

# **Team Wellness Plan Guidance**

## **What is a Team Wellness Plan (TWP)?**

This Team Wellness Plan is a working document that can be used to identify what keeps you, as a team, well at work, what may affect that, how you manage it and what support you give each other and strategies you have to maintain your team wellbeing, physically or mentally.

This is a proactive tool that you can use whenever you feel necessary; this could also be used when you are experiencing a specific period of difficulty or pressure within the team and want to discuss what additional support you might want to consider. The TWP discussion should be, as open and honest as possible but sharing only the information that you all feel is necessary, and you are comfortable with.

## **What is the Support Document For?**

Where support and strategies have been discussed, these should be recorded on the support document as a record of what you've agreed as a team whether this is something that you will be doing in the team to help your wellbeing, or some additional support that your manager has agreed to. There is a section in the support document for recording any specific work-related stress support or strategies.

The TWP and all Support Documents will be held on an agreed area which is accessible to all team members, e.g. a confidential shared drive.

## **When should the TWP be reviewed?**

There is no standard timescale for review, however, as good practice, it would be advisable to review it at team meetings to ensure that nothing has changed.

If there are agreed support/adjustments in place, either generally or for an agreed period of time, it should be actively reviewed at team meetings to ensure that these are in place and are effective for the whole team. This will also identify if anything else needs to be considered.

The TWP is individual to the team's needs, therefore, if your line management changes at any time, the TWP and any support and adjustments at that time, can be proactively shared with your new manager to ensure that this continues to keep the team well at work.

## **How to spot the signs of not being well**

We all have mental health just as we have physical health, but it can seem more difficult to spot the signs of mental ill health. This link gives you some good information on the common triggers which might impact on your mental health and signs that suggest that you may need support. <https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/resources/take-10-together/triggers-signs.pdf>

If any signs of you becoming unwell as a team have been discussed, you may want to agree with your manager that if they recognise these signs, they can actively have a conversation with you to see if you need any support.

## Work-related stress

We may all experience pressure on a daily basis and need it to motivate us and enable us to perform at our best. It's when we experience too much pressure without the opportunity to recover that we start to experience stress.

We recognise that work-related stress is defined as the following:

*"The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them at work" (HSE definition).*

Therefore, pressure can be beneficial and have positive effects if managed correctly, but excessive pressure can have a negative effect and lead to both mental and physical ill health.

The Health and Safety Executive has more detailed information on the stress management standards. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>

There is a separate Support Document to record any agreed actions/adjustments related specifically to any team work-related stress factors.

## Support and reasonable adjustments

There will be a limit to what, as a team, you will be able to provide as support to each other and as a manager, what can be agreed as additional support and reasonable adjustments.

Anything that's agreed will need to be based on what is reasonable, depending on business needs and service delivery, including team principles for 'How we will work'.

What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances of each individual case. It is important to discuss with the individual what adjustments they suggest will be able to help them and to refer to the [Government Reasonable Adjustments guidance](#) for more information.

Information on general wellbeing and the support that is provided to employees can be found on the school document library under [Your Wellbeing](#). This includes details on the employee assistance programme (EAP). This provision is the employee wellbeing service offer to schools, as part of the WES HR & Payroll Service.

## Conversation Guide for managers and team

Use the **HELP** model below to have open and non-judgemental conversations within the team.

**H**ave an open and non-judgemental conversation with each other:

- ask open questions, for example, how are you? what would help you? how does that feel for you?
- avoid judgemental and patronising responses and questions, for example, if a colleague is clearly struggling, what's up? why can't you just get your act together? everyone else is in the same boat and they're ok.

**E**mpathise and try to put yourself in your colleagues' shoes:

- acknowledge what they are saying, e.g., "that sounds really challenging", "I am sorry you are going through this"
- ask questions to understand more, e.g., "what has it been like for you?", "how are you feeling about everything?"

**L**isten actively to hear and understand what your colleagues are really saying:

- find a suitable location to undertake your team wellness plan discussion
- allocate sufficient time
- identify a suitable time and date
- avoid interruptions, e.g., switch off laptops and phones
- ensure all the team have an opportunity to participate

**P**rovide support to each other to keep you all well at work:

- make yourself aware of all of the support available to you

## Team Wellness Plan

<b>Name of team &amp; colleagues:</b>	
<b>Name of manager:</b>	
<b>1. What do we do as a team to support our wellness? -</b> <i>good communication, feedback, encourage each other's wellbeing (e.g. taking lunch breaks, taking time away from your workspace), celebrate team and individual successes</i>	
<b>2. What does it look like when we're working well together? -</b> <i>for example, sharing information/work effectively, delivering our service, being motivated and positive, identifying when a colleague needs support</i>	
<b>3. What is the impact on the team when we don't do this? -</b> <i>miscommunication, imbalance of workload across the team, negativity and tension</i>	
<b>4. Do we have any pressure points? If so, what and when?</b> <i>Are there any points in the year where you can expect pressure to increase? For example, end of financial year, end/start of academic year, deadlines, significant change</i>	
<b>5. What is in place to support us during these pressure points to keep us well?</b> <i>For example, regular team catch-ups, continuing behaviours which support team wellness, good lines of communication</i>	
Employee signatures:	Date:
Manager signature:	Date:

## Support document

Use this document to record any agreed support/adjustments

<b>Name of team and colleagues:</b>		
<b>Name of manager:</b>		
<b>Issue/concern</b>	<b>Agreed support</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>Employee signatures:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Manager signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>

**Support document for work-related stress**  
 Use this document to record any agreed support/adjustments

<b>Name of team &amp; colleagues:</b>		
<b>Name of manager:</b>		
	<b>Agreed actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>Demands</b> <i>Issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment</i>		
<b>Control</b> <i>How much say the person has in the way they do their work</i>		
<b>Support</b> <i>Encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, management and colleagues</i>		
<b>Relationships</b> <i>Promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour</i>		
<b>Role</b> <i>Whether they understand their role within the organisation</i>		
<b>Change</b> <i>How organisational change (small or large) is managed and communicated in the organisation</i>		
Employee signatures:		Date:
Manager signature:		Date: