

# NHS Health and Wellbeing Strategic Overview





## Dame Carol Black, Chair of the NHS Expert Advisory Board on Employee Health and Wellbeing

Enabling our diverse NHS people to be healthy with a sense of wellbeing is crucial to high-quality patient care. Putting the health and wellbeing of NHS people first should be a fundamental part of the DNA of the Service, enabling our NHS people to put our patients first.

The revised Health and Wellbeing Framework and its resources build upon the original framework launched in 2018. The framework enabled organisations to understand the health and wellbeing of our people and introduce appropriate interventions. The emphasis then was on reduction of sickness absence. However, the pandemic has highlighted the need to think beyond sickness absence and to recognise presenteeism and embrace prevention.

This revised framework targets the major factors which affect and could improve organisational health, namely management capabilities, job quality, social relationships at work, support for workers coping with health conditions or life stresses, and promotion of workplace health. We have worked with NHS organisations, expert partners across academia, the voluntary sector, professional bodies, the military, and government, to understand what 'good' looks like. Through this extensive engagement we have drawn upon an evidence base of best practice, research, and insights, which will enable NHS organisations to mould their own wellbeing programmes to their particular local needs.

Organisations are at different points on the health and wellbeing journey and therefore these resources are designed to be used in a flexible way to meet individual institutional needs. They can be used to start, revise, or relaunch a wellbeing programme, and be used either in total or in part depending on the starting point.

There is an emerging consensus around caring for our NHS people. We must act now and build a culture of health and wellbeing across the entire NHS. Doing this will most certainly enable a healthy workforce and support high-quality patient care.





## Prerana Issar, Chief People Officer

Our NHS People Plan and People Promise places the wellbeing of our NHS people at the heart of what we do. Caring for the wellbeing of our NHS people enables them to care for the wellbeing of our patients. This framework flexibly supports NHS organisations to create a culture of wellbeing for our NHS people to thrive.

We have all experienced an extraordinary challenge, both professionally and personally, as a result of COVID-19. Our NHS people have demonstrated astounding commitment during this challenging time, yet this has come at the cost of personal wellbeing.

We have learned a lot about how we enable the wellbeing of our NHS people over the past year. The evolution of the Health and Wellbeing Framework and suite of tools is a further step in ensuring we strengthen the health and wellbeing support for our NHS people during recovery and long term as we move our efforts toward creating a culture of wellbeing for all our NHS people to thrive.

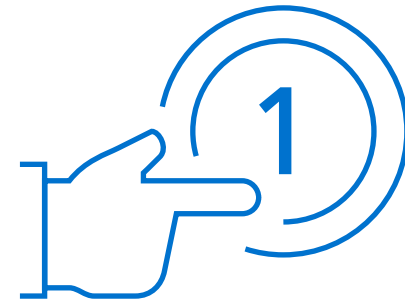
Health and wellbeing support has traditionally been focused on reducing sickness absence, particularly relating to mental and physical health. This framework has evolved to take account of the broader organisational and cultural factors that underpin an individual's ability to bring their best self to work. Taking account of our diverse workforce, the impact that leadership and line management has to play, and focusing on the prevention agenda will enable us to embed a culture of health and wellbeing across our healthcare organisations.

There is no single answer for how NHS and wider healthcare organisations should be improving health and wellbeing. Each organisation is unique and in a different place on their wellbeing journey. Therefore, this toolkit builds upon the successes and best practice within the previous iteration of the framework and provides resources to NHS organisations to flexibly plan and implement their own approach for improving our NHS peoples' health and wellbeing.





## Introduction



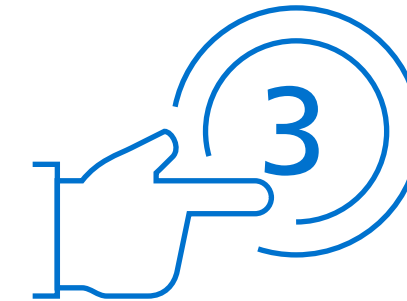
### Where we were

- The first publication of the NHS Health and Wellbeing Framework was launched in 2018 and was successfully utilised by a large body of NHS organisations. It spoke to an evidence base and rhetoric that predominantly focused on drivers to reduce sickness absence, and there is evidence that organisations using the framework did reduce their sickness absence rates
- Prior to the global pandemic, reducing sickness absence was seen as the leading indicator of improved health and wellbeing. Emphasis was very much on patient care as opposed to the thinking that if we focus on the health and wellbeing of our NHS people, they would be better placed to care for our patients and service users, therefore creating a culture of wellbeing that focuses on prevention and culture change



### Where we are now

- We have taken the best of the existing framework and through co-design, have evolved it into a set of resources to empower NHS organisations to create a sustainable wellbeing culture for our workforce
  - We have achieved this through co-design with stakeholders across systems and NHS organisations, from primary care Practices to acute trusts
- In this re-design we have focused on:
- placing emphasis on a positive health and wellbeing culture
  - place greater emphasis on the preventative health and wellbeing interventions
  - embedding equality, diversity and inclusion
  - Providing a clear rationale and case for change



### What does this mean for you?

- This set of resources aims to represent the huge diversity of healthcare organisations, forms and functions
- Health and wellbeing is not a one size fits all concept. However these resources demonstrate what good could look like for the majority of healthcare organisations
- Regardless of who you are, these tools can be applied within the context of your organisation and diversity of your people to understand what good health and wellbeing looks like for you, and what can be achieved
- The smallest primary care practice to the largest acute hospital trust will find inspiration and guidance in these resources



# Who is the Health and Wellbeing Framework for?

Health and wellbeing is not a one size fits all solution and every NHS organisation will have different health and wellbeing needs and aspirations. Therefore, these resources are designed to give a standardised view of what good could look like in an NHS setting. You will need to use these resources in the context of your organisation and for our diverse NHS people.

