Employee Health and Wellbeing
Stress Awareness - April 2021

April is stress awareness month and, after a difficult year, you may have found yourself experiencing more stress, both in work and at home.

What is stress?

Pressures are a normal part of life and can sometimes be a useful motivator. However, when perceived pressure on you becomes too great, you may experience stress. Stress is common and, long-term, can damage our health and wellbeing. Stress can lead to physical and emotional symptoms, as well as behaviour changes:

Emotional

- Difficulty concentrating
- impaired memory
- Feeling less decisive and/or confident
- Mood Swings
- Constant worrying

Behavioural

- Irritability, restlessness
- Over or under-eating
- Sleeping problems
- Changes in work attendance (arriving later or staying on later)
- Using alcohol, smoking or drugs to cope

Physical

- Aches and pains
- Stomach problems
- Dizziness
- Headaches
- Chest pain, heart palpitations

Wellbeing Workshops

Stress Q&A

9.30am - 10.30am
Tuesday 6 April

Wellbeing Champion Training

1pm - 4pm
Friday 16 April

Mindfulness drop-in

1pm - 3pm
Tuesday 20 April

Steps for tackling stress

Lifestyle changes - stress can have a big impact on our bodies. Getting enough exercise, sleep and eating a balanced diet can help counteract some of these effects and help us feel better and more energised. You may wish to try ‘Doing our bit’, an exercise platform accessible to NHS workers.

Connect with others- although socialising as we used to isn’t possible at the moment, we are now able to spend time outside with others, or stay in contact using technology. Being with others can be a great way to relax and have fun.

•Self-compassion – self-compassion is even more important during difficult times. Learn how to be kinder to yourself at self-compassion.org or attend an Employee Wellbeing Service ‘Introduction to compassion and self-care’ workshop.

Self-awareness - being able to recognise how you experience stress and what your triggers are can be a helpful first step to managing your stress. Mindfulness can help us develop this awareness. You may wish to try the Headspace mindfulness app, visit Palouse mindfulness or attend the upcoming Employee Wellbeing Service mindfulness drop-in.

You may wish to access Silvercloud, an online CBT program which includes a ‘Space from Stress’ module.

Further support

The Employee Wellbeing Service can provide support through counselling, guided self-help and signposting to other resources or services. In addition to telephone appointments, we are now offering video call appointments using the ‘Attend Anywhere’ platform. Call 02920 744465 or email employee.wellbeing@wales.nhs.uk to refer yourself.

Health for Health Professionals Wales are providing free mental health support to all Health Professionals and Healthcare Students working in NHS Wales.

Samaritans offer a free, confidential telephone helpline where you can talk to someone about anything that is troubling you. The helpline is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call: 116 123

C.A.L.L is a mental health helpline, offering a confidential listening service. The service is open 24 hours a day, 365 days year. You can call 0800 132 737 or text help to 81066.

If you are in crisis and do not feel you can keep yourself safe, contact your GP or the emergency services on 999 or 111.

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