



# Framework to support staff mental health and wellbeing: COVID-19

## Introduction

The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 12 March 2020.

The purpose of this document is to provide a whole of Health summary on the mental health and wellbeing response that is tiered across the predicted pandemic phases. It focuses on how to maintain and support mental health and wellbeing at the individual, service and corporate level.

## Background

Maintaining staff mental health and wellbeing is critical to ensure capacity to maintain the response to COVID-19.

Key to this is for staff to support their colleagues, be kind, respectful and compassionate in dealing with each other as well as our patients. Working to our values can assist us in pulling together at these times.

This document provides an overview of strategies to employ from an organisational to individual staff level. The attached table *Optimising staff preparedness, wellbeing, and functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic response* provides further details as to these specific actions, with appropriate references as indicated.

## Optimising staff preparedness, wellbeing, and functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic response

### Leadership and management

Good leadership and management of health services is vital to the mental health and wellbeing of staff. Providing regular, reliable and consistent information and monitoring staff wellbeing are fundamental roles. Ensuring existing resources are appropriately allocated and utilised including deployment of staff when necessary to critical areas, establishing new and additional response capacity, and liaising with external stakeholders also impact on the overall health of the workforce.

### Frontline managers

Managers play a key role in setting the service culture and modelling supportive and compassionate behaviours which can directly impact upon staff wellbeing. In times of crisis it is easy to become absorbed by immediate demands and lose sight of equally important business as usual matters. However, it is during such times that good leadership and management practices are crucial in maintaining staff wellbeing and preventing psychological distress. Maintaining a visibility to staff, attending to practical issues, open communication, flexibility to

new ideas and reminding staff to take breaks are all key to supporting good mental health and wellbeing.

Some staff will be deployed into roles directly related to the COVID-19 response and others will remain undertaking their usual work. Whilst development and implementation of the Health response to the pandemic is the highest priority, other roles remain valued and essential to operations and need to be recognised as such. Service directors and managers may:

- Reassure staff who are not working on COVID-19 that their work is essential and valued.
- Staff working in isolation need strategies to help them remain connected – for example daily team huddles by Video Conferencing (VC).
- Supporting staff to be involved in their own and their family's self-care.

Staff may experience mental health issues during the COVID-19 response as they balance work and personal responsibilities. Staff should be encouraged to seek assistance and support for their mental health. Ensuring staff have choice in the support they may require is important. Staff can seek mental health assistance through the following avenues:

1. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
2. Web based information and National help-lines
3. General Practitioners (GP)
4. Other specialist mental health services

### **Promoting mutual support within workplaces**

Healthcare staff work in formal or informal groups and teams, and mutual support within these work groups is an important source of wellbeing. Health services should support opportunities, within the constraints of physical distancing, for staff to join and share experiences, concerns and issues. The use of virtual groupings should be encouraged through social media, SMS/chat and other digital connections, in adherence with any related policies. Health services should give consideration to promoting small group “pods” or “huddles” of work colleagues for regular check-ins, considering examples such as the Royal Perth Bentley Group ‘Wellness Hubs’ and recommendations such as through [RUOK](#). Encouraging existing peer/discipline/team support opportunities is also important.

Health Services should consider the use of drop-in centres such as COVID fatigue drop-in groups and encourage meetings of small work groups where individuals are known to one another and have the common cause of their department, team or speciality in common. These meetings can be run virtually if required and enable discussion and sharing of the social and emotional aspects of work within the constraints of physical distancing. Wellbeing champions/group facilitators with appropriate training can provide support to such activities and health services should access/train suitable facilitators if possible.

### **Guidance for Individual self-care**

Healthcare staff are highly skilled in dealing with emergencies, but they are also individuals who are part of families and communities that might be impacted upon directly or indirectly by the virus. We all have responsibilities outside of work that might include caring for a family member and/or being a part of other organisations or communities, (e.g. sporting clubs, State

Emergency Service) which may also include duties to do in response to the pandemic. We also know that in times of instability, our staff can experience periods of heightened anxiety just like everyone else. It is likely that staff will experience challenging issues, especially related to loss and grief, and moral distress. Ensuring our responses are respectful of cultural, faith-based and other specific needs is still vital during these difficult experiences.