Forewords and introduction

Overview of the resources

How to use the resources

## People and roles

<p><b>Senior leaders/senior responsible officer for wellbeing</b></p>	<p>The resources illustrate what good looks like for health and wellbeing and will support your organisations strategic sponsor for wellbeing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– undertake a diagnostic of how your organisation compares to what good looks like</li> <li>– develop a strategic organisational action plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organisation lead for wellbeing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The resources provide a view of what good looks like for health and wellbeing as well as inspiration and implementation guidance for interventions based on successful work across the NHS</li> <li>– The organisational diagnostic tool, the elements of health and wellbeing and case studies support this</li> </ul>
<p><b>Anyone interested in health and wellbeing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Health and wellbeing is a topic that all NHS people should and can engage with. The resources in this framework are designed to support all of our people in building health and wellbeing culture for themselves and their teams</li> </ul>

## Diversity of healthcare organisations

<p><b>Systems</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The framework and the diagnostic tool can be used to gain a broad understanding of how health and wellbeing is adopted across organisations within a system, the strengths and development areas for the system, and to develop strategic action plans to support all partner organisations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Large organisations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Large organisations such as acute trusts can utilise the framework to assess health and wellbeing culture and needs for their diverse people.</li> <li>– No single organisation will be alike, so the resources need to be applied to the context of your diversity of people and organisational needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Small organisations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Smaller organisations such as those found in primary care can use these resources to gain an understanding of what good health and wellbeing looks like and then contextualise this information for their unique organisation and diverse people</li> </ul>



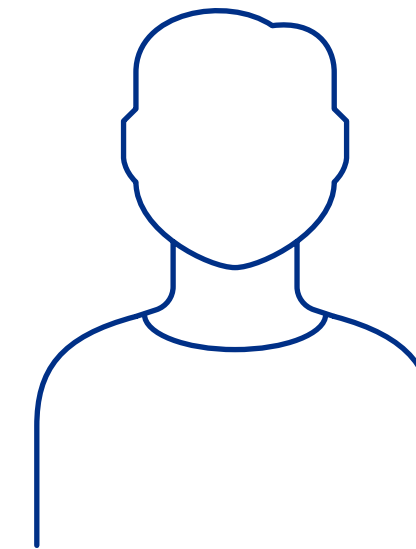
## Our people and our patients

The evolved health and wellbeing resources are all aimed at enabling organisations to support the health and wellbeing of our diverse NHS people. The evidence is clear that if we look after our people, then they will pass this care on to our patients through safe, high-quality care.

Putting our NHS people first through an holistic approach to health and wellbeing for individuals, teams, managers and organisations



Increased patient safety and care quality



44.1% of NHS people reported that they had felt unwell as a result of work related stress during the last 12 months

### The bottom line:

Many organisations have already embarked on a journey to deliver a positive and an effective health and wellbeing culture for our diverse NHS people. Where there is more work to do or an organisation is at the start of their journey then there are multiple people and financial rationales for change. Further statistics and supporting evidence are heavily embedded in this evolved framework.



Patient satisfaction in acute trusts was higher in trusts where health and wellbeing was higher (measured by injury rates, stress levels, job satisfaction and turnover intentions)



Mental health conditions are consistently the highest reason for sickness absence in the NHS. Even at its lowest level in 2020, it accounted for 21% of sickness absence, c472,000 FTE days lost in a single month



4.8 million working days in human health and social work are lost each year due to workplace injury or work-related illness



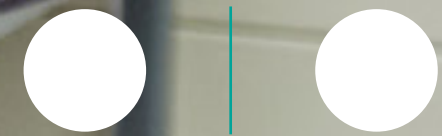
Research in 2018 estimated the cost of bullying and harassment to the NHS as over £2.3 billion per annum



In 2018/19, stress, depression or anxiety were responsible for 44% of all cases of work-related ill health and 54% of all working days lost due to health issues in GB



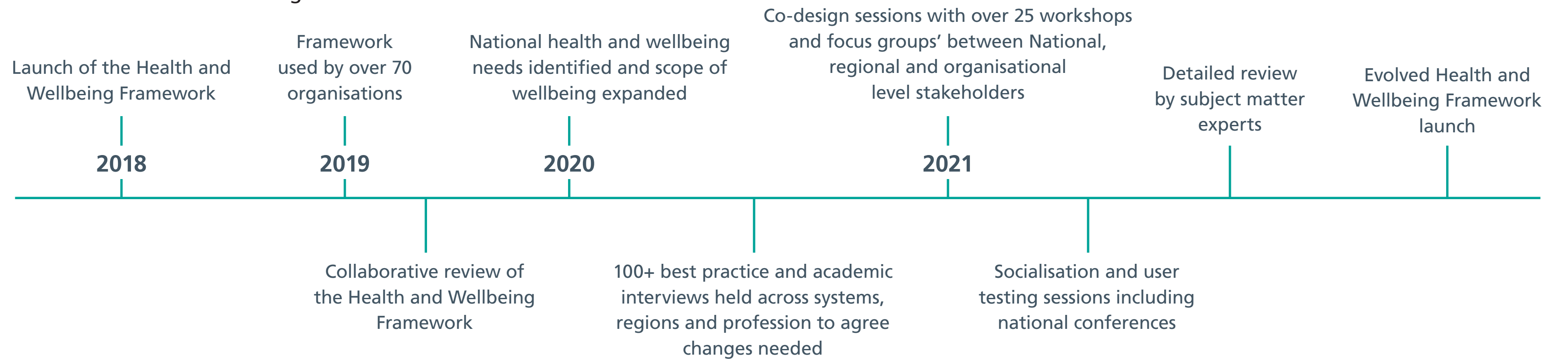
What's new and contained within these resources?





