

COVID-19 Staff Support Psychology Resources Pack

April 2020



This pack is organised based on the principles of Psychological First Aid (PFA)

PFA recognises that it is normal to have strong emotional reactions in this very unusual situation.

Strong emotional reactions are not a sign of mental illness, or that you are “losing it”.

We can all find it difficult to cope at times in these circumstances.

This pack will guide you to things that can help and includes the following sections:

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1. Care for immediate needs

I need help NOW!

- 1. Use the 10 second stop technique.**
Repeat if necessary, until you are ready to go on
- 2. Use 7 daily steps resource.**
Repeat if necessary, until you are ready to go on
- 3. Now that you can think more clearly, take a look through the rest of this document. Each section contains information that may be helpful, and links to further resources.**
- 4. Any time you feel overwhelmed, come back to 1.**

Resources

10 second stop

7 daily steps

NES Turas COVID-19 module: Psychological First Aid – see COVID-19 Resources: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot>

2. Protect from further threat and distress

It is natural to want to seek out information about potential threats, but nowadays we can be subjected to a constant bombardment of information from the media, including social media. This can become unhelpful.

If you do want to find out information, stick to trusted sources of information:

- **NHS Inform** (www.nhsinform.scot) for information for the public
- **Health Protection Scotland** (www.hps.scot.nhs.uk) for information for professionals

Check in to how you feel after accessing information, even from trusted sources. If this makes you feel more distressed or anxious, try setting a limit on accessing information. This could include only checking news for 10 minutes, once a day (not before trying to get to sleep).

Consider blocking or unfollowing things that make you feel worse, including automatic news updates and notifications.

The same applies to social media, even from friends and family. If accessing this makes you feel worse, limit or stop this temporarily.

Staying safe and well

Online resources

NHS Scotland Staff Governance Website – www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Education for Scotland – Psychosocial mental health and wellbeing support: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot>

NHS Inform – Coronavirus (Covid-19) advice: www.nhsinform.scot

Support in Mind Scotland – www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk

Breathing Space – <https://breathingspace.scot>

Mental Health Foundation – www.mentalhealth.org.uk

3. Educate about normal responses

Strong emotional responses are normal in exceptional circumstances – like now!

Different kinds of crises affect people in different ways, and there’s a wide range of responses that people can have.

Most often we respond with resilience, and in ways that are designed to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

How we respond depends on a number of factors, including:

- How much support we have at the time
- Our previous experience of distressing events
- Our perceived capacity to cope with the situation
- The nature and severity of the situation itself

Distress can be common, but in most cases will not be associated with lasting difficulties.

Features of pandemic environment	Normal emotional responses
Uncertainty of the situation and about the future. Ongoing, frequent and significant changes to our lives. Perceived threat.	Distress – anxiety
Loss of previous lifestyle, relationships and contacts, employment or sometimes of loved ones.	Sadness
Sense of unfairness. Uncertainty of the situation. Ongoing changes to our lives. Perceived threat.	Distress – anger
Loss of sense of control over own world and life.	Zoning out, shutting down

Intense emotions will come and go.

There is no right or wrong way to think, feel and respond



Resources

NES Turas COVID-19 module: Psychological First Aid – see COVID-19 Resources: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/>

Staying Safe and Well a Self Care Guide for Staff Looking After Patients with Coronavirus – see COVID-19 Resources: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/>

See Grand Round Wellbeing During COVID Presentation

4. Connect with social supports

Connecting to social supports can help us in various ways:

- Sharing experiences and concerns
- Making sense of what has happened
- Keeping some normality in our lives
- Helping others
- Keeping our sense of self-worth, well-being, confidence and hope

Out of work, find creative ways to maintain meaningful social contacts despite social distancing, for example using FaceTime, Zoom or Skype. Video or voice calls often lead to more meaningful contacts than texts or messages.

In work, stay connected to your colleagues. You will be helping them and you.

National and local community online resources and support mechanisms may be helpful.

