

Greater Manchester Wellbeing Toolkit

Supporting the wellbeing of our workforce
in Greater Manchester



**Greater
Manchester**
Integrated Care
Partnership

Foreword

This toolkit is now in its third year of production and it continues to have an important role to play in supporting the wellbeing of our health and care workforce in Greater Manchester.

The toolkit emerged as part of the initial response to the pandemic in April 2020, to bring together wellbeing offers for the newly recruited Covid response teams. The toolkit became a focal point for wellbeing support and resources for anyone who worked in health and care and beyond. It also became the foundation for direct delivery of wellbeing sessions.

Since then it has grown into a movement for better wellbeing in the workplace. This third edition of the toolkit, adopting our new Integrated Care Partnership brand, sees us moving beyond responding to need, but looking at how we proactively create good, sustainable wellbeing cultures in workplaces across Greater Manchester's health and care services. As well as a complete refresh, the toolkit has been updated to include new sections on Stress and Burnout.

In March 2023, the Greater Manchester People and Culture Strategy for our health and care workforce was launched.

It has five priority areas:

- Workforce Integration
- Good Employment
- Workforce Wellbeing
- Addressing Inequalities
- Growing and Developing our Workforce.

This toolkit and the wider Greater Manchester Wellbeing programme is a key delivery vehicle for the Workforce Wellbeing priority; to help provide the support and space for our people to maintain good health and wellbeing and make sure help is on hand when it's needed. It is also a key enabler to supporting work in the other four priority areas:

- promoting parity and integration between services
- improving employment standards
- supporting organisations to recruit
- retain their workforce, and helping to tackle inequalities.

This toolkit will continue to be supported by the delivery of wellbeing sessions and the work of our Greater Manchester Wellbeing Champions network.

We hope you find this latest edition of the toolkit to be useful. Please share it with your friends and colleagues and let us know if we can support you and your organisations to make the most out of the toolkit. Wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and we'd love you to join our movement for better wellbeing in Greater Manchester.

Professor Dame Sue Bailey OBE DBE

Non-Executive Director, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care

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10GM

Business In The Community

GM Moving

Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter

Greater Manchester Creative Health Strategy

Greater Manchester Primary Care Provider Board

Greater Manchester Resilience Hub

Greater Sport

Macc

Malleable Mind

MIND

NHS Employers

NHS England, Supporting Our NHS People

NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care

NHS North West Leadership Academy

North West Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NW ADASS)

Oscar Kilo

Every Mind Matters - Public Health England

Samaritans

Skills for Care

Thriving at Work: Stevenson / Farmer Review

Introduction

Good wellbeing is when we are able to be at our best – at work and home.

For us, wellbeing is about three things:



the **physical** support that helps you to be at your best



the **practical** aspects of what makes your working day easier



the **psychological** care to help keep your mental health well

What is wellbeing?

Our wellbeing is something that is personal to each and every one of us. We all need something different to maintain good wellbeing for ourselves, depending on our circumstances, our context, and our influences.

The impact of the pandemic on the ways we work, our home lives and the communities around us was unparalleled. For many of us working across our public services in Greater Manchester, this meant that we stepped up in ways that we would never have anticipated or planned for. The flexibility and strength that each of us demonstrated was quite remarkable. In a matter of weeks, we had evolved and re-organised how we did things – both in our home and working lives.

Since then, we have continued to evolve our ways of working, navigating the ongoing operational challenges we face. Many of us continue to work at the pace of a sprint, but at the distance of a marathon. The sustained nature of the changes in the ways that we work and the impact of the guidance and governance around us, means that it is just as critical to be conscious about how we look after our wellbeing.

This toolkit has evolved to respond to the needs of our workforce across Greater Manchester. It looks to address the inequalities of wellbeing provision, access and support available to everyone across our networks. The themes of what we need continue to shift, but the message is still loud and clear: wellbeing continues to be our priority to best support each and every person working to deliver our services across Greater Manchester.

This is the third edition of our Wellbeing Toolkit. It has been updated to capture what we are learning and responding to how our wellbeing needs are changing. There is a continued focus on our individual wellbeing, the wellbeing of those around us, and improving our workplace cultures.



Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit has been developed by NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care for the benefit of our health and care workforce, including colleagues in the NHS and social care, as well as those in the voluntary sector, those delivering health and care services in the private sector and our unwaged workforce too.

It is designed with this workforce in mind; however, we know that what creates good wellbeing practices in our workplaces is universal. This toolkit is aimed at how we help people to be at their best – and can be applied across all our public services in Greater Manchester.

We know there are lots of support offers out there, and that this can feel overwhelming at times and hard to connect with when we need them the most. So, we have listened to your feedback and in response, we have collated this toolkit to help make it easier for you to look after yourself, your teams at work, and your families at home.

We have kept this toolkit simple, practical and relevant to the ways that you are working (whether at home or in your place of work) – just as you asked. We will continue to develop this live resource to make sure it brings together the best of the support available to you.

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit is interactive – so you can digest the whole thing at once or jump to the section that is relevant for you. As well as sharing top tips and useful resources, it also includes templates and guides which you can download and share, or adapt for your own organisation.

You can navigate through the sections of this toolkit by using the coloured tabs at the top of every page. This will take you to the beginning of each chapter. Alternatively, you may want to find what you are looking for from the contents page or refer to the resources page at the end of the document.



The toolkit is divided into three sections:

Looking after yourself

It is important that where possible we are pro-active about the ways we approach our wellbeing and build our physical and mental resilience to help us respond to the challenges of our working lives.

Supporting others

Whether you are a manager or a supportive colleague, there are lots of ways we can look after one another – through buddy systems, good conversations, introducing debriefing sessions and more.

Responding to need

It is vital that we recognise when we need to reach out for help. There is a broad range of support in Greater Manchester available at our fingertips - both online and more personal, depending on what works best for you.

Share this toolkit with others

If you have found this toolkit to be useful, we would encourage you to share it with colleagues or even family and friends.

This toolkit will continue to be a live resource, regularly updated based on the feedback you give us and providing new resources as they become available. Therefore, please share this link rather than a copy of the document itself, to ensure you share the latest version.

We welcome your feedback on how you have used this toolkit and any improvements we can make. Please share your feedback with us at: gmhscp.gmworkingtogether@nhs.net

This toolkit is an open resource and we encourage you to share it. We ask that when sharing it directly with colleagues or as a link on your website, please acknowledge **[NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care 2023](#)**.

These resources were produced by **NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care**, in collaboration with colleagues from across the Greater Manchester system. For further information please email: gmhscp.gmworkingtogether@nhs.net

The views expressed in this work are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the **NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care**.



Looking after yourself

It is important that we look after ourselves to be at our best – physically, practically, and psychologically. While we plan and deliver services to improve the health outcomes of our communities, it's easy to put the needs of others first – our service users, our colleagues, or our family – and forget to look after ourselves.

Looking after yourself is critical to being at your physical and mental best, and this section will help raise awareness and make the changes that will help you to put your best foot forward every day.





Staying active

We all know that being physically active helps us feel good about ourselves, be more productive, and supports better quality sleep and relaxation. Engaging in physical exercise alleviates stress and increases endorphins with positive impacts on mental health.

Sometimes it can be daunting to get started, so **GreaterSport** are working to help us all get more active in our working day. Have a look at this **Active Workplaces Toolkit** for guidance on the small changes you can make to your working day to improve your health and wellbeing.

Whatever you choose to do, make sure its enjoyable and that every move counts! Try and aim for 30 minutes of activity every day that gets the heart pumping and the your body warmer – even if that’s in blocks of 10 minutes as you go about your day.