## The evolution of the Health and Wellbeing Framework

The first version of the NHS Health and Wellbeing Framework was launched in 2018. Since then a large proportion of NHS organisations have successfully used those tools to support implementing their health and wellbeing agenda. Our peoples needs have changed in that time, as has our view of health and wellbeing. As such we have engaged stakeholders across the NHS to help evolve the health and wellbeing resources available now with particular view on how this framework can support embedding a culture of health and wellbeing in the NHS, with a focus on prevention and ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is considered throughout.



We have engaged with a large number of stakeholder groups across the organisation through one to one interviews, focus groups, co-design workshops and conferences. Stakeholders include:

- NHS health and wellbeing advisory board
- Wellbeing guardians
- National strategic partners
- Professional bodies
- Health and wellbeing leads
- Health and wellbeing academics / experts

- NHS employee networks
- Senior healthcare leaders
- Health and social care partnerships
- Primary care leaders
- Workforce issue groups
- Trade unions

- Human resources directors
- Organisation development leads
- Occupational health leads
- Equality, diversity and inclusion leads





# Introducing the NHS health and wellbeing model

Many factors influence health and wellbeing of our diverse NHS people and teams. Some of these, such as physical and mental health, are well understood. However, there are other factors such as relationships, management skills and the environment that are fundamental to support our diverse NHS people in providing world class health care to our patients. This model underpins the set of resources that form this Health and Wellbeing Framework. There are seven health and wellbeing domains containing sixteen elements, these elements incorporating supporting evidence, case studies and critical questions for our organisations.

The proactive interventions and services that empower our NHS people to manage their own health and wellbeing. Sections cover:

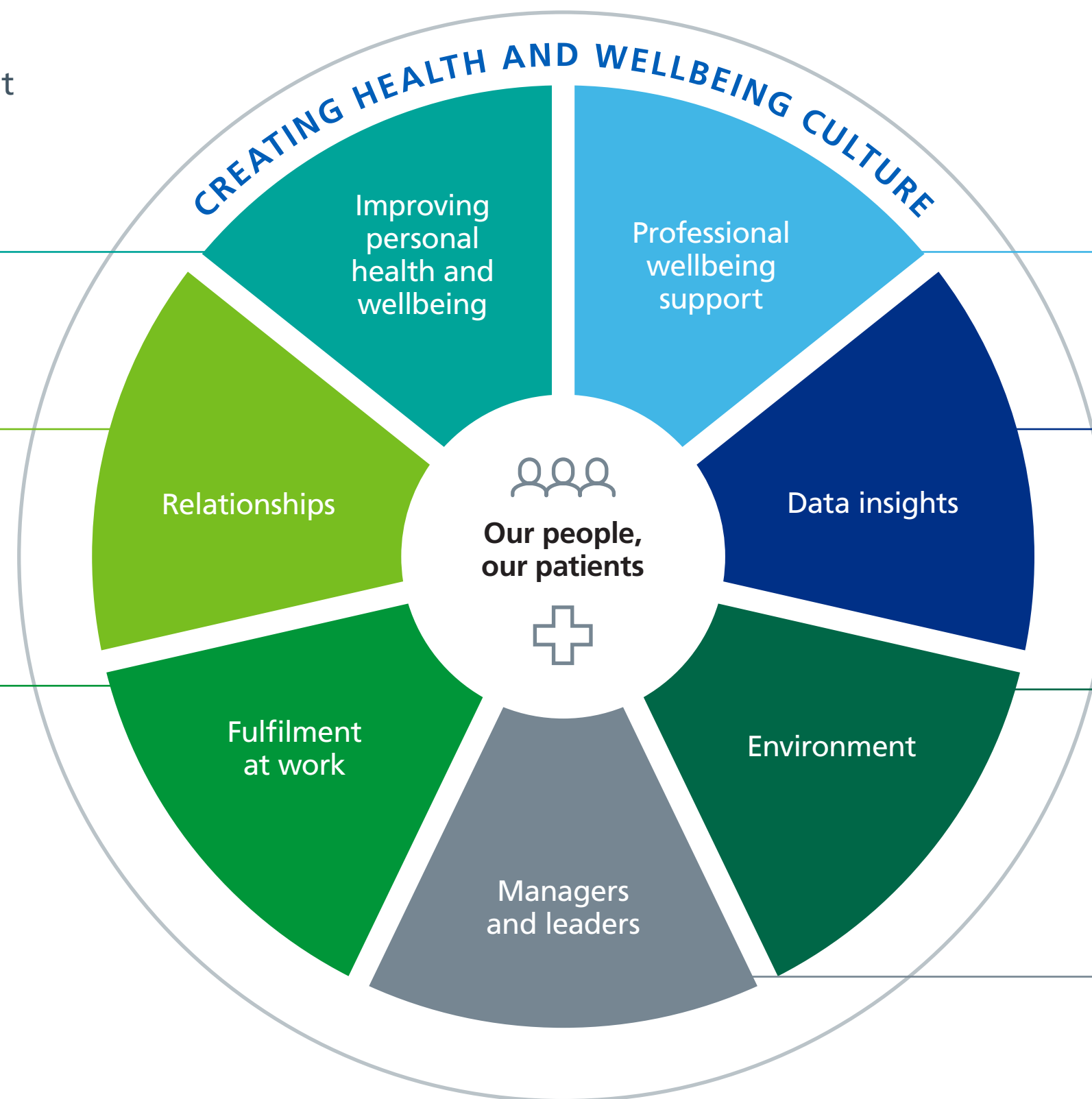
- mental and emotional wellbeing
- physical wellbeing
- healthy lifestyle