It is important that staff are encouraged to proactively care for their psychological well-being. There is a great deal of information about individual mental health and wellbeing and these need to be accessible to individual staff, preferably through a variety of media. In particular the attached [WHO information](#) sheet and the [www.healthywa.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au) provide information for staff. There are a range of apps and online websites that may also be helpful, e.g. <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/> and <https://moodgym.com.au/>.

Some professional groups may choose to access discipline-specific health advice and support e.g. [Doctors Health Advisory Service](#)

### **Guidance for those with Children**

It is very likely that staff will need to spend time [confined to home](#), and information is available to guide individuals in using this time to maintain their mental health and wellbeing. Similarly, care for children and other dependents will be a common concern of healthcare staff and ensuring a supportive work environment, and access to resources is also key in meeting these needs. Do not avoid talking about the current situation, and information such as [talking to children](#) or [zeroto thrive](#), the [Kids Helpline](#), and World Health Organization – [Helping Children cope with stress](#)

### **Cultural Considerations**

Support for Aboriginal staff should reflect cultural, family and kinship ties, and ensure access to cultural supervisors, mentors and other senior Aboriginal contacts, including elders. Awareness and education on COVID-19 has been developed by [Aboriginal Health Council of WA](#) and Department of Health ([Aboriginal Health Policy Health Directorate](#)), and Aboriginal staff should be encouraged to access this information.

### **Critical Incident Responses**

Critical incidents during the COVID-19 pandemic should be managed as per existing HSP policies. It is important to note that HSPs should ensure these policies reflect best practice which is that one-session, structured, psychological intervention in the acute phase, such as psychological debriefing, should not be offered on a routine basis for the prevention of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Rather, providing Psychological First Aid is the recommended approach to such incidents.

For further information on psychological debriefing and psychological first aid, please follow this link [Phoenix Australia PTSD](#).

# Optimising staff preparedness, wellbeing, and functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic response table

(Adapted from the NHS Staff Wellness in COVID-19)

PANDEMIC STAGE – Senior Execs/Managers		
	Recommended Actions:	Helpful Links
<b>Preparation for Covid-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear, factual communication from the DoH and consistent (in line with Government) messaging.</li> <li>• Daily communications at the same time in a similar format with helpful links</li> <li>• Key messages reiterated across all HSP's</li> <li>• Daily Sitrep updates</li> <li>• Local HSP COVID-19 information page</li> <li>• FAQs updated daily with updated version circulated to staff</li> <li>• Senior Executive staff highly visible among staff and approachable</li> <li>• Executive rounding, to be visible to staff</li> <li>• Senior Executives and managers need to communicate and model advice whenever possible</li> <li>• Seek collegial support to address knowledge gaps and share risk</li> <li>• Improved communications between HSP Executives</li> <li>• Ensure your actions align with organisational values'</li> <li>• Self-awareness seek support and coaching</li> <li>• Involve chaplaincy/faith based pastoral care services when appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">More support for Western Australians' wellbeing during COVID-19</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">PPE Stocks</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DoH media statements</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a></li> </ul>
<b>Early-phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue daily updates via established local HSP communication channels (see previous phase)</li> <li>• Provide clear guidance on workforce guidelines from DoH</li> <li>• Support staff to manage their own stress and anxieties in the face of COVID-19</li> <li>• Be mindful when dealing with colleagues and ensure your actions align with organisational values'</li> <li>• Senior Executives and managers need to model advice whenever possible</li> <li>• DOH central media plan to feed local media plans</li> <li>• Ensure staff wellbeing and PPE availability are standing items on COVID-19 management meetings</li> <li>• Develop local HSP guidelines on working from home</li> <li>• Self-awareness seek support and coaching as required</li> <li>• Ensure visibility to all staff in all areas, virtually if required</li> <li>• Suspend all non-urgent tasks and business as usual tasks if required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Identification and Use of PPE in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus Pandemic Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">PPE Stocks</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DOH latest updates</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Psychological Tips for coping with COVID-19</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DoH media statements</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a></li> </ul>

