

Looking after your team's health and wellbeing guide

Introduction and Getting started

March 2023

People Promise





Welcome to this guide

A healthy team leads to a great experience for all your team members, and ultimately better care for our patients. This guide is designed to help you and your team explore what being part of a healthy team means for you, and to embark on a collaborative journey where you are 'in the driving seat' to improve things, together.

We know that being healthy and well is different, for different people, at different times and that one size does not fit all. This guide recognises this by empowering you and your team to create a wellbeing culture that is right for your team, in your local setting, and at your own pace. It has been designed so that you and your team:

- will experience a flexible journey to create a personalised culture of team wellbeing
- are supported to explore health and wellbeing holistically, including aspects of environmental, physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing

- have an engaging experience, by offering practical insights, quick ideas, experiences, and exercises to recognise and bring about the very best in wellbeing in your team
- can flexibly benefit from the guide in your context, by supporting teams across our diverse range of health and care organisations both large and small, having been co-designed collaboratively with colleagues across healthcare, primary care, social care, and voluntary sectors
- are introduced to the existing evidence base around team wellbeing in a simple and engaging way, having been inspired by the [NHS Health and Wellbeing Framework](#), [Healthy Leadership Framework](#) and [NHS People Promise](#)
- have access to resources that are designed to grow over time, by continually adding inspiring content, resources, links, and case studies for you to consider that will support you on your ongoing journey of improvement

We hope that you enjoy engaging with this guide and wish you well on your personalised journey of growing your team's health and wellbeing culture.



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Introducing this guide

Who is the guide for?

This guide supports any team that is seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of members of the team, through a culture change approach. It is for all teams working in health and care, inclusive of all team forms and functions, across healthcare, primary care, social care and voluntary sectors.

It is for teams who are looking for inspiration and guidance to begin creating your local culture of wellbeing in a simple, practical and engaging way.

How will the guide help my team?

This guide is a simple 'one stop shop' to help you and your team to improve your health and wellbeing over time, through a flexible, continual, and collaborative 'journey'.

It will empower you and your team to explore and improve your health and wellbeing in an inclusive and holistic way, recognising that different people need different things at different times. It supports you to embed a team wellbeing culture for your local context.

The guide will also develop over time, by incorporating best practice resources all in one place for you, whilst also signposting you to wider resources and tools over time as we learn together from your experiences.

Why was this guide created?

This guide was developed because you suggested it and in response to feedback and engagement with colleagues.

When NHS England refreshed the Health and Wellbeing Framework in 2021, people asked for a guide that that would support them to grow wellbeing in their teams.

There are lots of initiatives that support organisational or sector wellbeing, but

people recognised that they spend most of their time with their immediate team and the wellbeing of that group of people was crucial to them.

**"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."
(World Health Organisation 2021)**

You will look at health and wellbeing holistically, and this includes aspects of environmental, physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual wellbeing. All of these factors need to be maintained to keep us personally healthy and well.