The ways our teams work together with care and compassion. Sections cover:

- supporting each other
- working together

How our work at the NHS inspires our NHS people, and how we support their growth and passion. Sections cover:

- purpose, potential and recognition
- life balance
- bringing 'yourself' to work



The teams and services, like occupational health, available to support organisation and people in their health and wellbeing. Sections cover:

- support services and partners
- organisation design and policy
- interventions overview

Our approach to understanding our health and wellbeing needs and then measuring our effectiveness in supporting them

Physical work spaces and the facilities available to our people to rest, recover and succeed

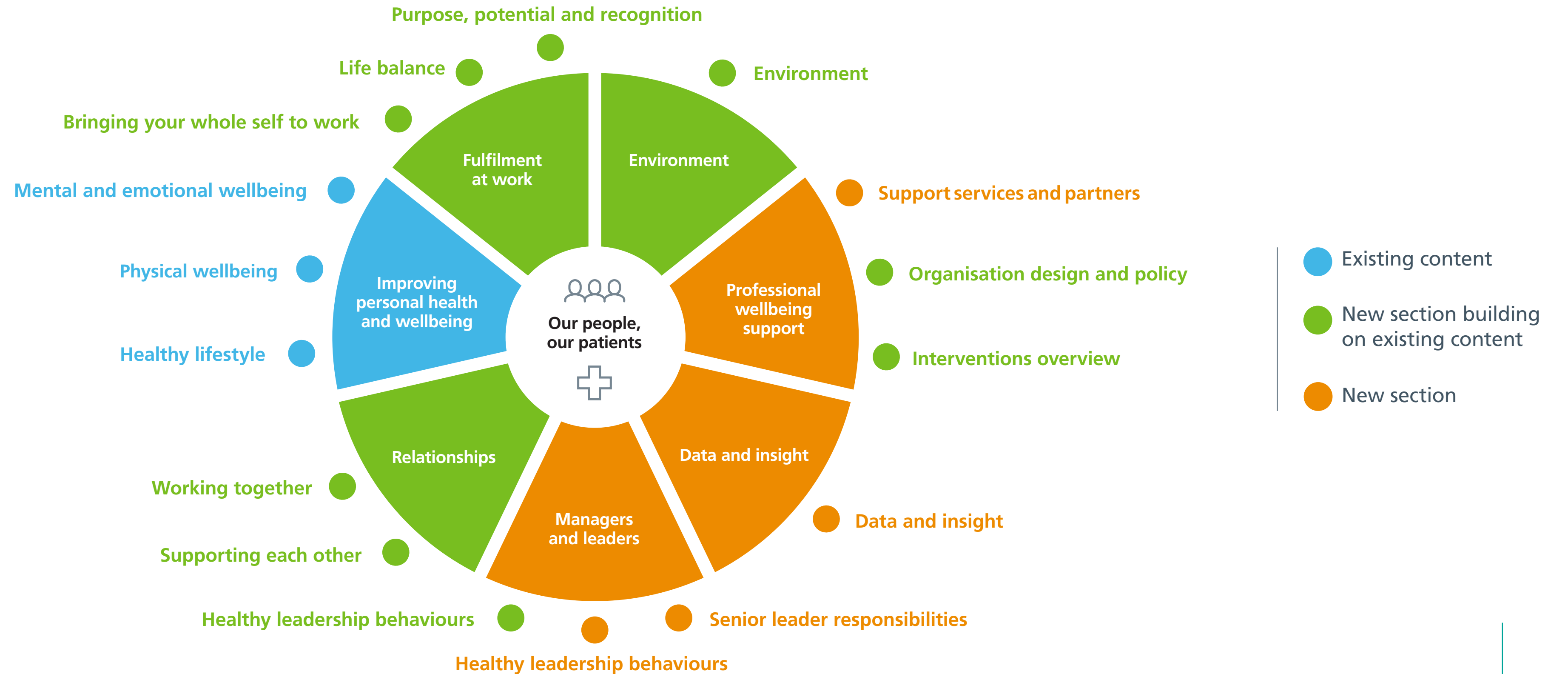
How our leaders and managers across all levels of the NHS provide health and wellbeing support as part of their role. Sections cover:

- senior manager responsibilities
- healthy leadership behaviours
- skilled managers



# What is new in the evolved Health and Wellbeing Framework?

Our understanding of health and wellbeing changes and improves with each piece of academic research or market insight. This is reflected in a broader view of health and wellbeing. Significant parts of our day to day working lives play a huge role in our individual wellbeing from the teams we work with through to the physical environment. This evolved Health and Wellbeing Framework builds on the successes of previous work and demonstrates the case for a wider, more inclusive health and wellbeing culture. Within this strategic overview we have used examples of both internal and external data points. These data points are replicated within the “Elements of Health and Wellbeing” document which also contains structured reference acknowledgements.



Forewords and introduction

Overview of the resources

How to use the resources



## Improving personal health and wellbeing

Personal health is more than the absence of dysfunction and disease. Mental and emotional health, physical health and a healthy lifestyle all contribute to an individual's health and wellbeing.