You can start with some of these simple steps:

- Make sure you have regular breaks away from your desk and do something physical that you enjoy.
- Set yourself some goals and commit to walking a mile every other day for the first week, and add more distance each time you walk, or increase the frequency. There is lots of walking advice on the **Greater Manchester Walking website** or take the **Daily Mile** challenge.
- Cycle or walk to work when you can and take advantage of cycle and travel schemes in your workplace.
- Explore your local area on foot, or get on your bike to discover new ways of getting from A to B. Find great tips on **cycling** across Greater Manchester, including organised rides, learning how to ride, and joining a local cycle group.
- Find an open space or park near you, and take the time to explore the seasons as they change across the year – you can find suggested parks and open spaces across Greater Manchester **here**.

Have a look through the **GM Moving** website to see the wide range of activities that you, your family and your colleagues can do to keep physically active.

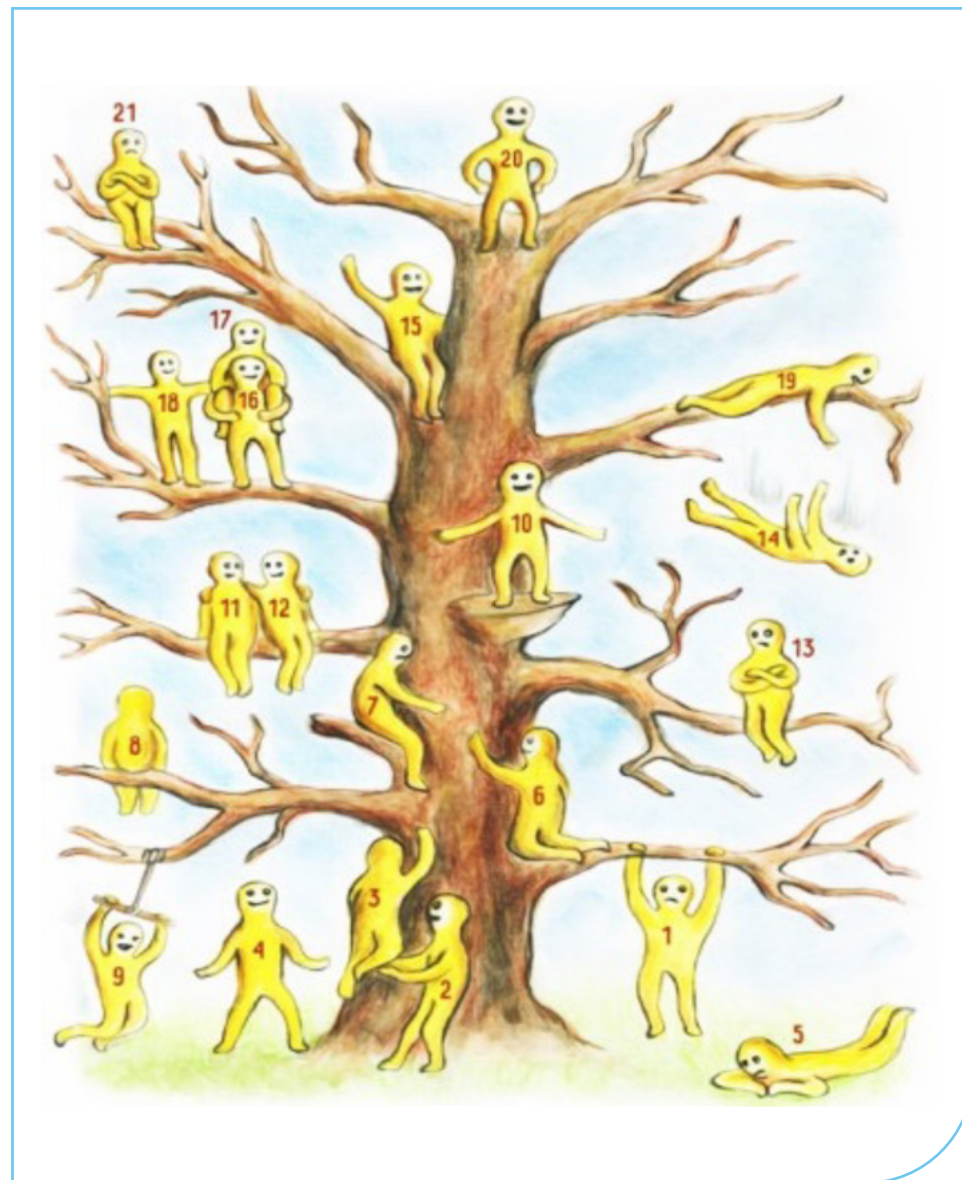


Take a look at **Mind's Five Ways to Wellbeing**. These are simple steps to embed into your everyday, to find a better balance through a busy or stressful working life and boost your mental health and wellbeing.

Sometimes it's hard to know what aspect of your wellbeing to pay attention to. **The Greater Manchester Wellbeing Quiz** may be a helpful way of understanding what you may need to pay attention to, sharing practical tips and links to help you focus on improving your day-to-day wellbeing.



We can all have good and bad days that fluctuate as we respond to the challenges around us. Have a look at this **Blob Tree** resource from Pip Wilson which can help us to reflect on where we are - as an individual or a team to help better communicate with others what we may be feeling.





Eating well

Eating a healthy balanced diet is a vital part of maintaining good wellbeing and being able to function at your best. It also helps with having a stronger immune system, better sleep and helping your mood and energy levels.

We all know about the advice to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, as well as drinking plenty of water across the day to make sure you stay hydrated – but many of us can struggle to do this. Have a look at the [Live Well, Eat Well](#) guides for up-to-date advice.



Drinking well

It is important to stay hydrated to keep our bodies well hydrated and functioning properly. We should be drinking fluids regularly throughout the day. These are some important times to remember to have a drink:



After waking up
Activate internal organs



Before taking a shower
Lower blood pressure
Activate internal organs



30 minutes before a meal
Improve digestion
Calorie burning benefits



Before going to bed
Hydrating benefits
Promotes better sleep
Toxin clearing benefits
Calorie burning benefits



Financial advice

Managing our finances can be challenging under normal circumstances and with the rise in the cost of living, the pressures of day-to-day finances can significantly impact our wellbeing.

Whether it is concerns about job security, a reduction in your household income, or an increase in your running costs at home – sometimes it can be hard to see a pathway through. There is support that you can access, with tailored advice and support for your individual circumstances, to help you find solutions that work for you and your family.

If you need financial advice to help with increasing costs and financial pressures, you can contact the **Money Helper** service (formerly Money Advice Service) for free and impartial money advice by telephone on **0800 448 0826** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or via WhatsApp (**+44 7701 342 744**).

MoneyHelper also provides free impartial advice about:

- dealing with **debt and loans**
- helping with your **Financial Fitness**
- resources to support **budgeting and savings**

Have a look at some of these helpful guides to support you through your financial concerns:

- **Should you save, or pay off loans and credit cards?**
- **Getting into the savings habit**
- **Why should I get advice for retirement?**
- **Retirement planning: preparing for retirement checklist**

You may also be able to access a **salary sacrifice** arrangement through your employer, who can help with benefits that support you with your financial wellbeing. This may include a Cycle to Work scheme, or on-site nursery or car park support where available. Check with your employer to find out what's on offer.

Finally, you may benefit from signing up for a **Blue Light Card** which provides a discount service for the emergency services, NHS, social care sector and armed forces - sharing with members thousands of amazing discounts online and on the high street that can help with the day-to-day costs of living. The card costs £5 for a two-year membership and is open to all working across health and social care.

Accessing **Greater Manchester Financial Support**





Hybrid working – a practical way to support our new ways of working

Over the last few years, many of us have had to renegotiate our ways of working – and especially for those not working on the frontline, this has meant working from home.