Be aware that not all social contacts will be helpful – try to limit or temporarily stop any that consistently make you feel worse.

Resources

See Grand Round Wellbeing During COVID Presentation

Social connections

Helplines

NHS 24 (111)

Breathing Space (0800 83 85 87)

Online support

NHS Education for Scotland – Psychosocial mental health and wellbeing support – <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot>

Breathing Space – <https://breathingspace.scot>

Mental Health Foundation – www.mentalhealth.org.uk

NHS Inform - Coronavirus (Covid-19) advice – www.nhsinform.scot

Support in Mind Scotland – www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk

SAMH – Looking after your mental health in challenging times – www.samh.org.uk

Penumbra – Coronavirus info hub – www.penumbra.org.uk

Samaritans – Coronavirus resources – www.samaritans.org

5. Information on coping

Remember your emotional response is normal, in what is a very abnormal situation. Most of us have never experienced anything like this before in our lives, our communities and our workplaces. This is true for everyone, right around the world. Know that it is normal to be feel stressed, anxious and scared right now.

Knowing your emotional responses are normal is helpful and may be enough. However, information on effective coping skills may also be helpful. This is important in helping you adjust to what is happening and building resilience to carry on.

ABCs of coping

A is for awareness – and normalisation of your own responses to stress

B is for balance – between your life and the demands of your work

C is for connection – with your people and social supports, and your own values

Some coping mechanisms are helpful and some are not. Here are some ideas of what and what not to do:

Helpful

- Use coping strategies that have been helpful in the past and think how you can adapt them to work in conditions of isolation/social distancing
- Talk to friends or family members for support by phone or on-line
- Make plans to do activities when at home in social isolation that keep you feeling useful and keep a sense of normality
- Get enough rest, food and exercise
- Set and maintain as normal a routine as possible
- Relax: schedule time to do what normally helps you relax
- Take part in an on-line support group or community group
- Find ways to have a laugh
- Understand and tolerate the different ways in which people cope with stress – they may be short tempered or distracted

Unhelpful

- Don't spend large amounts of time watching news broadcasts about the pandemic
- Try not to lose the structure of your day
- Try not to drink too much alcohol and don't engage in substance misuse
- Try not to withdraw from friends and family
- Try not to over eat or under eat
- Try not to blame yourself or others
- Don't do risky things
- Try not to let your emotions get the better of you (such as being extremely angry)

There is a lot more information on coping during the pandemic.

Resources

How to Approach Self Care Poster: see COVID-19 Wellbeing Resources – www.ics.ac.uk

Coping with Coronavirus

Coping with Stress – Advice for Hospital Staff

NES TURAS guide support for staff – see COVID-19 Resources: C – <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/>

Coping with Coronavirus: Advice for ICU Health Care Staff – see COVID-19 Resources: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot>

NHS Scotland: Staying Safe and Well: A Self Care Guide for Staff Looking After Patients with Coronavirus – see COVID-19 Resources: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot>

Moodcafe – www.moodcafe.co.uk

Headspace – <https://headspace.com>

Self care during COVID-19 – see COVID-19 Wellbeing Resources: www.ics.ac.uk

Staff Emotional Wellbeing During COVID-19 Pandemic

Tips on How to Cope if You Are Worried About Coronavirus and in Isolation – see COVID-19 Resources: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot>

Power Up Your Nutrition During This Pandemic

Live Positive – a Stress Management Tool

NHS Fife Well at Work Handbook

Compassionate Mind Foundation – www.compassionatemind.co.uk/resources

Red Whale COVID-19 Psychological Survival Guide – www.gp-update.co.uk

Resources

Virtual Drop-in Mindfulness Resource – to subscribe email mindfulness@ed.ac.uk (and ask to be added to the Little France list)

Insight Timer Meditation, Sleep and Relaxation App – <https://insighttimer.com>

Grand Round Wellbeing During COVID Presentation

Going Home Checklist – www.dbth.nhs.uk/news/the-going-home-checklist

Emotional wellbeing

Helplines

NHS 24 (111)

