that can help support with financial worries is important, but it's vital that we are using reliable and trusted sources of information. [Money Helper](#) has lots of useful tools and advice and is a regulated public service.

Mental Health at Work have created a toolkit of resources aimed at supporting staff financial wellbeing and it can be found [here](#).

There is also a confidential, free and impartial advice service offered by Money Helper that staff can contact for help. Staff can:

- Call 0800 448 0826, Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm;
- Access Typetalk 18001 0800 915 4622 during the same hours;
- Add 07701 342 744 to their WhatsApp and send the Money Helper Service's national support team a message for help with sorting out debts, credit questions or pensions guidance.
- Or access via the [online webchat](#)



# Next Steps

The following are in the process of being created to help support you as a manager and will be available soon within the manager's section of the Staff Support and Wellbeing website.



1

## Manager Factsheets and Guides

Quick-read guides and factsheets on a variety of topics relating to staff wellbeing and how you as a manager can support.



2

## Information Sessions

These will be short, mainly virtual education sessions that focus on a different topic and provide some information, advice and guidance.



3

## Networking Opportunities

We're looking to set-up some networking groups to ensure that you have access to peer support and advice.

# Organisational Help and Support

## Human Resources (HR)

Can help with all employment queries and advice ranging from Sickness Absence to Flexible Working Requests.

0330 041 4694 (option 2)

[fv.hrconnect@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.hrconnect@nhs.scot)

.....

## Occupational Health

Provide a confidential and comprehensive healthcare service to all employees, with an aim to support Managers and Staff to create a healthy and safe working environment.

01324 566663

[eOPAS Referral](#)

.....

## Health Promotion

Aim to ensure that Individuals at every stage of life have access to the knowledge and opportunities needed to make healthy choices and stay well. They provide training, CPD opportunities, information and resources.

[Contact Form](#)

.....

## Disability Equality and Access Service

NHS Forth Valley managers can refer a staff member directly or discuss possible reasonable adjustments by emailing [fv.disabilitydepartment@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.disabilitydepartment@nhs.scot) or calling 01324 590870. Any staff member wishing to make a self-referral can do so via the same process.

.....

## Recruitment

Can assist with all aspects of recruitment enquires and advice.

0330 041 4694 (option 1)

[fv.recruitment@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.recruitment@nhs.scot)

.....

## Health and Safety

Helps managers manage risk and health and safety issues affecting staff, patients and visitors. They also provides a range of information for staff to access.

[fv.fvsafetyandrisk@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.fvsafetyandrisk@nhs.scot)

Confidential Reporting Line: 0845 130 2836

.....

## Learning and Organisational Development

Can provide a whole host of advice and support including training, education and learning. Use the [Contact Us Form](#) or Call 01324 567390.

**HELP**