There have been benefits and downsides to this – reduced commute times and more efficient use of the working day has been counter balanced with back-to-back virtual calls, less social connection, reduced physical activity and the lines between work and home life becoming blurred. We are also less likely to feel connected with work developments around us, and unable to see the pressures our colleagues are under when not in physical contact on a regular basis.

What is hybrid working?

Hybrid working is a location-flexible arrangement that allows you to combine onsite and offsite working. It sits in the middle of fully remote or fully on-site working and offers a home-to-work balance to support you to work more flexibly in the right place and time, in a way that works for you.



The key to hybrid working is:

- A culture that embraces the new ways of working – based on trust and empowerment
- Leaders who role model this way of working
- Good systems, process and access to technology

When thinking about hybrid working and what it means for you, it is important to make sure that wellbeing is at the heart of this. Consider the way that you set up your workplace and the seat you sit on, and set reasonable work/rest boundaries. It is also recommended to schedule regular breaks – whether it's to grab a glass of water (recommended two to three litres per day) or go for a short walk and get some fresh air.



PDF

You can use this [**Flexible Working Conversation Starter**](#) which includes suggestions of the things you may want to think about when planning your flexible working pattern. It will also help you plan the conversation with your manager or team leader about how flexible working may look for your role – whether at home or on site.



Find what works best for you

- Working in a hybrid way will give you a higher level of autonomy in managing and planning your time and work
- Aim to achieve a better work life balance. There is a understanding that not everyone needs to be in the office full time but only when required to attend team days, meetings or for collaborative purposes
- Continue to work your contracted hours but be empowered to manage your working pattern, ensuring business needs are met whilst maintaining a good work-life balance. You are responsible for agreeing any outputs and deliverables with your manager

Work with your manager to ensure that whilst working remotely, you feel connected to the wider team, do not feel isolated, and you have regular opportunities to have great conversations.



Top tips for managers

The key to successfully managing a hybrid working team is to lead by example and role model the behaviour you want to promote. Line management will be focussed on trust, empowerment, performance, behaviour, and self-awareness, not on command and control. This means using different ways of keeping in contact with staff, considering individual's needs and assessing workloads and monitoring performance.



As a manager or team leader, you may need to rethink the need for face-to-face meetings and use a variety of ways to keep in touch with your teams. You will also need to agree the frequency of when and how you keep in touch, here are some suggestions you might consider:

- Informal daily check-ins' via MS Teams or Zoom
- Face-to-face team meetings when possible
- Regular 1:1s, quarterly conversations and annual reviews – using the **Good Conversation Guide**



Moving more to combat musculoskeletal conditions

Many workplaces are taking action to support better physical wellbeing and help combat the impacts of the way we work, which can create bad backs, sore necks and muscle pain – otherwise known as Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions.

There has been a recent shift from competitive endurance sports, such as bike rides, long runs or muddy obstacle races to a more holistic approach that gets more people moving like walking or step challenges, or the simple actions that can build activity into the working day.

Factoring physical movement into your working day is really important to help reduce the likelihood of developing MSK conditions associated with how we are sitting and also sitting for long periods of time. These don't need to be long runs, or high intensity exercise classes, but simple actions that can be built into the working day, such as a short walk near your home, or stretching regularly.

The **GreaterSport Active Workplace Toolkit** provides some simple activities and advice that can be incorporated into the working day, whether this is at your place of work or working from home.



The **Live Well Day** looks at how we can include 30 to 40 minutes of activity into your day, just by making a few simple changes to you existing day:

- **Commuting** – Could you swap the car for active travel, either walking or cycling? If the journey is too long to do this, could you park the car a little further away or get off the bus or tram a stop early. Don't worry if you're working from home, you can still do this. Why don't you do a 'fake commute' and walk around the block before you switch your laptop on in the morning?
- **Lift or stairs** – When you get to work, do you take the lift or the stairs? Even taking the stairs a few floors and then taking the lift the rest of the way is a good start if there are too many stairs to climb.
- **Desk exercises and stretches** – Whether you're desk based or not, performing a few bodyweight or resistance band exercises as well as stretches can all help movement during the day.



Have a look at these fantastic resources that share practical tips on how to embed movement into the working day:

- [Your Desk Posture Survival Guide](#) (PDF)
- [Exercise vs Physical Activity](#) (PDF)



Have a look at the insights from [Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust](#), who have produced this learning document from their Musculoskeletal Health in the Workplace programme.

Alternatively, you may want to look at the [BITC Musculoskeletal Health in the Workplace toolkit](#) for employers which is packed with advice.

Have a listen to this podcast with John Brady and Stephen Lunt exploring [insights into...the Impacts of MSK in the workplace](#).



It is recommended that we all get at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week. This means that you should raise your heart rate slightly, and still be able to hold a conversation while performing the activity.

Walking can also provide some alternatives to the things you do in your day that may traditionally have been done whilst sat at your desk or in a meeting room.

- **1-2-1 Meetings** – Could these be done on the move? Why not meet up and have your 1-2-1 in a local park.
- **Swap a video call for the phone** – This enables you to have your meeting on the move as well. Plug your earphones in and go for a walk and talk.



For more examples of how to include movement into your health and wellbeing plan, support your colleagues to move more, or give yourself some ideas to bring into your working day visit the [GreaterSport Active Workplace Toolkit](#).

This resource has been developed in partnership with [GreaterSport](#) and the [Business Health Group](#).

Greater Manchester
Moving > ^ < v



Take care of your stress bucket

The causes of stress can vary from pressures in the workplace, or challenges at home. There is rarely a single source of stress, instead it will be a combination of things layering on top of each other.

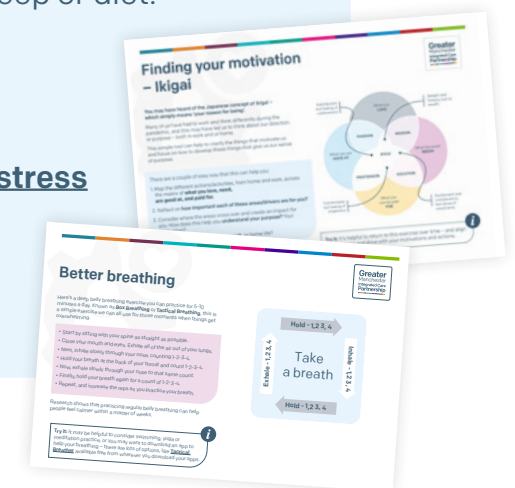
While they may not be significant problems on their own, if we are not proactive about relieving our stresses over time, they can build up to become a significant problem. Imagine your stresses are dripping into a bucket – everyday that bucket will get fuller and fuller, until it will reach a point where the bucket overflows.

The good news is that we can do something about this. It is important that we recognise what causes these day-to-day stresses and take steps to relieve them – and release the stresses before they begin to overflow. For some, this is about being physically active, eating well or getting enough sleep. For others, it is about knowing where you have a safe space to talk, decompress from a stressful day, or practicing breathing or meditation techniques.



By being aware of what causes our stress and anxieties, and putting actions into place to release the pressures, we can develop stronger resilience, and improve our ability to respond to challenges as they present themselves. Have a look at these handy tools to help you manage or improve your motivation, anxiety, relaxation, sleep or diet:

- [Finding your motivation](#)
- [What's in your control](#)
- [Better breathing to help your stress](#)
- [Improve your sleep](#)
- [Eating for wellbeing](#)





Understanding stress and burnout

Stress is both a physical and psychological by-product of how our brain interprets the world around us.