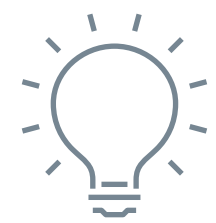
### Key stakeholder feedback



Personal wellbeing is more than a sickness absence metric

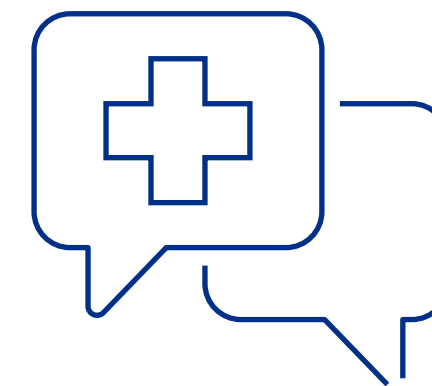


More emphasis needs to be placed on preventative interventions rather than discrete reactive support



Mental and physical wellbeing needs to be viewed more broadly e.g. with the inclusion of financial wellbeing and menopause support

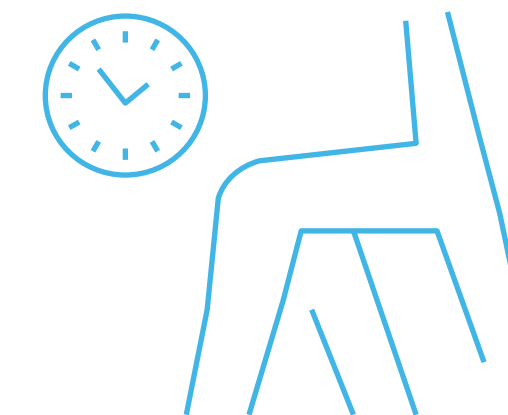
### Snapshot of people experience



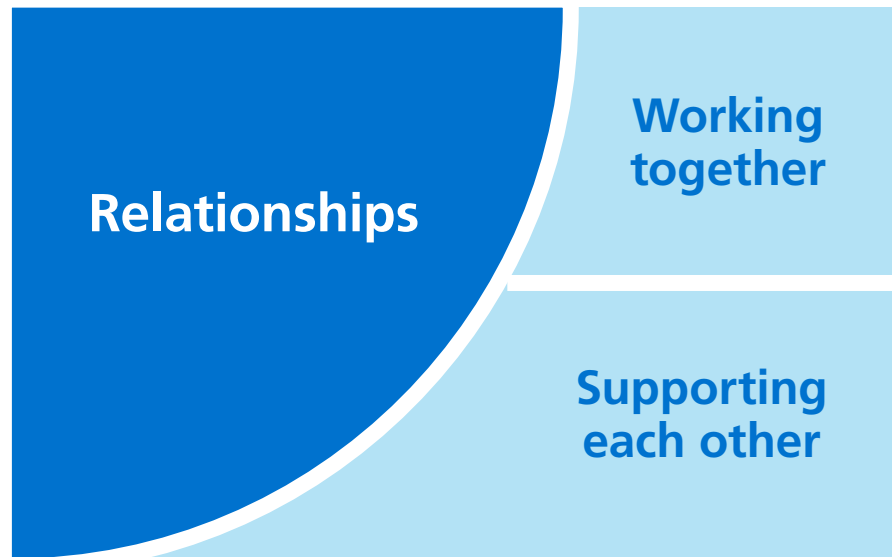
Patient satisfaction in acute trusts was higher in trusts where health and wellbeing (measured by injury rates, stress levels, job satisfaction and turnover intentions) was higher



Mental health conditions are consistently the highest reason for sickness absence in the NHS. Even at its lowest level in 2020, it accounted for 21% of sickness absence, c472,000 FTE days lost in a single month



Musculoskeletal problems such as back, shoulder and knee pain are the leading cause of working days lost in the UK – it is estimated that 31 million days a year are lost due to these problems



## Relationships

Extensive evidence shows that having good-quality relationships can help us to live longer and happier lives with fewer mental health problems. Having close, positive relationships can give us a purpose and sense of belonging.

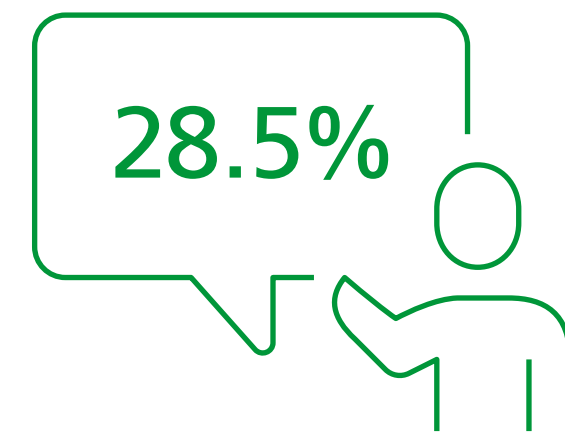
### Key stakeholder feedback

The impact of the team on personal wellbeing cannot be underestimated

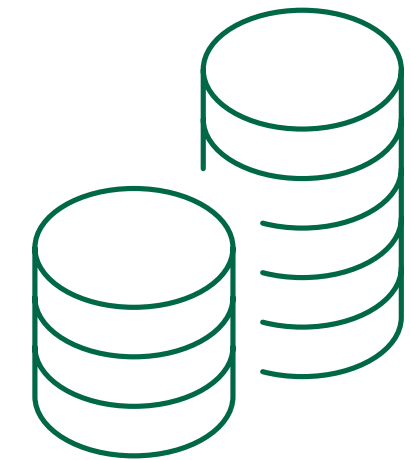
Transparency and accountability when driving cultural change is essential

Health and wellbeing is a two-way relationship between our NHS people and organisational leaders