## PANDEMIC STAGE – Senior Execs/Managers

<b>Mid-phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue daily updates via established local HSP communication channels (see previous phase)</li> <li>Provide clear guidance on workforce guidelines from DoH</li> <li>Active monitoring of staff wellbeing</li> <li>Senior Executives and managers need to model advice whenever possible</li> <li>Ensure staff wellbeing and <a href="#">PPE</a> availability are standing items on COVID-19 management meetings</li> <li>Develop local HSP guidelines on working from home</li> <li>Ensure direct line to support frontline management</li> <li>Ensure visibility to all staff in all areas, virtually if required</li> <li>Ensure successes are shared, no matter how small</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Identification and Use of PPE in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus Pandemic Policy</a>  <a href="#">DOH latest updates</a>  <a href="#">PPE Stocks</a>  <a href="#">DoH media statements</a> <a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a> <a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a>
<b>Peak-phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue daily updates via established local HSP communication channels (see previous phase)</li> <li>Senior Executive staff highly visible among staff and approachable</li> <li>Active monitoring of staff wellbeing</li> <li>Consider additional practical support for staff to allow them to stay at work if required</li> <li>Redeploy some staff to support frontline staff that are caring for COVID-19 patients</li> <li>Liaise with external bodies as required</li> <li>Managers may need support and coaching to ensure their actions align with your organisational values'</li> <li>Ensure direct ongoing support to frontline management</li> <li>Visibility to all staff in all areas, virtually if required</li> </ul>	<a href="#">Identification and Use of PPE in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus Pandemic Policy</a>  <a href="#">DOH latest updates</a>  <a href="#">PPE Stocks</a>  <a href="#">DoH media statements</a> <a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a> <a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a>
<b>Tail-off phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active monitoring of staff wellbeing and PPE availability standing agenda item COVID- 19 management meetings</li> <li>Regular communication channels and consistent media plan as above</li> <li>Once the crisis begins to recede, staff must be actively monitored, supported, and provided with evidence based treatments as required</li> <li>Ensure successes are shared, no matter how small</li> <li>Liaise with external bodies as required</li> <li>Open door policy in person/ remotely</li> <li>Ensure direct ongoing support to frontline management</li> <li>Ensure visibility to all staff in all areas, virtually if required</li> <li>Where possible reinstate business as usual</li> </ul>	<a href="#">DOH latest updates</a>  <a href="#">Psychological Tips for coping with COVID-19</a>  <a href="#">DoH media statements</a> <a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a> <a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a>
<b>Post COVID-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managers may need support and coaching ensuring their actions align with organisational values'</li> <li>Continue to actively monitor and support staff and provide evidence based treatments as required</li> <li>Open door on offer as needed</li> <li>Plan team building activities</li> </ul>	Local EAP, <a href="#">Beyond Blue</a> or <a href="#">Mind Spot</a>

## PANDEMIC STAGE – Frontline managers / Clinical leaders

	Recommended Actions:	Helpful Links
<p><b>Preparation for Covid-19</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage self-care at supportive team meetings and opportunistic situations</li> <li>• Circulate good advice regarding COVID-19 safety protocols</li> <li>• Start regular supportive small team or buddy system meetings with colleagues</li> <li>• Commence 'end of shift' huddles and regular supportive team review meetings</li> <li>• Ongoing contact with staff self-isolating. Ensure contact is maintained with staff (will vary according to staff member)</li> <li>• Encourage home-based tasks when staff well and self- isolating, to support sense of being useful</li> <li>• Work within own competencies</li> <li>• Optional 1:1 coaching with senior staff</li> <li>• Seek mentor or peer support group can be virtual</li> <li>• Maintain regular communication with manager</li> <li>• 'Toolbox meetings' or short team briefings at commencement of shift to identify and allocate tasks. Share the load</li> <li>• Be mindful and ensure your actions align with organisational values'</li> <li>• High tolerance regarding productivity ensuring staff safety is at the forefront of actions and decisions</li> <li>• Self-awareness seek support and coaching</li> <li>• Roster staff with short periods of leave where possible</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Identification and Use of PPE in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus Pandemic Policy</a></p> <p><a href="#">More support for Western Australians' wellbeing during COVID-19</a></p> <p><a href="#">DOH Wellbeing Hub</a></p> <p><a href="#">COVID-19 (coronavirus)</a></p> <p><a href="#">PPE Stocks</a></p> <p><a href="#">DOH latest updates</a></p> <p><a href="#">Psychological Tips for coping with COVID-19</a></p> <p><a href="#">confined to home</a></p> <p><a href="#">DoH media statements</a></p> <p><a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a></p> <p><a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a></p>