We're all familiar with the inner dialogue and feeling that we sometimes have competing agendas causing conflict. Using the neuroscience of how the brain is built, and the concept of what is termed as the 'dual process theory', we can understand two specific brain regions. The first is the frontal lobe and the second is the limbic lobe and key structures within it, the amygdala and thalamus.

Our amygdala and thalamus are concerned with responding to our perception of threat and opportunity in the world around us; it does this very rapidly and responds with key stress hormones, such as cortisol or adrenaline.

While our stress reaction is perfectly normal, this does not mean that it's comfortable or pleasant. In fact, it's not intended to be. It's important to note our stress response can fire off in exactly the same way to a real-life threat as to perceptions of threat.

Burnout can be understood as persistent and ongoing activation of our heightened stress response. Now as you might imagine, the persistent activation of a system which is primarily there for threat and opportunity response, and ultimately to keep us alive, could cause some problems. The links between the normal but uncomfortable activation of our stress response system and burnout are important to understand.

It's important to understand that feeling a bit stressed doesn't necessarily mean we're burning out. Burnout is something altogether different as it's that sense of complete physical and mental exhaustion, which is often characterised by cynicism, exhaustion, negativity in our outlook and thoughts and feelings of reduced efficacy.

Most of the time when we experience stress it passes, or we can harness the power of our frontal lobe to help mediate and manage down our stress levels often by introducing different perspectives and reframing how we're thinking and feeling. When we're completely burnt out, our mental energy and ability to do this can be seriously depleted.

It's important to consider the wider context of what's going on for us, when understanding our own thoughts and behaviour, and that of others. What we see and feel on the surface may not be the full picture. The inability or perceived inability to fulfil some of our important unconscious motivations or 'drives' can feed directly into elevated stress levels. Over time this could also contribute to burnout. It can be really useful to chart how we're feeling over time, and better understand where we may be on our stress barometer, and how far we think or feel we are from how we would like to be – in our energy, our thoughts or our emotions.

The 12 stages of burnout



Stage 1

You feel there is a strong need to prove yourself



Stage 2

You keep working hard and harder to achieve this



Stage 3

You begin to neglect your own needs more



Stage 4

You are conflicted and blame others or the situation



Stage 5

You change your values to focus on work more



Stage 6

You deny the problems that arise due to work stress



Stage 7

You withdraw from social life and your family as well



Stage 8

Your behaviour changes which upsets your loved ones



Stage 9

Depersonalisation happens, you do not feel like yourself



Stage 10

You feel empty and numb, substance abuse can occur



Stage 11

You feel depressed, lost and completely exhausted



Stage 12

You mentally and physically collapse, full burnout

Source: @ThePresentPsychologist

Consider these practical steps to help manage your stress:

- Seek support from others – when we're stressed or in a stage of burnout, we can find ourselves withdrawing from others, and may end up not feeling like ourselves. At times like these, the anchoring that comes from our social support networks can be powerful. It can help us to understand that we are not alone, and there are those who are ready to listen and engage with us empathetically.
- Research has shown that reframing can be particularly useful in helping to manage the impacts of burnout. To reframe how we view what's happening around us, helps identify and highlight the areas where we feel a sense of control and influence over our working lives.
- Setting boundaries may be something as small as putting timeframes around the workloads we have, or the language we use with those around us - the words 'no' or 'not now' can be very challenging to use when we want to do our best for others. The key is to set small and realistic goals, and create a stepped approach rather than trying to do everything, all at once.
- Moving more and eating nutritious food can have a positive impact, as well as hydrating and getting good quality sleep. Collectively, they can have a significant boost to our mental health.
- Do what makes you feel good – whether listening to music, enjoying nature, or talking with trusted ones, conscious actions can anchor the positive impact on your mental health.

If you are a leader or manager, pay attention to how you:

- Are prepared to innovate and involve others to gather system insight, and find solutions in novel ways.
- Manage your own psychology to reach across what you can't see or hear, using or sharing your power to influence your workplace cultures and support with the resources as necessary.
- Establish and maintain open communication channels with your workforce and networks.
- Build new communities between different parts and functions of your organisations.
- Role model empathic and compassionate leadership.



This content has been developed in collaboration with **Malleable Mind**



Finding support in your communities

You can contact your local voluntary and community groups to find out information about activities in your area, as well as local faith organisations shared by **GMCVO** and **10GM**. Alternately you may want to look at the **Local Inter Faith** groups in your area.

For those who would like to find advice, support and information services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities, you can contact the **LGBT Foundation**.

Finding time to look after yourself

Often finding or making the time to look after our wellbeing is the biggest challenge; with long shifts or back to back meetings, it is difficult to ensure we factor it in to our day to day routine.

Here are some suggestions for ways we can all make sure we are regularly making the time to check in on our own wellbeing:

- Block out protected time in your diary, whether it is fifteen minutes every day or one hour once a week.
- If you are going into the workplace, do a quick check in or some breathing exercises on your way home.
- If you're working from home, build a 'virtual commute' into your day by going for a short walk or stretching at the beginning and the end of your working day.





When to ask for help

It's crucial that we are open and honest about the pressures and demands we are facing, and to pay better attention to when we may need some support ourselves.

These are some of the signs to pay attention to:

- If you are experiencing **high levels of distress**
- If you are **unable to focus** at work or home or are unable to perform daily activities
- If you have **significantly increased** your use of alcohol and/or substances
- If those around you are very **worried about you**
- If you are worried about your ability to **keep yourself safe**

You may recognise and experience some of these at some points, and that can be fine from time to time. However, when they become more regular, or you feel like it's a little bit harder to get through the daily challenges, that's when you may need to ask for help.



Access the free **iResilience tool**, as part of the Good Day at Work campaign from Robertson Cooper - to help develop insights and awareness about your own strategies to maintain wellness in challenging situations.



Supporting others

As we improve our awareness of how to look after our own wellbeing, we can find that we will also be able to recognise the needs and challenges of our peers and teams, and offer better support for those around us.

We are very used to paying attention to operational or technical matters, so we can improve our practice, and handover work across different teams – and we need to improve how we do this from a wellbeing perspective. There are lots of practical ways we can improve how our teams can work better together, stay connected and be a source of peer support when needed.





Check in with your team

It's great practice to check in with each other on a regular basis; to help decompress the challenges at work and collaborate on solutions when working at pace.

This **Check In/Check Out** guide can be used by individuals or as a team. It includes questions to help you reflect on your day and supports the transition back to your home life.

PDF

Debrief with your team

Debriefing is an important mechanism for reflection and handing over at the end of the working day. It is just as valuable for the individual as the whole team as it helps us decompress from the working day and set boundaries between when we are working and when we aren't.

There are some simple steps that can help you to debrief effectively as a team:

- **Reflect on what has gone well**, and what you would want to change in the future. What have you learnt from this? Remember – giving feedback is not a debrief.
- **Focus on how to improve**, rather than evaluate or judge what happened.
- **Concentrate on specifics** – details, incidents, or events, rather than general or sweeping statements.
- **Make sure you have the input of others**, and actively listen to the different viewpoints and perspectives.

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Set up a Buddy Network

Being social with your work colleagues is an essential part of your support network. Your colleagues can be a great source of support, whether that's virtual or face to face.

