



EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICE

Occupational Health
Occupational Physiotherapy
Employee Wellbeing

Wellbeing Resources

The Employee Wellbeing Service have compiled these resources on a range of topics to help you support your mental health and wellbeing.



Stress

Pressures are a normal part of life and can be a useful motivator. However, when pressure becomes too great, you might feel yourself experiencing stress. Stress is very common and can start to take its toll on your mental health. Below are some resources for managing stress.

Understanding stress can help you to manage it better: the **MIND** website has useful information about what stress is, signs of stress, its causes and ways to deal with pressures.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/stress/what-is-stress/>

Physical activity can be a great way to relax and unwind. Try going for a walk, jog or use online exercise videos. Other relaxation or mindfulness techniques can also be effective (see Anxiety and Depression resources)

Stress Risk Assessment: ask your manager to conduct a work-related stress risk assessment. A stress risk assessment is an opportunity to collaborate with your manager to identify your stressors and make an action plan to reduce your work-related stress. You can view the Stress Risk Assessment form and guide on the Employee Wellbeing Service webpage- 'Services and Support Section' - 'Staff Wellbeing Information for Managers and Staff' <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/ews-information-for-managers-and-staff>

On this same webpage you will find the **ISMA Stress Wheel**- this can be a useful, visual way to better understand the different pressures on you at this time.



Anxiety

While worrying and feeling nervous is something that every person will experience at times during their lives, normal anxiety can become a problem when it is excessive and feels uncontrollable. Below are some resources to help you cope with anxiety.

The **Centre for Clinical Interventions** workbook on anxiety consists of evidence-based modules which provide information, techniques and practices to support you to better cope with anxiety. <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Worry-and-Rumination>

This **NHS** website provides information on anxiety and its symptoms and tips to help you cope with anxiety. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-panic/>

Try listening to these relaxation techniques. This includes **Mindful breathing** and **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**. <https://stresscontrolaudio.com/home>

The **Employee Wellbeing Service** website has a wide range of resources to help with anxiety, such as self-help guides, useful contacts and mental health apps. <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/ews-services-and-support-available>

Grounding Techniques

Grounding techniques are things that you can do to bring yourself into contact with the present moment, to reduce emotional dysregulation, anxiety and traumatic memories, distract from negative thoughts and help you feel safe in the present moment. This may be brief strategies (such as breathing techniques), or longer, more formal exercises (such as meditation).

The **Living Life Well** website provides some grounding techniques

<https://www.livingwell.org.au/well-being/mental-health/grounding-exercises/>

Psychology Today provides 10 grounding techniques to help you calm yourself and get settled, centred and grounded.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/fixing-families/201905/upset-10-grounding-techniques>



Panic Resources

Everyone experiences feelings of anxiety and panic at certain times; it's a natural response to stressful or dangerous situations. Feeling anxious and afraid is very much a part of the experience of being human, and serves to protect us, as an automatic alarm response that activates a whole series of bodily changes to prepare us for potential danger. Sometimes, however, it is possible to have this intense fear response when there is no danger. Panic attacks are brief, sudden surges of intense anxiety, with symptoms that are very similar to intense fear. They often strike out of the blue, without any warning, and sometimes with no clear trigger – they may even occur when you're relaxed or asleep. No matter how powerless or out of control you may feel about your panic attacks, it's important to know that there are many things you can do to help yourself.

Learn about panic and anxiety

Simply knowing more about panic and the fight-or-flight response experienced during a panic attack can go a long way towards relieving your distress.

The **Centre for Clinical Interventions workbook** on panic consists of evidence-based modules which provide information, techniques and practices to help you better cope with panic attacks. The Distress Intolerance workbook also suggests strategies for managing distress more effectively.

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Panic>

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Tolerating-Distress>

MIND and the NHS provide information on panic attacks, its symptoms, and things you can do to help with fear and panic.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/understanding-panic/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/anxiety-and-panic-attacks/panic-attacks/>

Breathing retraining/Mindfulness/Relaxation

Practice relaxation techniques, such as meditation, and **progressive muscle relaxation**.

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/~media/CCI/Mental%20Health%20Professionals/Anxiety/Anxiety%20-%20Information%20Sheets/Anxiety%20Information%20Sheet%20-%202009%20-%20Progressive%20Muscle%20Relaxation.pdf>

NHS staff have been given free access to a number of **wellbeing apps**, such as 'Headspace' and 'Calm'.
<https://keepwellnhs.com/category/mind/apps/>
<https://people.nhs.uk/help/>

Learn how to control your breathing with **breathing retraining exercises**.