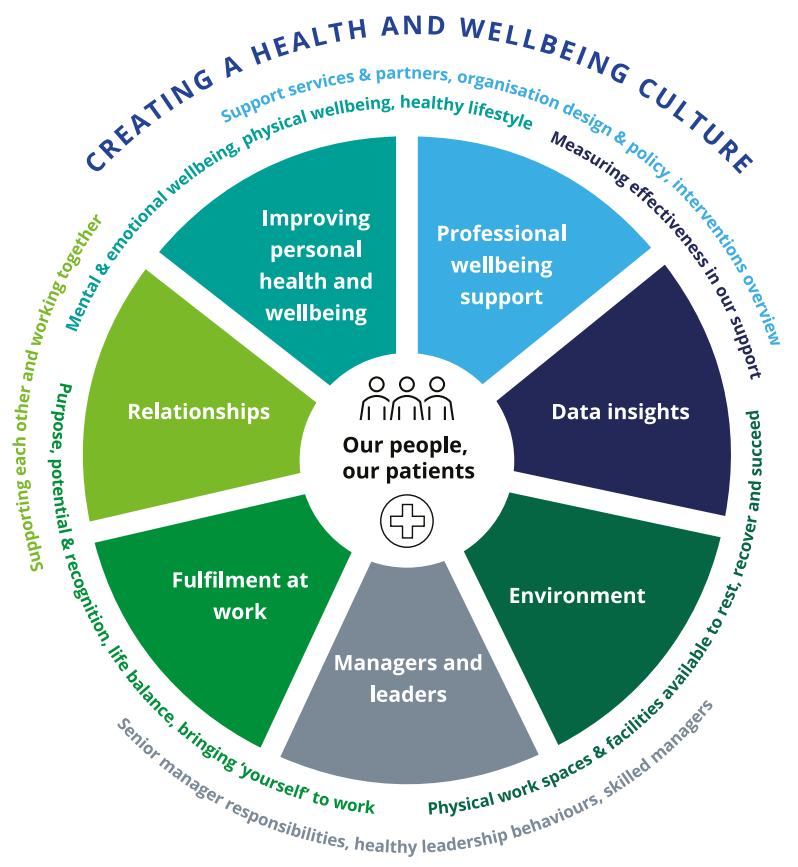
Inspired by the NHS Health and Wellbeing Framework, this guide has been co-designed with colleagues across health, social care and voluntary sectors to support teams across a range of organisations on a journey to grow their team wellbeing culture.





NHS Health and Wellbeing Framework

The framework is a high-level culture change toolkit that supports organisations to diagnose their NHS people's health and wellbeing needs and plan, deliver and evaluate interventions.



Wellbeing for our NHS people is also a core part of the NHS People Promise. The Promise sets out, in their own words, what our NHS people in many different healthcare roles and organisations have said would make the greatest difference to them in their working lives. The NHS People Promise highlights that, as NHS staff,

“we want to bring out the very best in one another... We all do this by making the culture of the NHS one that’s compassionate and inclusive for everyone and addressing our workforce and workload challenges.”



We are **safe** and **healthy**





The guide aligns with the NHS Core Values:

- working together for patients
- respect and dignity
- commitment to quality of care
- compassion
- improving lives
- everyone counts

By living these values, we can ensure the best possible care for patients, as well as looking after our own wellbeing.

This guide also reflects the diversity that is so important to us all. Having a diverse and inclusive workforce is important because:

- it helps create a culture where everyone is valued and respected
- it helps tackle health inequalities by having a workforce which is more representative of the population we serve
- we know that patients have better experiences in NHS organisations when there is a culture of inclusion for all staff

The People Promise describes how we can act with compassion and in an inclusive way:

“We are kind and respectful. We all feel the pressure at times, but we care for each other, as we care for our patients. We don’t tolerate any form of discrimination, bullying or violence, and call out inappropriate behaviour. We are open and inclusive. We understand, encourage and celebrate diversity, making the NHS a place where we all feel we belong.”





How will you experience this guide?

Your team's personalised journey is at the heart of this guide. It has been co-designed with people who work in the NHS and social care, so that you are in the driving seat and choose the journey and pace that is right for you.

You will start by exploring what health and wellbeing means to you as a team. This will provide you with your starting point to begin exploring how to improve things, together.

You will then be guided through a series of sections that will help you to further explore and improve your team health and wellbeing, at a pace that is right for you. Each of these sections links to the NHS Health and Wellbeing Framework.

You and your team will probably have been thinking about and working on your wellbeing for some time now, and you are the expert in what works and will work for you. So there is no set order in which you need to do the sections – you chose where the start is, based on your knowledge of your team. There is also a facilitator's guide, with tips and ideas if you would like to take the lead in delivering an activity with your team.

In keeping with the idea of a journey, you can come back to any section or sections if you like or repeat activities – a good time to do this might be when new members join the team, for example.

"I think this guide helps move things forward. It empowers people to ask questions, take action and to feel valued."