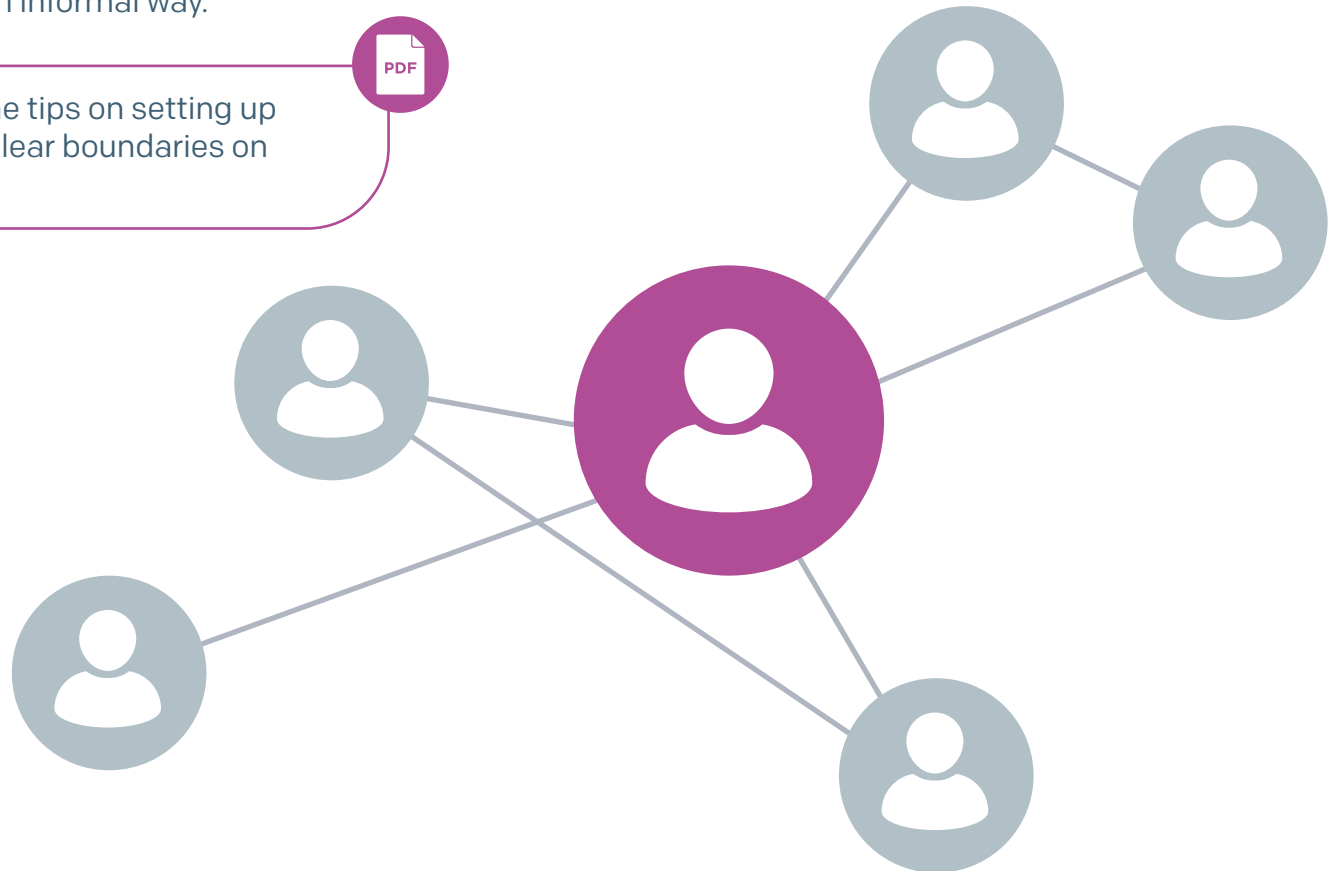
You may want to consider setting up a Buddy Network in your team. A Buddy Network pairs colleagues together, often people who do not work together regularly, to offer regular peer to peer support in an informal way.

This **Buddy Guide** gives you some tips on setting up a Buddy network, as well some clear boundaries on what a Buddy is and isn't.

PDF

Join a staff network

You may also want to have a look at the **staff networks or support groups your workplace may have** – from LGBT+, Carers, to inclusion groups – if there isn't a group just right for you, then look to set one up, or there may be a Greater Manchester or national network for you to join.





Wellbeing champions

Most workplace settings across health and social care have identified a **Wellbeing Guardian** (often a Non-Executive Director) or a **Strategic Wellbeing Lead** who can influence and help embed good wellbeing cultures, along with **Freedom to Speak Up Guardians**, or **EDI leads** improving inclusion and diversity across our workplaces.

To learn more about embedding a holistic wellbeing culture, have a look at this [Wellbeing Community Resource Pack](#) which outlines the variety of roles that can exist across our system.

As part of these developments, there is focus on how we sustain this energy and create work spaces that help us be at our best.

Wellbeing Champions are individuals who work at all levels across their workplaces, from all demographics and roles, to promote, support and signpost their colleagues to local and national wellbeing provision and offers.

Sometimes called 'wellbeing ambassadors', they often have a particular interest in health and wellbeing, who are just keen to support the wellbeing of their colleagues. They work with their Wellbeing Lead to share and cascade wellbeing support and offers with their colleagues.

A **Wellbeing Champion** is a colleague who role models and supports good wellbeing practices. They:



are recognised as the 'go to' person to share and signpost colleagues to wellbeing provision;



provide a listening ear for colleagues;



are familiar with the tools and guides in the Wellbeing Toolkit;



know where to direct wellbeing queries.

They may also work alongside their Wellbeing Guardians, or Strategic Wellbeing Leads to connect up the day-to-day experiences and challenges faced by colleagues and help inform what support needs to be prioritised.

We are building a network of Wellbeing Champions across our Greater Manchester system, for anyone who wants to be involved: to help share the learning and experiences; improve the wellbeing support our Champions receive; and look at how we can train and up skill our Champions collectively.

The network is looking to promote fair access and support for all Champions and embedding good workplace wellbeing cultures. It is also recognised that some of the Wellbeing Champions go on to become wellbeing specialists in a particular area, including Mental Health First Aiders, Active Workplace Champions, or those trained in TRiM (Trauma Response Management) trauma, Bereavement or Menopause specialisms.

If anyone is interested in getting involved, or to learn how to set up a Wellbeing Champions network, then please contact gmhscp.gmworkingtogether@nhs.net



Have a listen to this podcast with clinical lead Ann Carey exploring [Insights into...Wellbeing Champions](#)

Supporting your team – best practice for managers

Managers and team leaders have an important role to play in supporting the wellbeing of their team.

As a manager you can help support colleagues to prioritise their wellbeing as well as setting a good example by looking after your own.

Starting good conversations

It can be hard when working in such a busy environment to remember to have conversations with our teams.

This is especially true when we are pressed for time, distracted by emails or phone calls, or feeling overwhelmed by the volume of work.

Being a good listener and asking how someone is, is a simple and important part of demonstrating your support and understanding how you can advise in the best way possible.



Have a look at the Samaritans [S.H.U.S.H. Listening Tips](#) to become a better listener, or download the [Little Tips](#) poster that helps someone open up when something is worrying them.

A good conversation is focused on the individual and the issues that matter to them.

It should consider the person as a whole; from wellbeing, experience of work, development, successes and improvements. The **Greater Manchester Good Conversations Guide** is an interactive online toolkit that has been designed to support individuals and managers to get the best out of their conversations. The guide includes suggested discussion themes as well as top tips and templates for recording your conversations.

This is supported by the **Wellbeing Conversations Guide for Managers** which can be used on a regular basis to help managers stay connected with teams and is there to enhance (and not replace) any internal processes you have for appraisals or performance conversations. This includes a list of suggested questions based on good coaching techniques to help the person you are speaking with to reflect and share how they are feeling and doing. They will help you plan your discussion and make sure that you cover all aspects – in case you get sidetracked!

If you would like a bit more structure, you may want to have a look at this **Wellbeing Review Template** to help structure your discussions over time.