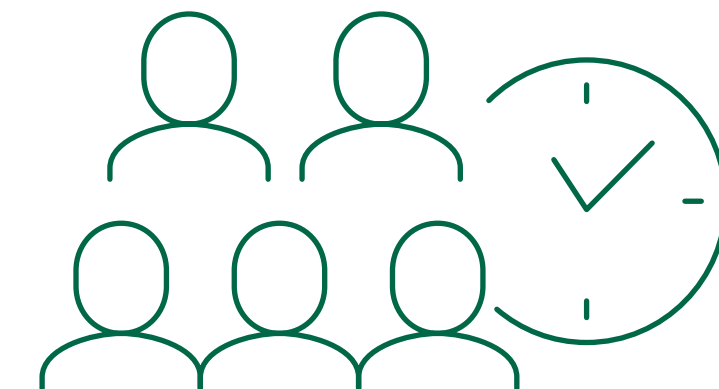
### Snapshot of people experience



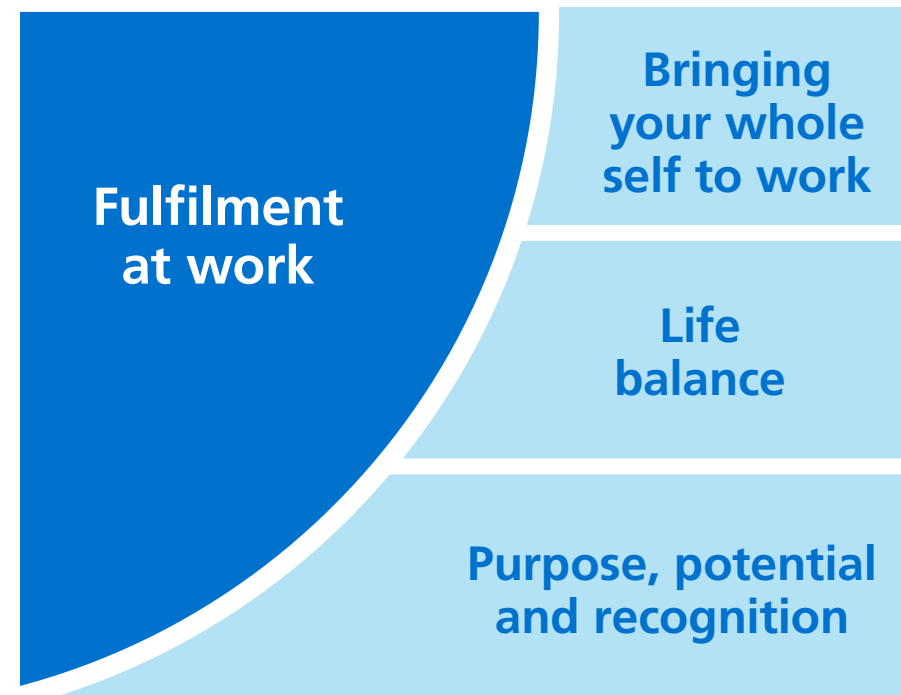
28.5% of NHS people reported experiencing bullying in the last 12 months, with 12.3% of NHS people experiencing bullying and/or harassment at work from managers and 19% from other colleagues



Research in 2018 estimated the cost of bullying and harassment to the NHS as over £2.3 billion per annum



Employees who acted collaboratively stuck at their tasks 64% longer than their solitary peers, whilst also reporting higher engagement levels, lower fatigue levels and higher success rates



## Fulfilment at work

Fulfilment at work encompasses not only the work we do on a day to day basis, but a range of themes and activities that together form a critical component of an individual's health and wellbeing. This section provides definitions for those core components, why they matter and things to consider. From ensuring purpose in work to enabling our diverse NHS people to bring their whole self to work.

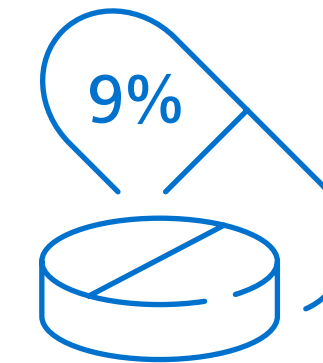
### Key stakeholder feedback

Equality, diversity and inclusion themes need to be heavily embedded in our approach to health and wellbeing

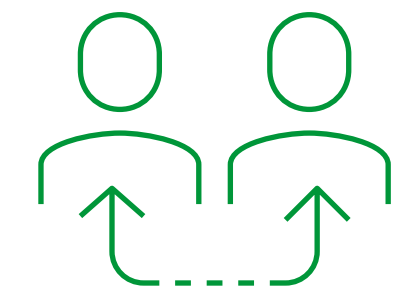
Job redesign is essential but it needs to be enabled by effective and compassionate people policy

Supporting our NHS people to develop will lead to a more effective and engaged workforce

### Snapshot of people experience



Disabled NHS people are 9% more likely, compared to non-disabled NHS people, to be pressured to come into work despite not feeling well enough to perform their duties (32.0% vs. 23.0%)



Just 40.7% of black and minority ethnic NHS people believed that their organisation provided equal opportunities for career progression or promotion compared to 88.3% for white NHS people



White applicants were 1.61 times more likely to be appointed from shortlisting compared to black and minority ethnic applicants; this is worse than in 2019 (1.46) which itself showed no improvement on the previous year. There has been year on year fluctuation but no overall improvement over the past five years. It was 1.60 in 2017



## Managers and leaders

Our managers and leaders are fundamental to creating positive and healthy working environments for our diverse NHS people. The following section identifies the responsibilities of senior leaders, what healthy behaviours look like for the leaders across our organisations and the importance of skilled and supported managers in helping to build and sustain cultures of health and wellbeing.

