



## Top tips for team resilience during COVID-19

These are some evidence-based ideas of things you might do to protect and develop the wellbeing of your team as a whole during this period. They apply for all teams, clinical and non-clinical, hospital and community, 'frontline' or not. If you would like more information or tailored advice for your team, contact the Trust's psychologists ([hdft.clinicalpsychology@nhs.net](mailto:hdft.clinicalpsychology@nhs.net).) Use your skills, attributes and experience to:

### **Set an example to your staff**

Your example to your team is powerful. What you do matters as much as what you say. Be matter-of-fact about how you're feeling, demonstrate that 'it's OK not to be OK' and show that you are looking after yourself. Be a visible leader to your team – accessible, open, and kind (to yourself and others).

### **Look out for team members' safety**

Be aware of up-to-date and relevant local and national information and procedures regarding PPE and risk management. Communicate this clearly to your staff.

### **Look after the basic needs of your staff**

This is *critical*. Make sure staff have access to food, drinks, breaks, safety equipment and enough time off from work between shifts to rest. Encourage your staff to use the support of friends, family and colleagues. We have also written an information sheet (called 'Top tips for emotional wellbeing during COVID-19') with some ideas for your staff on looking after themselves, which you might like to share with them.

### **Communicate with team members regularly and clearly**

Ensure all staff have good-quality information updates on a regular basis. Avoid information overload. Be honest if there are things that you don't know. Make sure there are ways staff can feedback to you about their feelings, needs and experiences, and be prepared to address these.

### **Instil hope**

Mark and celebrate the achievements, good news and success of individuals, your team and patients.

### **Rotate staff from high to lower stress work**

Rotate workers from higher-stress to lower-stress functions where possible. Partner inexperienced workers with more experienced colleagues. Such systems help to provide support, monitor stress and reinforce safety procedures.

### **Enhance connectedness: Encourage the team to support each other**

This is *really* important. Think about how this already happens in your team: what is working well to provide a sense of 'we're all in this together'? What things are already in place to allow staff to support each other? What could you introduce, add or tweak to make this even more effective? What do you do (or could you do) to promote this way of being in your team? Protecting staff space and time to connect about both work and non-work things is crucial for peer support.

It may be helpful for staff to 'buddy up' at the start of each shift, with buddies making active efforts to keep an eye on each other's wellbeing during and at the end of the shift. Making staff aware of signs of burnout / distress could be helpful, so people know what to look out for, and who to contact if they are concerned about a colleague.



At the end of a shift, team leaders might consider doing a 'check in meeting' with staff so they can share their experiences, 'decompress', and identify people who might need to be signposted to support (see below) or offered more support from the team lead. On the right is an infographic with some ideas a session like this could be structured around.

### **Induction for new members to the department or ward**

Someone who is familiar with the realities of the role new staff will undertake should provide new starters with honest, accurate information about the nature of the work and possible challenges (e.g. exposure to traumatic or upsetting situations; the challenges of wearing PPE for extended periods; worries about COVID-19), as well as the support options available. Ensure staff feel as confident as possible in the work they will be asked to do.

### **Understand normal emotional responses**

At a time like this it is normal to experience strong emotions like fear, anxiety, numbness, low mood and anger, and to feel overwhelmed. This is not a reflection someone can't do their job, is 'weak' or is not coping - it is a sign of what a significant and extraordinary situation we are facing. In other words, 'it's OK not to be OK'. There is no right or wrong way to feel and we don't always have to be or feel like a 'hero'. Previous experiences (e.g. trauma or bereavement), existing mental health issues or additional pressures outside work may mean some team members have a harder time coping than others. Think about how to best monitor the wellbeing of these staff and put extra support mechanisms in place for them if needed.

### **Remember**

It is normal to experience a wide range of emotions at a time like this. Most people are very resilient and will 'bounce back' with time. Sticking together and supporting one another is the most effective thing a team can do. There is support available for individuals or teams who need it (see below).

### **Know where to access resources and support**

Below you can find a list of the support open to individual staff members locally and nationally.

If you would like to talk anything on this information sheet through, or would like more tailored advice or input for your team, you can contact the HDFT Psychologists: [hdft.clinicalpsychology@nhs.net](mailto:hdft.clinicalpsychology@nhs.net).





## Summary of support for staff

Please also check the 'HDFT Coronavirus (COVID-19) Daily Update' email for further updates on Health and Wellbeing support available.

<b>HDFT Wellbeing Helpline</b>	Staffed by HDFT clinical psychologists and counsellors, a free, confidential helpline offering a listening ear, in-the-moment support and signposting onwards if needed	Phone: 01423 223005 See <a href="#">here</a> for available phone slots, or leave a message on the helpline and we will call you back as soon as we can (Rooms available in Elmwood Outpatients Department in HDH to call in privacy if needed)
<b>Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)</b>	Free online resources on a range of topics relating to wellbeing, and access to counselling (one off sessions or a series of planned sessions) for HDFT staff and their spouse or partner	Phone: 0800 243 458 Website: <a href="http://www.eapdirect.co.uk">www.eapdirect.co.uk</a> (username: Harrogate, password: employee)
<b>#Caring4NHSPeople</b>	Free wellbeing support helpline providing confidential listening from trained professionals and specialist advice, psychological support to those in need. Anyone who requires further help will be signposted to other services	Phone: 0300 131 7000 (07:00-23:00) Text: FRONTLINE to 85258 (24 hrs)
<b>Free apps</b>	Apps currently made free to NHS staff including for help with sleep, worry / anxiety and mindfulness / relaxation.	Visit <a href="https://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2020/03/free-access-to-wellbeing-apps-for-all-nhs-staff">https://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2020/03/free-access-to-wellbeing-apps-for-all-nhs-staff</a>
<b>Wellbeing areas</b>	A space to take some time out. Refreshments available. Often someone around to offer a listening ear. Open 24/7.	HDH: Coffee Lounge, off Herriot's Restaurant Ripon: Coffee Lounge, ground floor Selby: Interview Room 1, off main reception