Thinking about menopause

Women make up nearly 80% of the health and care workforce and every woman goes through menopause at some point in their lives.

This usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, although there are many reasons why this could occur earlier. It can affect younger women through a premature, medical or surgical menopause. It can also affect transgender and non-binary people. Statistics suggest that around one in every three women has either experienced or is currently going through menopause – which will have an impact on both work and home lives. It is important to make sure we have a good understanding of what it is and how we can support ourselves and colleagues.

What is menopause?

Menopause is a natural transition stage in most women's lives. It is marked by hormonal changes in a woman's reproductive cycle and has four key stages:

- **Pre-menopause:** the stage before any menopausal symptoms occur.
- **Peri-menopause:** when a woman experiences menopausal symptoms due to hormone changes, but still has her period.
- **Menopause:** when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months.
- **Post-menopause:** the time in a woman's life after she has not had a period for 12 consecutive months.

What menopause feels like

There are lots of myths about what menopause feels like, so it's important to have a clear understanding of how it can affect women. There are a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms experienced at the different stages of menopause and women can often encounter difficulties at work as a result of their symptoms. Some studies suggest that women of colour may have more prevalent and severe symptoms.



Common symptoms include:

- Hot flushes, that may include sweating, skin becoming red and patchy and a quicker or stronger heart rate
- Headaches and migraines
- Low mood, irritability, increased anxiety, panic attacks, fatigue, poor concentration, loss of confidence and memory problems
- Tiredness and pain in joints

There are many other recognised symptoms and every woman will experience symptoms differently, with varying degrees of intensity and impact.



Ways to manage symptoms:

- Eat healthily and regularly and drink plenty of water.
- Take regular exercise and breaks to help reduce hot flushes, improve sleep, boost your mood and maintain good fitness levels.
- Reduce smoking and alcohol intake.
- Stay cool as much as possible by wearing comfortable clothing and ensure access to well ventilated rooms. In some cases, some workplace adjustments may help.
- Keep a record of your symptoms over a period of time, so you can track any patterns, and share this information with a clinician.

What can be done to help in the workplace?

We are looking to make colleagues and our places of work more aware of how menopause impacts women and those around them. We are hoping to do this by:

- Creating a greater understanding of what menopause is, and a work culture where we can talk about the impact menopause has on women's working lives.
- Improving the information and support available for those impacted by menopause. Having a proactive wellbeing culture when it comes to the menopause can really help, especially where women can talk openly about their concerns with colleagues and managers.
- Fresh air and natural lighting can be beneficial, as well as getting enough rest and relaxation to reduce stress levels and improve mood.



If you are a manager or a team leader, you can support a team member experiencing menopause by improving your knowledge and awareness and helping to make any adjustments they may need in their workspace or their working day. Have a look at [Wellbeing Review Template](#) for more help.

Getting further advice

If you need more advice, you can:

- Access support through your Employee Assistance Programme, or contact a member of your HR team.
- Contact your GP for medical advice.
- Speak with your manager for more information and a referral to Occupational Health.



For more information:

- [Balance](#)
- [Henpicked](#)
- [Rock My Menopause](#)
- [Menopause and the workplace, NHS Employers](#)
- [Living Life To The Full in Your Menopause](#)



Have a listen to this podcast with Dr Cath Munro exploring [Insights into...Menopause.](#)



Sharing the support available

As a manager or team leader, it's important that you spend some time getting to know your team members and how to help them be at their best in the workplace.

You will find each person needs something different and will bring something unique and valuable to the team.

It is important to remember that it's the individual's responsibility to look after themselves first and foremost and stay as well as they can. However, you can be a supportive manager by encouraging the individual to look after themselves and find the support they need from a range of services.

It would also be a good idea to familiarise yourself with these one-page guides, to support good conversations:

- [Finding your motivation](#)
- [What's in your control](#)
- [Better breathing for stress](#)
- [Improve your sleep](#)
- [Eating for wellbeing](#)



PDF

Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter

The mental and physical wellbeing of Greater Manchester's workforce is fundamental to the development of good employment across the city region.

Greater Manchester's employees spend a minimum of 60% of their waking hours at work.

The sickness absence rate in the UK in 2021 rose to 2.2% with an estimated 149.3 million working days lost because of sickness or injury, equivalent to 4.6 days per worker.

The GM Good Employment Charter sets out very clearly what a healthy workplace looks like, and by signing up to the Charter, employers are pledging to prioritise workplace health and wellbeing.



GM Mental Health Toolkit for Employers

Includes key information and approaches employers can take to address mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

Growing Occupational Health & Wellbeing Together

Have a look through the Growing Occupational Health and Wellbeing roadmap for the future of occupational health and wellbeing people, services, and practice across the NHS.

Greater Manchester Creative Health Strategy

Read about the ambitions to become the first creative health city region, to help address inequities and improve the health and wellbeing.



Bereavement and grief

Grief affects us all in different ways. Our relationship with a person who has died makes how we feel about the loss unique to each of us – and we will react in a different way depending on our context, beliefs, cultural perspective on death and the circumstances of the death itself.

It is a process that is both emotionally and physically exhausting, so it is important to take care of yourself through this process and find the support that you need from those around you.

In the initial period after a bereavement there can be many demands placed upon you, so don't feel reluctant to ask those around you for help. Whether friends and family or colleagues and managers at work, many will want to support you at this difficult time.

For more information about grief and to get some insight into the process have a look at this resource from [Cruse](#) here.



If you feel you want to talk to someone about how you are feeling, who is not directly affected by the loss themselves, then the [Greater Manchester Bereavement Service](#) is available for you.

The service provides a listening ear and can connect you with wider support services, depending on what you need. It can also provide advice to family/friends or professionals wishing to support a bereaved person known to them.

Contact: **0161 983 0902** / salccg.gm.bs@nhs.net

Monday-Friday 9am-5pm (excl. bank holidays).



**GREATER MANCHESTER
BEREAVEMENT SERVICE**

Supporting someone who is bereaved

During our lives we will meet many people who have experienced bereavement and it is important that we show compassion and kindness at a really difficult time in their lives, whether we know them on a personal or professional basis.

Don't worry too much about saying exactly the right thing, your good intentions will come across and it is more important that you say something to connect with the person you are supporting, rather than nothing at all. You can find more advice on what to say [here](#).

When you are supporting someone who is grieving, it's important to remember that your role is not to fix things - just being with someone through their experience can be an enormous help. There is no time limit on grief and it can be heart-breaking for a bereaved person when people stop mentioning the person who died. Saying the name of the person they have lost can bring great comfort and show they are still remembered. Bereaved people can be greatly affected by their loss when significant dates and anniversaries arise in the months and years ahead. Continue to acknowledge their loss at these times and make them aware of the support you and others can offer.

Remember: it can be very emotional to support someone when they are grieving. Look after yourself first, so that you are in the best position to offer them the support they may need.

Losing someone to suicide can be extremely painful and emotionally complex. The grieving process is often complicated and typically lasts longer than other types of bereavement, but there is support available and we can all play a role in helping those affected.

The **[Greater Manchester Bereavement Service](#)** and **[Shining A Light On Suicide](#)** offer support and information, including Suicide Bereavement Practitioners who can support those affected in the days, months and years after the loss of a loved one. The **[Support After Suicide](#)** partnership also provides guidance for those who have lost a child, sibling or friend to suicide.

There are a number of Suicide Bereavement Peer Support groups running in Greater Manchester, so those affected can speak to and gain support from others with similar experiences:

[Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide](#)

[Speak Their Name Suicide Bereavement Group](#)

Finally, if you or someone you know has been witness to the potential suicide of someone you didn't know (in your personal or professional life) support information is available from **[First Hand](#)**, as well as trauma support to take care of yourself and others from the **[Greater Manchester Resilience Hub](#)**.



