**Supporting Emotional Wellbeing during Covid-19**

**Our Commitment to You**

Social work is a difficult and often stressful profession at the best of times. Working in the present context of Covid-19 has added a whole new dimension as we adapt to find new ways to live and work.

None of us were prepared for the pandemic and despite this, witnessing how people have pulled together and met the immediate challenges has been incredible. That said, now is the time to pause and acknowledge that we are working in a very challenging situation and it is likely that people will experience increasing pressures and stresses – this is a normal reaction to an abnormal situation and is part of being human.

Our feelings may heighten during this time as we manage worries and tolerate uncertainty that no one has the answers to. We are undertaking critical jobs, managing high levels of risk and spending less time with colleagues, family and friends. Work life tensions may arise and our home life may be unsettled as we face an uncertain future.

Many of you will be increasingly working from home, some juggling your own child care arrangements and personal commitments whilst also ensuring the continuation of essential services to vulnerable children, young people and their families in Hull. It can be easy to feel isolated and unsupported.

As an organisation we are determined to support you to cope successfully and tolerate the ambiguity we all find ourselves living with .Your emotional wellbeing is an absolute priority and we recognise the potential negative impact of reduced wellbeing on you, our workforce and also the families that we serve.

We want to offer a level of assurance that it is ‘okay not to be okay’ and we would encourage you share your worries and concerns with your managers who are there to support you and guide you to relevant resources and tools. Support needs will be different for each individual as different people cope in different ways.

We are committed to ensuring that your individual personal supervision is stepped up at this time and that space is created which invites honest conversations about how you are experiencing your work and discus any contextual issues that are impacting on you at this time. We have put together a range of resources to signpost you to supportive measures in self-care and building resilience, and encourage you to consider following some of these up.

We are also mindful that some workers may find self-care on its own too difficult at this time and might need access to more targeted or specialist resources. This might include an increase in 1-2-1 support from your manager or another identified person, or access to external organisations who can provide help and support, including counselling.

We are also looking at how we can best support teams differently to stay well connected, continue to develop and make the most of peer support to help us through these times.

I hope that this offers some reassurance of how valued you are and that we are taking your wellbeing seriously. Thank you for your continued commitment and dedication, and please do let us know any other ideas that would support you, your colleagues or teams to keep emotionally well. And finally, please do remember that thankfully these times will eventually pass.

**Supporting Wellbeing during Covid 19 – Checklist for Supervision**

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**Forward**

The purpose of this ‘checklist’ is to proactively support positive wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic and assist you as a manager to identify and respond to signs and symptoms of emotional difficulties.

The checklist is intended as a series of prompts to aid discussion in supervision and encourage people to talk about issues important to them and concerns relating to their emotional wellbeing in a changing and uncertain context. Everyone manages life challenges in different ways and as managers our responses will need to be tailored to individual needs.

When completed the checklist should help you and your worker talk about what additional support might be required. This could range from simple signposting to websites that offer positive wellbeing tips for the general population to targeted and specialist resources such as counselling services, wellbeing action plans and mental health resources for those experiencing more severe symptoms.

A selection of resources follows the checklist and it would be a good idea to familiarise yourself with the contents before recommending them to workers.

You will of course have your own style and approach to talking about emotional wellbeing with your individual workers. The questions below are not intended to be rigid but all points should be covered.

**Checklist:**

1. How is the worker generally adapting their work and home life to the present situation? How are they finding this?
2. Are they managing basic wellness actions - to eat healthy, exercise regularly, get enough sleep and stay in touch with people?
3. In relation to working from home, has the worker established a routine? Have they got a space for homeworking and how do they manage this with competing demands such as others that live in the home or childcare? Are they taking breaks and turning off all devices at a set time and not going back to emails etc.?
4. How are they managing the emotional demands of working with vulnerable children, young people and families whist the pandemic is ongoing? What about returning from difficult visits, working with partners that are remote working, getting in touch with you for advice and support? What are their main worries about this e.g. that they might take the virus home after visiting families?
5. Are they managing to stay connected with family, friends and colleagues that they’re not seeing at the moment? Do they feel that you keep in touch enough with them and are they in contact with the wider team? How are they coping with the technology to support their work?
6. Do they get a break from coronavirus information either on the news, radio other media and try and limit this to set times of the day?
7. What’s helping them stay emotionally well at this time?
8. How might experiencing reduced emotional wellbeing impact on them and their work?
9. Do they think that there would there be any early warning signs that they, you, or others might notice? How might you know this if they are remote working?
10. What steps do they think they can take to stay emotionally well?
11. What does the worker think that you as a manager could do to support them stay well or minimise any reduced wellbeing symptoms they are experiencing?
12. Is signposting to general wellbeing resources appropriate or is a more targeted or specialist response required?
13. Do you need to agree a more detailed plan that will support your worker and their wellbeing needs? How will you review this together?