### Key stakeholder feedback

Health and wellbeing needs to be at the top of the leadership agenda

Managers at all levels are at the centre of an individuals work experience and wellbeing

Managers need training and given the right tools to effectively support their teams

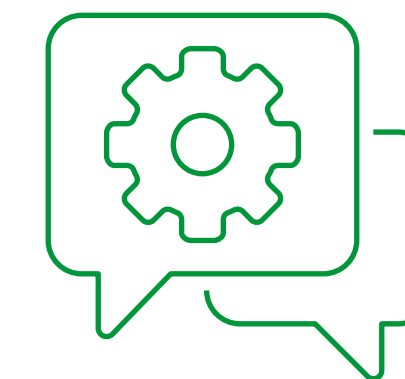
### Snapshot of people experience



Only 43.4% of our NHS people feel that communication between senior management and NHS people is effective



69% of employees that participated in a recent study identified that the behaviour of their managers had increased their stress and that the rise in stress had a major impact on organisational performance




Only 33.9% of our NHS people felt that senior managers act on feedback




## Environment

A healthy workplace is one where workers and managers collaborate to continually improve the health, safety and wellbeing of all workers and by doing this, sustain the productivity of the business. Given we spend one third of our lives at work, the working environment can have a significant impact on our health and wellbeing. Getting the basics right, such as clean restrooms with locks on the toilets, proper space dedicated for lunch / breaks and access to drinking water is vitally important and should not be underestimated. Additionally, workers need a work environment in which there is not only an absence of harmful conditions that can cause injury and illness but one that supports healthy choices and offers resources to actively encourage healthy behaviour.

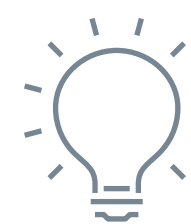
### Key stakeholder feedback



Sometimes it is as straightforward as getting the basics right like space to rest, reflect and replenish

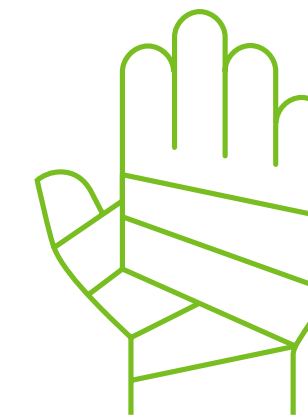


Organisations need to strike a balance between pastoral and clinical working environments

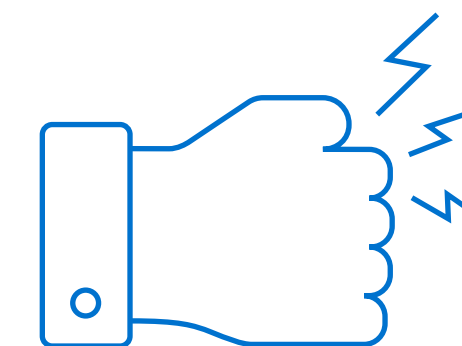


The wider economic, natural and community environment needs to be considered

### Snapshot of people experience



4.8 million working days in human health and social work are lost each year due to workplace injury or work-related illness



14.5% of all our NHS people experienced an incident of physical violence from patients, service users, their relatives or other members of the public in the last 12 months

Investing in green infrastructure would reduce costs to the National Health Service alone by £2.1bn





Forewords and introduction

Overview of the resources


How to use the resources




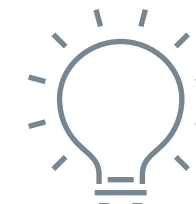
## Date insights and professional wellbeing support

Health and wellbeing is a broad and complex topic that is best supported by a multi-disciplinary team. Smaller organisations may commission in this support, whereas larger organisations may have access to a wider range of internal supporting services. Regardless of the size of your organisation, you should engage as much expertise as possible to ensure our diverse NHS peoples' wellbeing is supported.


### Key stakeholder feedback

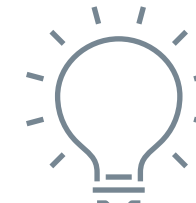
 The relationship with occupational health needs to develop from performance management tool to driver of proactive health and wellbeing


 Health and wellbeing needs to be on the human resources agenda

 An effective health and wellbeing strategy is successful when integrated across all support areas not just through siloed interventions

### Data insights

 Organisations need to have the capability to understand the health and wellbeing needs of our people

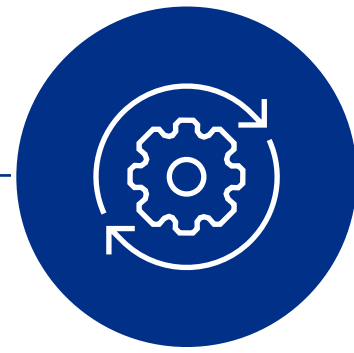
 Interventions are most useful when targeted based on the relevant risk populations

 Measuring the effectiveness of interventions is the only way we can understand what works best in an NHS setting

Good data and robust analysis are fundamental to knowing where to focus your health and wellbeing interventions and what form these should take to support the diversity of our people. Furthermore, it also enables you to measure whether they are having the desired impact or not, and therefore whether it is worth expanding, adapting or stopping implementation. Data used in the right way will help your organisation understand the specific health and wellbeing needs of individuals and diverse groups of our NHS people, helping your organisation focus on preventative measures rather than reactive interventions.



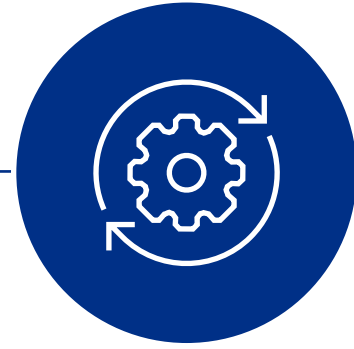
The tools and how to use them



# How to use these health and wellbeing resources

Every NHS organisation is different. Different in terms of its people and different in its progress towards a positive health and wellbeing culture. The resources are designed to be used in a flexible way to meet the needs of your organisation. They can be used to start, revise or relaunch a programme, and either be used in total or in parts, depending on your starting point.