Shining a light on suicide

It can be really hard to know how to support someone who you think might be feeling suicidal. It can affect any one of us, and it is estimated that 1 in 5 people will think of suicide during their lifetime.

Whether you meet someone in your personal or professional life who may be struggling with such thoughts, you can become suicide aware and be more confident in knowing how to spot the signs that a person may be thinking of suicide. Complete this short training from the [Zero Suicide Alliance](#) to learn how you may be able to save a life.

Support is available for anyone who is thinking about suicide or who has been affected by it.




SHINING A LIGHT ON
SUICIDE

If you are feeling suicidal

Sometimes we can feel so low that life seems unbearable. It's important to talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling. This could be a family member or friend, a Mental Health First Aider or your GP. It may be helpful to have a [Safety Plan](#) which can be a reminder of the positive things that get us through an emotional crisis.

You can call the Samaritans if you are having a difficult time - anytime on 116 123.



[Suicide Postvention Toolkit](#). Have a look at this postvention toolkit from Samaritans to help health and care organisations manage the impact and provide support following a colleague suicide.

The [Greater Manchester Resilience Hub](#) is also able to provide support for people in crisis, by offering mental health advice and support.

If you are worried about someone, then this [guide from Samaritans](#) may also help your understanding of how you can help.



Have a listen to this podcast with Adele Owen exploring [Insights into...Bereavement Grief & Suicide](#)

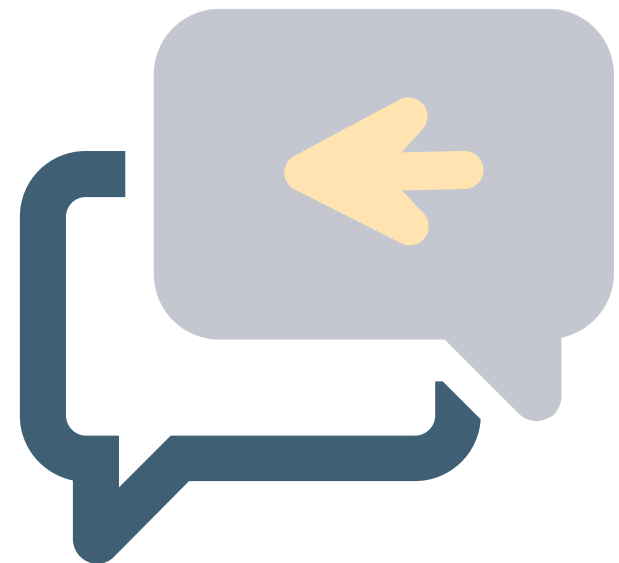


REMEMBER: You are not alone, and help is available.

Responding to need

It's a good first step to recognise when you may need a little more support. We can all have the occasional bad day or feel like we are not doing a great job – because it really is okay not to be okay from time to time – but nobody should be struggling over a long period of time.

Whether you are struggling to focus on work or home, if you are in distress about things that wouldn't ordinarily bother you, or if you, (or those around you) are noticing a difference in your behaviours, it may be time to ask for help. There are several options to find the support you need, in a way that works for you...





Speaking with someone

You can speak directly and confidentially (online or on the telephone) with services across Greater Manchester – and you don't need to tell anyone else if you don't want to. From help to manage your stress, support for your children at home, or advice with those financial worries – there are lots of options for you to find the right one for you:

Financial advice

If you need financial advice to help with increasing costs and financial pressures, you can contact: **Money Advice Referral Tool (MART)** from Action. They provide locality specific support across Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Money Helper provide free tools, calculators and guides to help you take control of your money.

Community and faith groups

Find out more information about the community and faith groups in your area and how they can support you – information can be found at **GMCVO** and **10GM**, and **Inter Faith** groups in your area.

LGBT Foundation

To find advice, support and information services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities, you can contact the **LGBT Foundation**.

You can find the links and support provision collated into the **Greater Manchester Mental Health & Wellbeing resource** – so you have all the links on a single PDF for ease.

Developing more culturally informed mental health services

We know that the health inequalities experienced by our communities are a crucial barrier to improving the experience and outcomes for people from different backgrounds and cultures – and this includes our mental health provision.

Work is underway across Greater Manchester to develop collaborative partnerships supporting community-led organisations to improve our mental health services.

To find out more information or share insights, email: **gmhscp.gmworkingtogether@nhs.net**

Greater Manchester Resilience Hub

0333 009 5071

gm.help@nhs.net

The Greater Manchester Resilience Hub provides a central point for mental health advice and support, for health and care workers, and their immediate families living or working in the Greater Manchester area. People can access support from the team of experienced Mental Health clinicians – starting with an initial screening process, and a telephone call with a clinician who can advise on helpful options to support the individual including direct support, advocacy, therapy or connecting into wider provision.

Colleagues who are already accessing this support have shared that the support offers a safe and confidential space to talk.

Don't wait until you feel distressed before reaching out, the Hub is available across Greater Manchester to support you whenever you need it.

The Hub also has the clinical experience of working with managers and leaders with psychological and mental health support following a trauma or critical incident, in the form of workshops, webinars, training, advice and consultation.

Get in touch to explore what's helpful for you and your team.

Samaritans – call 116 123 for free.

Samaritans provide a confidential support line – **day or night** – for anyone who needs someone to listen. This support line is here for when you've had a tough day, are feeling worried, or overwhelmed by what's on your mind and need to talk it through.

Crisis helplines in Greater Manchester:

If you feel you need mental health support please contact one of these 24/7 helplines (freephone). They're available to anyone of any age:

- Bolton, Manchester, Salford, Trafford and Wigan
0800 953 0285;
- Bury, Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale, Oldham, Stockport and Tameside & Glossop **0800 014 9995.**

If there's an immediate risk of danger to life, you should ring 999.

Shine a Light on Suicide – learn to save a life.

Support information for those with suicidal thoughts, concerned for another or bereaved by suicide. Free online suicide prevention training that takes just 20 minutes.

Ambulance Staff Crisis Phonenumber

0300 373 0898 - Immediate and ongoing suicide and mental health care for UK ambulance staff, available 24/7, 365 days a year.

Greater Manchester Bereavement Service

0161 983 0902

salccg.gm.bs@nhs.net

Locality based support is available for anyone in Greater Manchester who has been bereaved or affected by a death. No one needs to feel alone as they deal with their grief.

There is also a confidential bereavement support line, operated by Hospice UK and free to access from 8:00am–8:00pm, seven days a week. This service is open to all NHS care sector staff and emergency service workers. A team of fully qualified and trained bereavement specialists provide support for bereavement and wellbeing issues relating to loss experienced through work. Please call **0300 303 4434** to speak to a trained specialist.

Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 254 0909

If you are in immediate danger then ring 999. If you cannot talk either press '55' on a mobile or wait on a landline until you are connected with the police.

If you are worried that you or someone you know may be experiencing domestic abuse, then contact the 24-hour **National Domestic Abuse Refuge** helpline on **0808 2000 247**.

Contact your trade union

Trade unions are independent, membership-based organisations of workers who represent the needs of that working group. They give advice when their members have problems at work, represent members in discussions with employers, and help improve wages and working conditions by negotiating with employers. If you are a member of a trade union, you will be able to access their range of support covering your working conditions, welfare, financial wellbeing, and more.

Each trade union offers something different - we recommend that you find out what support you can access by contacting your local staff side representatives or the regional or national branch.

It is also important to consider that your organisation may have an **Employee Assistance Programme** available for you to access directly to support your psychological wellbeing and provide practical advice.