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/~media/CCI/Mental%20Health%20Professionals/Anxiety/Anxiety%20-%20Information%20Sheets/Anxiety%20Information%20Sheet%20-%202008%20-%20Breathing%20Retraining.pdf>

Sleep

Sleep problems are very common and can impact your mental health. Below are resources for improving sleep hygiene:

The **Centre for Clinical Interventions** provides information on sleep hygiene and a sleep diary to help you to better manage your sleep. <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Sleep>

Silvercloud is an online CBT service that is currently free to access for NHS staff. You can access several CBT programmes, including 'Space for sleep' using the link below. <https://www.silvercloudhealth.com/uk/mental-health-nhs-staff>

This **NHS** webpage 'How to get to sleep' provides practical advice on sleeping problems. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/>

Self-compassion

During stressful times it is especially important that we are able to calm and soothe ourselves while remaining present and connected to ourselves and our environment. Developing self-compassion is fundamental to achieving this. Being cruel to ourselves and trying to be perfect can, in fact, make situations more difficult and affect our wellbeing. Below are resources for developing self-compassion.

- **Kristen Neff's** '<https://self-compassion.org/>' website is a great start to learning about and developing your self-compassion. She explains the fundamentals and importance of self-compassion, and provides various meditations and practices for self-compassion.
- The **Centre for Clinical Interventions** provides a self-compassion workbook, which consists of practices and information to help you to be kinder and more compassionate to yourself. <https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Self-Compassion>
- The mental health charity **MIND** has some practical advice on self-care on their website : <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/mental-health-problems-introduction/self-care/>
- The **Employee Wellbeing Service** will shortly be providing online workshops for compassion and self-care. These workshops will be an opportunity to learn how to care for ourselves better. We will cover: how the brain and body react to stressful situations, the importance of a 'soothing system' in being able to care for ourselves and different strategies to develop this. <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/ews-wellbeing-workshops>

Depression and low mood

Depression can make you feel fatigued, distracted, lacking in confidence or self-esteem and generally low in mood. Below are some resources for those experiencing depression or low mood and its associated symptoms.

The **Centre for Clinical Interventions** provides information on depression and a workbook based on practical skills and techniques to manage low mood:

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Depression>

The **Silvercloud** online CBT service is free to access for NHS staff. The 'Space for resilience' program can help you to regain your passion for life, feel more positive and connect with those around you.

<https://www.silvercloudhealth.com/uk>

The **Mind** website provides information and individual accounts of depression. Depression is a very common experience and hearing other people's experiences of depression can help you to feel less alone in your own experience. <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/depression/about-depression/>

Counselling: It may be appropriate for you to work through your depression with a trained counsellor or therapist. The Employee Wellbeing Service provides counselling if appropriate, as well as Guided Self-Help for low mood. Guided Self-Help is a brief, low intensity therapy, based on the principles of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). You can self-refer to the service with a referral form which you can find on the EWS webpage on the intranet:

<http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/make-a-ews-referral>

You can also find private, **BACP** (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) approved counsellors and psychotherapists in your local area using the BACP directory.

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/search/Therapists>

Mindfulness can help you to improve your mood and reconnect with yourself and the world around you by learning to become more engaged in the present moment:

- **Palouse Mindfulness** provides an eight-week free online Mindfulness-Based Stress-Reduction course. Their website also has lots of related resources.

<https://palousemindfulness.com/>

ACT-ion for Living is a course based on the principles of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy. You will be taught strategies that can help you to learn to live with and accept difficult emotions while committing to solving the problems that you *can* address head-on. Formerly an in-person group, the course is now available online in the form of videos that you can watch at any time.

<http://www.stepiau.org/action-for-living>

Experiencing a mental health crisis

If a person needs urgent mental health assistance, their GP, out-of-hours GP or NHS Direct 111 should be contacted. If you feel that you or another person are in immediate danger, contact the emergency services. Below are helplines for people who are struggling:

The Samaritans have introduced a confidential NHS staff support line, free to access from 7:00am-11:00PM, seven days a week.

Call: 0300 131 7000.

Alternatively, you can text

FRONTLINE to **85258** for support 24 hours a day via text.

C.A.LL (Community Advice and Listening Line) is a free confidential listening and emotional support service. Anyone concerned about their own mental health or that of a friend or relative can access the service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call: 08000 132737 or Text: 81066

The Cruse Bereavement Care Freephone National Helpline is staffed by trained bereavement volunteers, who offer emotional support to anyone affected by bereavement.

The helpline is open Monday-Friday 9.30-5pm (excluding bank holidays), with extended hours on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings when the line is open until 8pm.

Call: 0808 808 1677 or email helpline@cruse.org.uk



Zero Suicide Alliance provides training on how to respond and react when you feel someone may be feeling suicidal or might act on those feelings. Take the time to do the training and feel more comfortable talking about the issue of suicide. <https://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/>

Papyrus is a suicide prevention charity for young people (under 35s). You can find advice, a helpline and support here: <https://papyrus-uk.org/>

For individuals who are struggling with suicidal ideation, it can be useful to write a safety plan for when you are in crisis. It may be a good idea to work through a safety plan with a professional, such as a therapist, or another trusted person. **Staying safe** provides guided, supportive videos detailing how to create a safety plan. <https://staying-safe.net/home>