	Getting started	Understanding your needs	Planning		
Which resource?	Strategic Overview	Organisational Diagnostic Tool	Elements of Health and Wellbeing	Case Studies	Implementation Guide
What?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introduction to the framework and NHS model of health and wellbeing</li> <li>– Overview of what health and wellbeing means in the NHS</li> <li>– Explanation of how to use the resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Diagnostic tool aligned to the NHS model describing what good health and wellbeing looks like</li> <li>– Provides a view of where your organisation should prioritise its health and wellbeing efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Definitions for each of the elements of health and wellbeing</li> <li>– Evidence and rationale for change</li> <li>– Critical questions and considerations to apply to your organisational context and diversity of people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Inspirational case studies from across systems and our diversity of organisations and people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Practical planning and delivery guidance from initial diagnostic through to implementation</li> </ul>
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understand the resources available to you and your organisation and how to use them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understand health and wellbeing within the context of your organisation and diversity of people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understand the components of health and wellbeing</li> <li>– Gain inspiration for what is possible for health and wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Gain inspiration from across the NHS of what health and wellbeing practice looks like</li> <li>– Examples come from across systems and organisation sizes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Understand how to diagnose our NHS peoples' health and wellbeing needs</li> <li>– Understand how to plan, deliver and evaluate your interventions</li> </ul>



## How to use these health and wellbeing resources

The resources are designed to be used in a flexible way to meet the needs of your organisation. They can be used to start, revise or relaunch a programme, and either be used in total or in parts, depending on your starting point.

### Are you...?

#### Improving existing activity

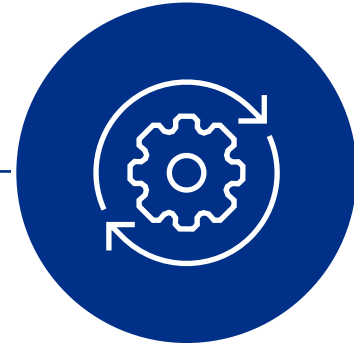
- 1 Complete the diagnostic tool to understand gaps in your current delivery and provision
- 2 Incorporate actions to fill gaps in the current health and wellbeing plan and/or update objectives
- 3 Use the health and wellbeing resources to develop and deliver against gaps, then monitor and evaluate impact and effectiveness
- 4 Engage with your organisations leadership team and stakeholders like wellbeing guardians or health and wellbeing leads to agree your next priorities

#### Planning a new programme

- 1 Complete the diagnostic tool to understand current status of your organisation
- 2 Work with your organisations leadership team and stakeholders like wellbeing guardians or health and wellbeing leads to agree priorities
- 3 Use the 'Implementation Guide' to understand the tasks and activity, develop and plan interventions and make the business case
- 4 Agree a plan and success measures, then implement your health and wellbeing intervention

#### Just interested

- 1 Look to the NHS model of health and wellbeing and 'Elements of Health and Wellbeing' resource for an overview of how we see health and wellbeing in the NHS
- 2 Look to the 'Case Studies' resource for inspiration on what has worked well across our organisations
- 3 Engage with your managers, wellbeing guardians or health and wellbeing leads to understand how you can get involved with driving health and wellbeing in your organisation



## How to navigate the resources

Consistent icons have been used throughout the resources.

Some refer to the domain or element of health and wellbeing such as improving personal health. These are consistent across all of the framework resources.

### Improving personal health and wellbeing



### Relationships



### Fulfillment at work



### Managers and leaders



### Professional wellbeing support



### Environment



### Data insights



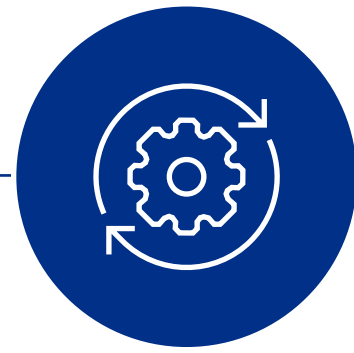
High level case studies from across the NHS are highlighted with a star. Further and more detailed case studies can be found in the case studies resource.

**Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust** introduced a fast track programme for NHS people off sick with musculoskeletal health issues, offering them an appointment with physiotherapy as soon as they phoned in sick. They also developed a video showing strengthening for our NHS people involved in moving and handling duties and introduced desk based exercises. We saw a decrease in time off work for back related causes of musculoskeletal absence; and non-back related causes of musculoskeletal sickness have now steadied.

Academic or market insight is highlighted with a light bulb.

These resources are heavily underpinned by the most recent health and wellbeing research and market evidence from organisations such as:

**Whatworkswellbeing | SOM | CIPD**



## How to interpret data and insight

The NHS health and wellbeing resources are underpinned by current research and insight from across the NHS and wider industries. Health and wellbeing needs will vary by organisational context, so generic data points are provided to inspire and highlight the experiences of our diverse NHS people and the rationale for creating a positive health and wellbeing culture. You will need to identify your own data relevant to your organisation and diversity of people when developing your local health and wellbeing strategy.

### Examples of external data sources

- What Works Wellbeing
- Society of Occupational Medicine
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
- World Health Organization
- Forbes
- Britain’s Healthiest Workplace

### Examples of NHS data sources

- NHS Digital
- NHS staff survey
- Relevant NHS organisational level data

### Questions to ask yourself when engaging with these resources

What can good look like for my organisation?

What are our NHS peoples’ health needs?

What is important for our NHS people?

Which data sources are relevant to our NHS people?

What’s worked well for similar organisations?