## PANDEMIC STAGE – Frontline managers / Clinical leaders

### Early Phase

- Create informal peer-support for teams
- Pair up experienced with inexperienced staff, use a buddy system
- Provide increased levels of supervision, ensure no one is pressured into a role that provokes overwhelming anxiety and stress
- Start support forums (in-person or virtually)
- Continue to monitor PPE equipment required
- Enable trained support staff/facilitators to conduct small fatigue drop in groups
- Commence wellbeing champions within your teams
- Continue with regular supportive Team Review Meetings
- Enable working group social and emotional support sessions on each shift as required
- Establish discipline speciality specific support including, integrated external providers e.g. (Doctors Health Advisory Service, Colleges, Australian Psychological Association)

[Identification and Use of PPE in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus Pandemic Policy](#)

[More support for Western Australians' wellbeing during COVID-19](#)

[DOH Wellbeing Hub](#)

[COVID-19 \(coronavirus\)](#)

[DOH latest updates](#)

[PPE Stocks](#)

[Psychological Tips for coping with COVID-19](#)

[confined to home](#)

[Doctors Health Advisory Service](#)

[Australian Psychological Association](#)

### Mid-phase

- Prioritise staff safety ensure availability of drinks/food/rest/sleep and other essential items
- Direct line to Senior Executive as required
- Coordinate strategic comfort breaks to optimise comfort whilst conserving stocks of PPE
- Manage up and down huddles with senior executive as required
- Continue with regular supportive Team Review Meetings
- Maintain working groups/teams social and emotional support sessions
- Ensure successes are shared, no matter how small
- Ensure regular 'offload' time on shift
- Progress wellbeing champions within your teams
- Suspend all non-urgent tasks as required

[Identification and Use of PPE in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus Pandemic Policy](#)

[More support for Western Australians' wellbeing during COVID-19](#)

[DOH Wellbeing Hub](#)

[COVID-19 \(coronavirus\)](#)

[PPE Stocks](#)

[DOH latest updates](#)

[Psychological Tips for coping with COVID-19](#)

[confined to home](#)

[DoH media statements](#)

[DOH Daily Snapshot](#)

[DoH Daily Sitrep](#)

## PANDEMIC STAGE – Frontline managers / Clinical leaders

<p><b>Peak-phase</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise and ensure staff have access to basic and essential items of need</li> <li>• Discuss any issues with wellbeing champions and action as necessary</li> <li>• Exercise compassionate management within your teams</li> <li>• Attend to personal and professional needs</li> <li>• Ensure staff basic needs on wards coordinate with wellbeing champions</li> <li>• Support 'off load' time built into shift</li> <li>• Opportunistic support or 1-1 meetings</li> <li>• Effective rostering of buddy system' every shift</li> <li>• Continue with regular supportive Team Review Meetings</li> <li>• Continue with work group social and emotional support sessions</li> <li>• Vigilant to monitoring resources including adequate PPE</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Identification and Use of PPE in the Clinical Setting During the Coronavirus Pandemic Policy</a></p> <p><a href="#">DOH Wellbeing Hub COVID-19 (coronavirus)</a></p> <p><a href="#">DOH latest updates</a> <a href="#">Psychological Tips for coping with COVID-19</a></p> <p><a href="#">confined to home</a> <a href="#">PPE Stocks</a> <a href="#">DoH media statements</a> <a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a> <a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a></p>
<p><b>Tail-off phase</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compassionate management</li> <li>• Once the crisis begins to recede, staff must be actively monitored, supported, and provided with evidence based treatments as required</li> <li>• More formal psychological help if and when required</li> <li>• Regular supportive Team Review Meetings</li> <li>• Continue with work group social and emotional support sessions</li> <li>• Open door policy in person/remotely</li> <li>• Where possible reinstate business as usual</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">DOH latest updates</a></p> <p><a href="#">Psychological Tips for coping with COVID-19</a></p> <p><a href="#">DoH media statements</a> <a href="#">DOH Daily Snapshot</a> <a href="#">DoH Daily Sitrep</a></p>
<p><b>Post COVID-19</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compassionate management</li> <li>• Continue to actively monitor and support staff and provide evidence based treatments as required</li> <li>• Prioritise annual/study leave</li> <li>• More formal psychological help if and when required</li> </ul>	<p>Local EAP, <a href="#">Beyond Blue</a> or <a href="#">Mind Spot</a></p>