The above list is not exhaustive but should help to guide you and your worker to appropriate resources that can be accessed in the next section of this document. Please do also consider policies, procedures and guidance available on the intranet that support wellbeing in the workplace.

Your checklist should be recorded on a Personal Supervision Record form in the section titled Supervisee Personal Reflections and Wellbeingwhich can be accessed by following this link -[**Personal Supervision Record**](https://hullchserv.proceduresonline.com/p_sup_policy.html)

**Resources to Support Wellbeing during Covid -19**

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In this resource pack you will find three tiers of support and additional guidance specific to supporting worker wellbeing during Covid -19. This is divided into 5 sections:

1. Tips and guidance to support wellbeing– tier 1
2. Targeted resources – tier 2
3. Specialist resources –tier 3
4. Other guidance from professional bodies
5. Hull City Council resources to support wellbeing

**Section 1 - Tips and guidance to support wellbeing during Covid -19**

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* NHS UK offer tips for staying well whist working from home, follow the link here, [**7 simple tips to tackle working from home**](https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/7-simple-tips-to-tackle-working-from-home/)

**Section 2 -Targeted resources to support wellbeing during Covid -19**



* Elefriends is a supportive online community from the mental health charity Mind. A safe place to listen, share and be heard. Follow the link here to [**Elefriends**](https://www.elefriends.org.uk/)
* Mind also offers advice on how isolating can affect your mental health and wellbeing and how you can combat this. Follow the link here [**Mind.com Advice for staying at home**](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse5518c)
* Advice from NHS UK. Follow the link here [**Every Mind Matters: how to look after your mental wellbeing while staying at home**](https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/)
* More tips from NHS UK, Follow the link here [**Coronavirus anxiety tips**](https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/)

**Section 3 -Specialist resources to support wellbeing during Covid -19**

  

* **Hull City Council** policies, procedures and guidance should be followed at all times and can be found by accessing this link [Wellbeing](http://theintranet.hullcc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures/hr/health-safety-and-wellbeing/wellbeing) . It is important that an **Individual Workplace Stress Risk Assessment** is completed with workers as required. This can also be found via the link above.
* Hull City Council’s **Occupational Health Team** have set up a confidential emotional wellbeing telephone support service which can be accessed by staff. Workers can book an emotional wellbeing telephone support service slot, on 01482 613 333 or email. [**occupationalhealth@hullcc.gov.uk**](mailto:occupationalhealth@hullcc.gov.uk). The telephone appointment slots last for a maximum of 30 minutes
* **Space2BHeard** - Independent counselling service, which is free to all employees of Hull City Council. 01482 705 023.
* **Mind - mental health support**  
  01482 240 200 or 0300 123 3393 or text 86469 (9am to 6pm Monday to Friday)
* **Samaritans** - support for people experiencing distress or despair  
  01482 323 456
* **Rethink Mental** **Illness** - advice and information for people with mental health problems and carers  
  0300 500 0927 (9.30am - 4pm Monday to Friday)
* **Saneline** - information and support for people with mental health problems and carers  
  0300 304 7000 (4.30 - 10.30pm)

**Section 4 -Other guidance from professional bodies**

 

* Government website, click to follow the link here [**Gov.uk COVID-19: guidance for the public on mental health and wellbeing**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing)

**Section 5- Additional Hull City Council resources to support wellbeing**



* This pdf contains Hull City Council mental health and wellbeing polices, guidance and links to relevant e-learning modules available on OLM.

**Final words -** In reading and using this guide, please remember that this applies to you too. As a manager continuing to supervise and support staff during the pandemic, your wellbeing is important too and managers at all levels have signed up to this commitment. Think about your own support needs and talk about what might be helpful to you with your manager. Thank you for continuing your support to others and take care.