Breathing Space (0800 83 85 87)

Samaritans (116 123)

Online support

NHS Scotland Staff Governance Website – www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk

NHS Education for Scotland – Psychosocial mental health and wellbeing support – <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/>

Breathing Space – <https://breathingspace.scot>

Mental Health Foundation – www.mentalhealth.org.uk

NHS Inform - Coronavirus (Covid-19) advice – www.nhsinform.scot

Support in Mind Scotland – www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk

See Me – Resources to help challenge mental health stigma – www.seemescotland.org

SAMH – Coronavirus mental health information hub – www.samh.org.uk

NHS – Mental Health Apps – www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health

Sleep

Online support

NHS Inform – How to get to sleep – www.nhsinform.scot

Mind – How to cope with sleep problems – www.mind.org.uk

Dealing With Sleep Difficulties: Sleepio – <https://www.sleepio.com>

Eating well

Online support

WHO – Food and nutrition tips during self-quarantine – www.who.int

NHS Inform – Food and nutrition – www.nhsinform.scot

Food Standards Scotland – Eat well everyday – www.foodstandards.gov.scot

Parent Club – Eating well at home – www.parentclub.scot

Physical activity

Online support and resources

NHS – Fitness Videos – www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio

Mind – Physical activity and your mental health – www.mind.org.uk

Sport England – Stay In, Work Out #StayInWorkOut – www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout

WHO - Be Active During Covid-19 – www.who.int

Paths for All – Home based exercises – www.youtube.com

Resilience

Helplines

NHS 24 (111)

Breathing Space (0800 83 85 87)

Samaritans (116 123)

Online support

NHS Education for Scotland – Psychosocial mental health and wellbeing support – <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot>

Breathing Space – <https://breathingspace.scot>

Mental Health Foundation – www.mentalhealth.org.uk

NHS Inform - Coronavirus (Covid-19) advice – www.nhsinform.scot

Support in Mind Scotland – www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk

See Me – www.seemescotland.org

SAMH – Coronavirus mental health information hub – www.samh.org.uk

NHS – Mental Health Apps – www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/mental-health

Lifelines – How to stay well – <http://lifelinescotland.org/how-to-stay-well.html>

6. Support for practical tasks

Have a think about whether there are other things going on in your life (other than stress and anxiety at work) that might be contributing to how you feel right now:

Here is a list of other things that might be contributing:

- Childcare arrangements so you can be at work
- Difficulties with finances
- Difficulties with shift patterns at work
- Difficulty getting food shopping and other essentials

Here are some useful resources which might help with some of these problems.

Resources:

NHS Fife HR policies on flexible working

Top Tips Working from Home

Citizens Advice and Rights Fife – www.cabfife.org.uk

Fife Carers – www.fifecarerscentre.org

Dept of Work and Pensions – www.gov.uk

Benefits Agency: www.mygov.scot

NHS Fife Well at Work Handbook

Priority shopping hours – <https://priorityshoppinghours.com>

7. Comfort and console

Some staff members are likely to be personally affected by Coronavirus, through having family members who are unwell themselves, or suffering bereavements.

When this happens some staff may need a listening ear.

If you find yourself in this situation here is some helpful advice:

- Find a safe environment in which to talk to someone about your loss or grief
- Speak to someone you can trust either in work or outside
- Seek out someone who can help you make a plan as to what needs to happen next

Staff may also benefit from talking to someone who can provide spiritual support.

