

## LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM

### **BASICS**

**Sleep, food, hydration, exercise – make sure you get enough of all four.** This might seem like stating the obvious, but they are easy to neglect when under pressure.

### **PACING AND STAMINA**

Getting through this is going to be more of a marathon than a sprint. Try to maintain focus and mindfulness; pace yourself and maintain stamina by making sure you don't neglect the basics above.

### **MAINTAINING THE BALANCE**

We will all need some contrast and relief from the challenges at work and at home. Keep some time for pleasant activities and contact with those you care about, even if you can only do this online. For example, if you find yourself struggling to do this, then connect with someone and **message each other '3 Good Things'** you notice every day.

Try to **focus on the positives** of the situation like the amazing work being done by the NHS and other organisations.

**Develop your sense of purpose** – whatever role we play, whether close to the point of care for Covid-19 patients or in support services keeping the rest of the system going, we all are important to the health of the population.

**Keep a journal** of what you do and what happens around you, as this can help you manage your emotions and will provide an immense amount of learning from this unique situation

### **DEALING WITH DIFFICULT EVENTS**

Some of us may experience or be witness to very difficult events. Our emotional response will inevitably be intense at these times. Talk it through with people you trust. Remember to maintain the basics of sleep, food, hydration and exercise. Look out for each other too and offer support to those who need it.

### **FEELING OVERWHELMED**

Sometimes you may feel overwhelmed by the scale or intensity of the pandemic. If this happens try to take some time out, connect with what you know restores your balance and perspective. Seek help if the feeling of overwhelm persists.

Breathing exercises can help when we feel very anxious or panicky:

<https://www.nwbh.nhs.uk/healthandwellbeing/Pages/Breathing-Techniques-.aspx>

### **PRE-EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS**

If you already have a pre-existing mental health problem, you may find you need to focus on actively maintaining your wellbeing. Think back to the things that have helped before and do more of them. You may also need alternatives if your usual coping strategies are hindered by the constraints of the pandemic. If you feel you are relapsing significantly then access the Employee

Assistance Programme (details below) or consult your GP or speak to your Trainee Support Manager about a referral to Occupational Health.

### **MANAGING EXPECTATIONS**

All services are under increased pressure because of the impact of the pandemic, so be realistic in your expectations of response times and availability.

### **WORKING FROM HOME**

Working from home for sustained periods can leave us feeling disconnected from colleagues and teams, especially if we're in isolation or socially distancing at the same time. So, connect with colleagues online to discuss work and check in with each other. Connect with friends and family online too. For example, you could play games, send each other music tracks that sum up the day you've had, or even try having conversation using only gifs!

### **SUPPORT AVAILABLE**

VIVUP – 24/7 Counselling support – ring 03303 800 658

Working Well Occupational Health – any Health:Work concerns: [workingwell@ghc.nhs.uk](mailto:workingwell@ghc.nhs.uk)

Working Well Counselling – 'face to face' counselling – [workingwell@ghc.nhs.uk](mailto:workingwell@ghc.nhs.uk)

Lets Talk IAPT service

### **APPS**

Unmind is a mental health platform that empowers staff to proactively improve their mental wellbeing. Using scientifically-backed assessments, tools and training you can measure and manage your personal mental health needs, including digital programmes designed to help with stress, sleep, coping, connection, fulfillment and nutrition.

The team at Unmind are offering free access to NHS staff until the end of December 2020, which is active now.

How NHS staff can get access:

- Go to [nhs.unmind.com/signup](https://nhs.unmind.com/signup)
- Sign up with your NHS email address
- Download the Unmind app from your appstore - your organisation name is NHS.

### **Headspace**

Headspace is a science-backed app in mindfulness and meditation, providing unique tools and resources to help reduce stress, build resilience, and aid better sleep.

Free access to all NHS staff with an NHS email address is available until 31 December 2020 and is active now.

How NHS staff can get access:

- Go to <https://www.headspace.com/nhs> for NHS staff to access, with the option to select clinical or non-clinical staff to start enrolling.
- You will need to use your NHS email address to sign up.

Access their FAQs and support for more information.

## Sleepio and Daylight (developed by Big Health)

Sleepio is a clinically-evidenced sleep improvement programme that is fully automated and highly personalised, using cognitive behavioural techniques to help improve poor sleep.

Free access to Sleepio for all NHS staff is active now until 31 December.

Daylight is a smartphone-based app that provides help to people experiencing symptoms of worry and anxiety, using evidence-based cognitive behavioural techniques, voice and animation.

Free access to Daylight is active now until 31 December.

How NHS staff can access Sleepio:

- Click on the following link on your laptop or desktop computer: [sleepio.com/access](https://sleepio.com/access)
- Sign up for an account using your name and email address.
  - Click 'Personalise Sleepio'.
- Get started.

How NHS staff can access Daylight:

- Click on the following link: [trydaylight.com/access](https://trydaylight.com/access)
- Answer a few short questions to tailor the programme to you.
- Sign up for an account using your name and email address.
  - Download the Daylight smartphone app (search 'Daylight - Worry Less' on both iPhone and Android).
- Get started.

For technical support please contact:

[hello@sleepio.com](mailto:hello@sleepio.com)

[hello@trydaylight.com](mailto:hello@trydaylight.com)

## References

*NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme (GMTS)*

*MTS and Mental Wellbeing - Looking After Your Emotional Health During the Covid-19 Pandemic March 2020*

*NHS employers free access to apps for all NHS staff March 2020*