A yellow circular icon containing a white lowercase letter 'i', used to denote an information or tip section.



Online support

There is a range of online support and tools that you can access for guidance, counselling or advice.

Mental Health & Wellbeing Resources

Learn about online mental wellbeing training and resources you can use to understand more about supporting yourself and others.

Every Mind Matters

This resource provides guidance on looking after your wellbeing while working from home, with simple tips and how to create your own Mind Plan to start taking better care of your mental wellbeing.

Greater Manchester Health Hub – Living Life to the Full

Living Life to the Full provides free online courses for all Greater Manchester residents covering low mood, stress and resilience.

Silvercloud

Greater Manchester's Silvercloud online programmes for adults 16+ to help ease stress, improve sleep, or build resilience. This resource is self-help, confidential and secure.

Kooth & Qwell

Safe and anonymous online mental wellbeing support and links for young people in your family. Qwell, provided by Kooth Digital Health is a safe and anonymous digital mental health service which can be accessed for free, with no waiting lists or referrals.

Support for colleagues and their families with Long COVID

Long COVID is commonly used to describe symptoms that continue or develop after acute COVID-19 and it is estimated nearly 2% of the population are affected, which will include people across our workforces in Greater Manchester.

Find NHS support and advice on how to help colleagues who may have Long COVID, and **Your COVID Recovery** to help with the impact on both body and mind.

You may also find helpful advice and insights from international peer support **Long COVID Physio** which is a patient-led association for anyone living with Long COVID and anyone wanting to learn more.

Addiction & substance support

GM Health Hub can also help if you are noticing an increase in your substance intake. Get help and advice if you are concerned about [alcohol](#), [drugs](#) or [gambling](#).

Make Smoking History

Find the right support to quit smoking and help improve your health and finances. Get free help from your local services across Greater Manchester to quit now, download the [Smoke Free app](#), T&Cs apply (which is free for the first six months) or call the Greater Manchester Stop Smoking Helpline on **0300 123 1044** between 9am and 8pm (Monday to Friday) or 11am to 4pm (Saturday and Sunday).

Drymester

Drinking alcohol at any stage of your pregnancy can cause difficulties. Drymester supports parents-to-be to go alcohol free when pregnant (or planning a pregnancy) to reduce new cases of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in Greater Manchester.

Cradle – Pregnancy Loss Support

If you are supporting anyone affected by early pregnancy loss, the Cradle Charity provide a range of services from support for colleagues who provide the care, through to weekly online support groups. For enquiries, email info@cradlecharity.org

#OurNHSPeople

Available to everyone who is providing health and care services. Telephone: **0800 06 96 222** (7am-11pm) / Bereavement: **0300 303 4434** (8am-8pm) Text 'FRONTLINE' to **85258** – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week or get free access to a number of wellbeing apps including Headspace. You can find all the details and further information at [#OurNHSPeople](#). There are also online reference guides for personal and team resilience, as well as support for staff during life events.

Skills for Care

Offer a range of wellbeing resources, including digital wellbeing cards or resource for Registered Managers, as well as [Building Resilience](#) for you and your team. Find out more by contacting your Skills for Care [locality manager](#).

Greater Manchester Primary Care Provider Board

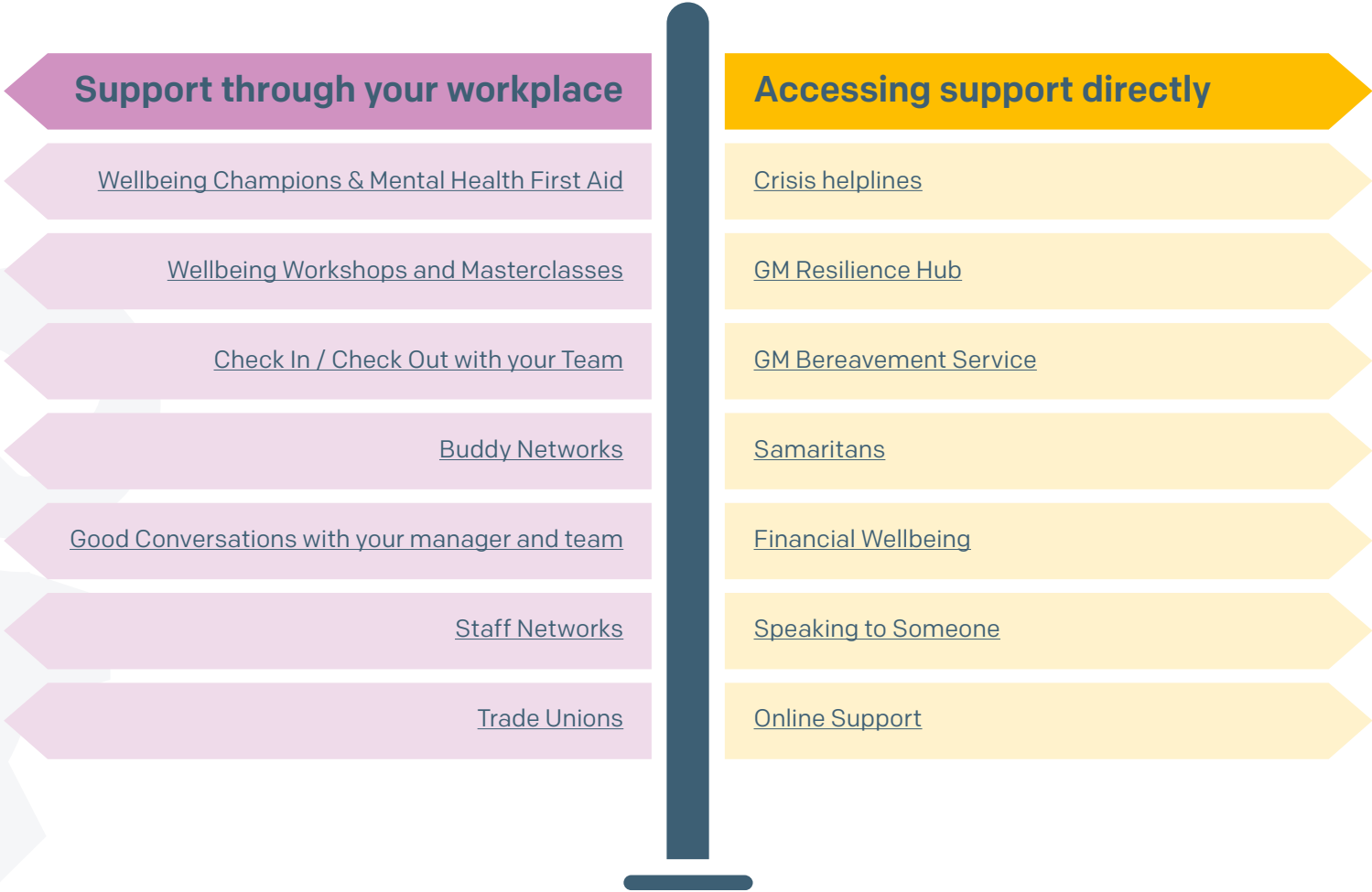
Find resources and support specifically curated for the Primary Care workforce across Greater Manchester, including podcasts, apps, and training through the [GM Primary Care Passport](#).

Access to Work Mental Health Support Service

The Department for Work and Pensions with Maximus offer free support to help individuals with their mental health in the workplace.

Finding your way to the support you need

Whether you are looking for critical support for your own wellbeing, or to help those around you, here are some options that may help find what you need.



This toolkit is an open resource and we encourage you to share it.

We ask that when sharing it directly with colleagues or as a link on your website, please acknowledge **NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care 2023**.

For more information, email: gmhscp.gmworkingtogether@nhs.net