Resources

Spiritual Care Service information

Cruse – www.crusescotland.org.uk

Sue Ryder – www.sueryder.org

Coping With Bereavement Leaflet

8. Need more help than this pack can provide?

Here are some additional options for support that you might like to consider accessing:

- Staff Support Hubs: A staff Support Hub has opened at the Maggie's Centre on the Victoria Hospital site. This is a space that staff can use for a break or at the end of a shift to come for a cuppa and a chat, or just to sit quietly and relax. The Clinical Health Psychology Service will be available there to offer face-to-face support if required, and staff can pick up packs of information on self-help and other support services. Support Hubs are available at Queen Margaret and Lynebank Hospitals, which provide similar resources, though may be staffed less frequently. Further hubs will shortly be opening at Stratheden and Whyteman's Brae Hospitals.
- Service Spiritual Care Service – <http://intranet.fife.scot.nhs.uk/spiritualcare>
- Psychology Staff Support Telephone Line – Please email fife-uhb.psychology-staffsupportcovid-19@nhs.net for more information about this service and to arrange a call.
- The Haven at Victoria Hospital and the Sanctuary at Queen Margaret Hospital is open for staff to make use of as a safe zone or place to relax. These spaces are not manned but will also have packs of information for staff to take away on self help and signposting to other support services
- Telephone support – Occupational Health Counselling Self Referral. For COVID queries email Fife-UHB.occhealth@nhs.net; Staff Counselling Service – 01592 729870 (ext: 29870)

Resources

BMA Doctors support for members – 0300123 1233

Doctors Support Network (mainly mental health) – www.dsn.org.uk

Psychotherapy for Doctors – www.dochealth.org.uk

Sick Doctors Trust (Drugs and Alcohol) – www.sick-doctors-trust.co.uk

Psychiatrists support service – www.rcpsych.ac.uk/workinpsychiatry/psychiatristssupportservice.aspx

RCOG Mentoring Scheme – 020 7772 6369; www.rcog.org.uk

RCS support scheme – 020 7869 6030; www.rcseng.ac.uk

9. Information for managers

Managers will face a range of challenges during this time. Some of these challenges will be the same as for all staff – you are human and can be affected by what is happening to you, your loved ones, and your colleagues. The resources in the other sections of this pack will be as relevant to you as they are to your staff in coping with these challenges.

You will also face the challenge of managing your staff through a period of rapid change and sustained uncertainty. The support structures you put in place will influence the ability of your team to cope with change and uncertainty.

You will face the challenge of maintaining the highest possible clinical standards under exceptionally difficult circumstances and managing the anxiety and distress of patients under these conditions.

Remember that your staff will take their cue from you. If you create and sustain a supportive team environment, and model calm, compassionate and appropriate responses to events, this will go a long way to helping your team through this.

Resources

Grand Round Wellbeing During COVID Presentation

Advice for Sustaining Staff Wellbeing in Critical Care During COVID-19 (also relevant for teams in other areas) – see COVID-19 Wellbeing Resources: www.ics.ac.uk

Optimising Staff Preparedness, Wellbeing and Functioning – www.lindadykes.org/COVID-19

Spiritual Care Information

Psychology Staff Support Telephone Line

This service is available to all Fife H&SCP staff during the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides:

1. Help for staff: A listening ear, and supportive conversations based on what we know can help people cope with normal emotions and reactions at this time (Psychological First Aid).
2. Help for managers: To use best practice information and the principles of Psychological First Aid to support their teams.

Clinical Health Psychology Service will help teams as well as individuals and can be accessed through Maggie's Centre

Culture and behaviours

Online resources

The Kings Fund – Michael West: collective leadership for culture change – www.kingsfund.org.uk

The Kings Fund – Improving NHS culture – www.kingsfund.org.uk

Civility Saves Lives – www.civilitysaveslives.com

Compassionate leadership

Online resources

Mind – Taking care of you - our work with emergency departments – www.mind.org.uk

SAMH – www.samh.org.uk

NHS NES - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Learning materials for professionals – www.nes.scot.nhs.uk

Healthy Working Lives – www.healthyworkinglives.scot

The role of the team

Online resources

CIPD podcast 'Building the best team' – www.cipd.co.uk/podcasts/building-best-team

Learning from Excellence – <https://learningfromexcellence.com>

NHS Fife

Hayfield House
Hayfield Road
Kirkcaldy, KY2 5AH

www.nhsfife.org

 [facebook.com/nhsfife](https://www.facebook.com/nhsfife)

 [@nhsfife](https://twitter.com/nhsfife)

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