



Managing health and wellbeing while working from home



How can line managers help promote wellbeing when working remotely?

- Check in regularly with your team members. Adapt to suit individual needs.
- Use video calls wherever possible to maintain face-to-face contact.
- Encourage open and honest chat. It's OK to admit you don't have all the answers: everyone is in this together.
- Encourage regular breaks – including fresh air and exercise.
- Encourage your team to share tips for coping with the current circumstances.
- Acknowledge things are challenging, but also highlight the positives, for example, no commute!
- Social contact is important, so have less formal (work-appropriate) communications.
- Remember one team member's circumstances and worries could be very different to another's (isolation versus overcrowding at home).
- Look out for differences in your colleagues' behaviour. Are they saying they're OK but their body language is saying something different?



Can you help people improve how they are working?

- Is their work station set up comfortably and can things be improved? Can household items like a cake stand be used for a screen riser or rolled up blankets for back support make things better?
- It may be possible to adapt their working location to improve surroundings, such as increasing natural light, or making the desk area more inviting with a plant or pictures etc.
- Some people may be struggling with their normal hours due to a busy household. Consider whether reduced hours or splitting their day might help balance home and work commitments, for example, 9am–5pm becomes 8am–12pm and 3–6pm.
- Routine can help.



What can line managers do if someone is finding things difficult?

- Review their challenges with them to see what can be changed.
- Consider using a Wellness Action Plan (WAP) to help gauge employees' wellbeing and solutions.
- Remind the team of resources available to them, for example, health cash plan, employee assistance programme, private medical insurance, the Mental Health First Aider, GPs etc, and remind them to use their support networks (where relevant).
- Signpost to further help, for example, www.mind.org.uk has a wealth of helpful resources.
- Try to focus on what we can influence or control rather than what we can't.
- Encourage them to limit exposure to news updates – information overload can perhaps trigger anxiety in some people.