## PANDEMIC STAGE – Staff Own Actions

	Recommended Actions:	Helpful Links
<b>Preparation for Covid-19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimise 'Personal Batteries'</li> <li>• Ensure adequate sleep, diet, exercise and down-time</li> <li>• Make personal wellbeing plan</li> <li>• Home contingency planning</li> <li>• See DOH and Local HSP working from home guidelines</li> <li>• Self-isolation planning</li> <li>• Work within own competencies while recognising that your skills/knowledge may be used in new ways</li> <li>• Encourage mutual support within team</li> <li>• Maintain communication with manager</li> <li>• Focus on what can be reasonably undertaken</li> <li>• Communication with colleagues and manager</li> <li>• Clear communication and escalation pathways</li> <li>• Try to anticipate individual professional and personal challenges</li> </ul>	<a href="#">More support for Western Australians' wellbeing during COVID-19</a> <a href="#">PPE Stocks</a> <a href="#">DOH Wellbeing Hub</a> <a href="#">Recharge Personal Batteries</a> <a href="#">Personal Wellbeing Plan</a> <a href="#">Five Ways to Wellbeing</a> <a href="#">Weekly Activity Diary</a> <a href="#">Online lists and resources</a> <a href="#">Self-isolation tips</a> <a href="#">My Compass</a> <a href="#">Psychological tips for frontline staff</a> <a href="#">Beyond Blue</a>
<b>Early Phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create supportive network within team</li> <li>• Consider split teams/rostering to enable quarantining responses as required</li> <li>• Work within the team buddy systems for support</li> <li>• Actively use Personal Wellbeing Plan</li> <li>• Learn new self-care strategies</li> <li>• Avoid excess caffeine/alcohol</li> <li>• Work within own competencies while recognising that your skills/knowledge may be used in new ways</li> <li>• End of Shift Huddles with managers</li> </ul>	<a href="#">PPE Stocks</a> <a href="#">DOH Wellbeing Hub</a> <a href="#">Recharge Personal Batteries</a> <a href="#">Personal Wellbeing Plan</a> <a href="#">Five Ways to Wellbeing</a> <a href="#">Weekly Activity Diary</a> <a href="#">Online lists and resources</a> <a href="#">Self-isolation tips</a> <a href="#">My Compass</a> <a href="#">Psychological tips for frontline staff</a> <a href="#">Beyond Blue</a>
<b>Mid-phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to manage your response to the changing challenges</li> <li>• Focus on 'circle of influence'</li> <li>• Focus on supportive teamwork</li> <li>• Work with your buddy systems and the team</li> <li>• Be kind, creative and work to organisational values'</li> <li>• Practice developing psychological and cognitive strategies</li> <li>• Conscientious attempts to establish a routine for relaxation and sleep</li> </ul>	<a href="#">PPE Stocks</a> <a href="#">Circle of influence</a> <a href="#">DOH Wellbeing Hub</a> <a href="#">Recharge Personal Batteries</a> <a href="#">Personal Wellbeing Plan</a> <a href="#">Five Ways to Wellbeing</a>