Feedback from a guide pilot site





Overview

This guide is separated into the following sections. We recommend you start with identifying your team's wellbeing goals, and then dip in and out of the other sections based on your identified needs.



Identify your team's wellbeing goals

This is where you can find help to support you in understanding your team's wellbeing needs.



Creating a safe and inclusive space to talk about wellbeing

This section will help team members to think about leadership behaviours in a team.



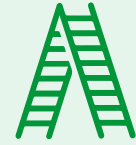
Looking after your emotional, physical and mental health

This section will help each team member to identify the things they can do to boost their own wellbeing.



Ensuring you have a safe working environment

This section will help you to review your physical workspaces and the facilities available to rest, recover and succeed.



Collaborative and supportive relationships that promote social wellbeing

This section will help team members to reflect on the ways the team works together to boost civility, respect and build compassion.



Finding meaning in the work you do and bringing your whole self to work

This section will help team members to connect with the wider purpose of the team and encourage each team member to tap into their full potential and bring their 'whole self' to work.



Knowing where to go when you need wellbeing support

This section will help team members to gain a shared understanding of the workload within the team and the services available to support team members to look after their health and wellbeing.



Inspiration Library

This section provides additional learning and resources to further support you and your team.





Ways to use the Guide

There is no one way to work through the guide, so pick the way that best suits your team. Some ideas to get you started include:

Are you looking for an overview?

Yes

Quick wins approach

You could do all the quick wins from each chapter, to grow or maintain momentum, and then go back and do more in-depth exercises.

No

Linear approach

Work through the guide in a linear fashion as outlined on the Overview (page 7).

Have you already completed an assessment of your team wellbeing?

No

Collective approach

You could ask team members where they want to start and take a cue from them.

Yes

Planned approach

You might want to review the sections within this guide and plot the order you will work through the themes, in line with your own priorities based on the outcome of your team assessment.

Do you have wellbeing priorities?

Yes

Themed approach

If your organisation, system or region is focussing on a wellbeing theme that also appeals to the team, you might want to make use of any resources available and focus on that theme.

No

Self-assessment approach

Use the quick self-assessment tool in this section to identify with your team where to start. You could decide to focus on areas of wellbeing that you all identify you haven't explored much yet, or you could decide to consolidate an area of wellbeing that you've already given some time to.



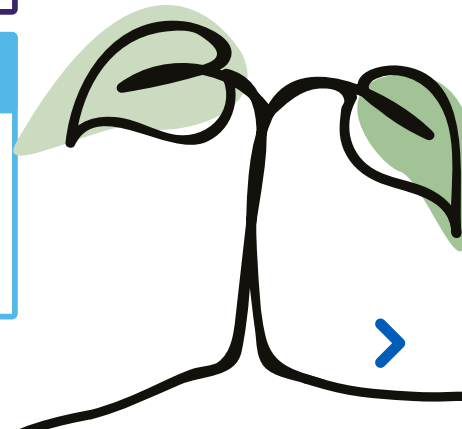
We want your feedback

If you have good ways of exploring topics in the guide already, use those (and please tell us – we'd love to hear about your experiences and spread your ideas!).

growing.ohwb@nhs.net

Remember...

There is no timescale to 'complete' either the guide or each section – take as long as you think you need.





Navigating this guide

Throughout the guide, you will find icons to help you to find your way around the different activities and resources. An explanation of the icons can be found below:



Review your team's wellbeing culture - use the **traffic light tool** to understand your team's wellbeing culture and where to focus your efforts by reviewing your progress against key areas that contribute to team wellbeing.



Activity - we all play a vital role in supporting a wellbeing culture. In each section of this guide, we have suggested activities you can do to boost your team's wellbeing culture.



Helpful tips and how to guidance - includes information for your team to undertake these activities.



Action plan - remember to record actions to progress your team's wellbeing journey.



Inspiration Library - contains further resources, websites, training, blogs, and videos if team members want more information.



Quick wins - team activities to boost wellbeing you can do right now.