## PANDEMIC STAGE – Staff Own Actions

<p><b>Peak-phase</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to manage your response to the changing challenges</li> <li>• Focus on ‘circle of influence’</li> <li>• Focus on supportive teamwork</li> <li>• Work with your buddy systems and the team</li> <li>• Be kind, creative and work to organisational values’</li> <li>• Use psychological, cognitive and self-compassion strategies regularly</li> <li>• Conscious attempts to establish a routine for relaxation and sleep</li> <li>• Build <a href="#">resilience</a></li> <li>• Ensure personal wellbeing</li> <li>• Report personal life changes to your manager – seek help</li> <li>• Avoid ‘overdrive’</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">PPE Stocks</a>  <a href="#">Circle of influence</a>  <a href="#">Psychological Tips for Frontline Staff</a>  <a href="#">DOH Wellbeing Hub</a>  <a href="#">Recharge Personal Batteries</a>  <a href="#">Personal Wellbeing Plan</a>  <a href="#">Five Ways to Wellbeing</a></p>
<p><b>Tail-off phase</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on supporting self and others</li> <li>• Conscious attempts to establish a routine for relaxation and sleep</li> <li>• Ensure ongoing personal wellbeing</li> <li>• Report personal life changes to your manager – seek help</li> <li>• Where possible reinstate business as usual</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Psychological Tips for Frontline Staff</a></p>
<p><b>Post COVID-19</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on supporting self and others</li> <li>• Use psychological and cognitive strategies if required</li> <li>• Focus on compassion for self and others</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Beyond Blue</a>  <a href="#">Mind Spot</a>  <a href="#">Psychological tips</a> during COVID-19</p>

## IMPORTANT

- This is an unprecedented situation that none of us have previously had to contend with.
- We must remember that all of us, however junior or senior, may be feeling out of our depth, which is an entirely normal and reasonable response.
- With planning and preparation and working as a collective we can support each other to do our very best.
- We will need to be creative, pool resources and also consider harnessing non-WA Health people for support tasks and tasks to optimise our performance.

## GLOSSARY

**End of shift huddles:** A quick check in, facilitated by senior clinician: what went well, what to do differently, self-care reminder, safety net for anyone who may need more support that day

**Team Review Meetings (formerly called debriefs):** For the purpose of this document, a Team Review Meeting refers to a semi-formal structured, regular facilitated meeting where teams are given the opportunity to come together to reflect on the experience of working together, build a shared understanding of what has happened, foster connection, give mutual support and think about their self-care needs. If regular meetings are not possible a one-off Team Review Meeting is to be encouraged.

Ideally, they should be facilitated by at least one suitably qualified professional (i.e. psychologist, psychiatrist, trained mental health nurse or other) although COVID-19 may mean flexibility is required across all aspects of provision.

The primary process is for compassionate support and not as a treatment intervention. However, it is important that at least one facilitator has a background in psychiatry or psychology and is able to recognise signs of PTSD should they emerge, so they can signpost and ensure the team review is delivered safely.

Team reviews must always be optional, and no staff member should be compelled to attend.

**Buddy System:** A system in which two (or more) members of staff operate together to support one another and share knowledge throughout the pandemic. It may include staff from the same ward, or team working together in a supportive manner. It can also be used to assist staff working from home to stay connected and not alone and can be used virtually if required.

**Personal Wellbeing Plan:** Designed to maximise wellbeing and build emotional resourcefulness to help mitigate tough times.

**Circle of Influence (based on Covey's work):** This can potentially be adapted to clinical settings to reduce cognitive load when working in a high pressure or crisis situation.

Encourage staff to think about the things that they can control; those they can influence and those they can neither control nor influence.

If staff become overwhelmed encourage them to focus on what is directly under their control at that very moment, and to encourage breaking down units of time or tasks into manageable chunks.

This can be applied to focussing on individual patient tasks if they start to become overwhelmed by unmanageable clinical workload or emotional distress

## NOTES FOR EXECUTIVE TEAMS & SENIOR MANAGERS

- Senior leaders to include active monitoring of staff wellbeing and in COVID-19 management meetings through engagement with stakeholders in Organisational Development/Occupational Health, Psychology, Liaison Psychiatry and faith leaders.
- **Communication is KEY**
- Focus on certainty with transparent, honest and consistent style with same wording format.

**Last updated 16 April 2020**

**This document can be made available in alternative formats  
on request for a person with disability.**

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