Case studies - examples from others about their experiences of team wellbeing.





Prepare for your team's wellbeing journey

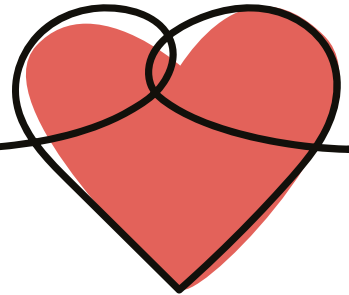
In this section, the team will find support on how to:

-  **introduce the guide**
-  **begin to talk about what wellbeing means to you**
-  **introduce team check ins and team check outs**



Hints and tips on preparing for your team wellbeing journey

- Share the guide with team members – share the online link, leave a copy in the rest areas, think about whether any of your team need the guide in different formats. Start talking about the guide and how you might use it as a team.
- Identify and set aside time to start working through the guide e.g. as part of a wider team meeting/huddle.
- Ask if team members would like to volunteer to be team wellbeing champions and take a lead in supporting the team to work through the guide.





Quick wins

- Create a team health and wellbeing space, in a visible, accessible space for everyone in the team. This could be a section of a noticeboard, or an online space. Throughout the sections there are ideas of information you can add to this space and ask team members to add anything to do with health and wellbeing as well.
- Introduce team check ins and team check outs.

Team check in and check outs are a way to get people to talk about wellbeing on a regular, routine basis. Check ins and check outs can be used at the start or end of the shift, or at the start and end of meetings. One person asks a question, and each team member takes turns to respond.

Check ins and check outs are a good way to check the mood of the team, and it's a good way to check that the basics are in place (something we'll come back to in the section about Environment). Some example questions team members could ask one another:

- What one word sums up your mood today?
- What one thing are you looking forward to today/this week?
- What one thing are you doing to manage your wellbeing today?
- What's your favourite habit for mental or physical health?
- What went well today?



Take a look at the Inspiration Library for more information about Team Check In and Check Outs, Going Home Checklist and Start Well, Ends Well.



Case study: taking time to check in

A team working on a ward in a hospital adopted a team check in at the start of every shift during the pandemic. It was a good way to communicate rapidly changing processes and procedures to all the team together, but over time, the team began to value the opportunity to check in on each other. Each check in covered three main topics:

- Is everyone being taken care of today? Have breaks been allocated, noting if any team member needs to leave due to e.g. a personal appointment.
- How does everyone feel today? Sharing any in or out of work worries.
- What do we need to do to manage our health and wellbeing today? This could be as simple as noting more teabags were needed in the rest areas or looking ahead to any potential stressors during the day.





When you have a bit more time

Introduce the guide

Before beginning the journey, introduce the guide to team members and discuss:

- why is team wellbeing important to us? (e.g. the impact on patient care, feeling healthy and well is good for everyone, we all want to help and support each other, talking about wellbeing helps us to work better as a team, creates a sense of team belonging, nurtures a positive and compassionate workplace, team and environment, creates a culture of appreciation at work, enables team members to speak openly about wellbeing and care for one another)
- the benefits of focussing on wellbeing
- how this guide can help the team

There are no right or wrong answers, and your team's answers are likely to be unique to you.

Talk about what wellbeing means to you

As a team, reflect on and share:

- what does wellbeing mean to you? (Here is the definition of wellbeing from the Oxford English Dictionary, which may help to start the discussion "the state of being healthy, happy...ability to flourish")
- when was the last time you felt really healthy and well, at home or at work? What do you notice about your habits, day-to-day activities etc that might contribute to that?
- what is positively contributing to our team's wellbeing culture? (e.g. "we have regular health and wellbeing conversations")
- what is negatively impacting on our team's wellbeing culture? (e.g. "we forget to focus on our wellbeing when the team is under pressure")

You may want to capture the things that positively and negatively contribute to the team's wellbeing culture. As a team, identify what you can do to maintain the things that positively impact and reduce/remove the things that negatively impact.

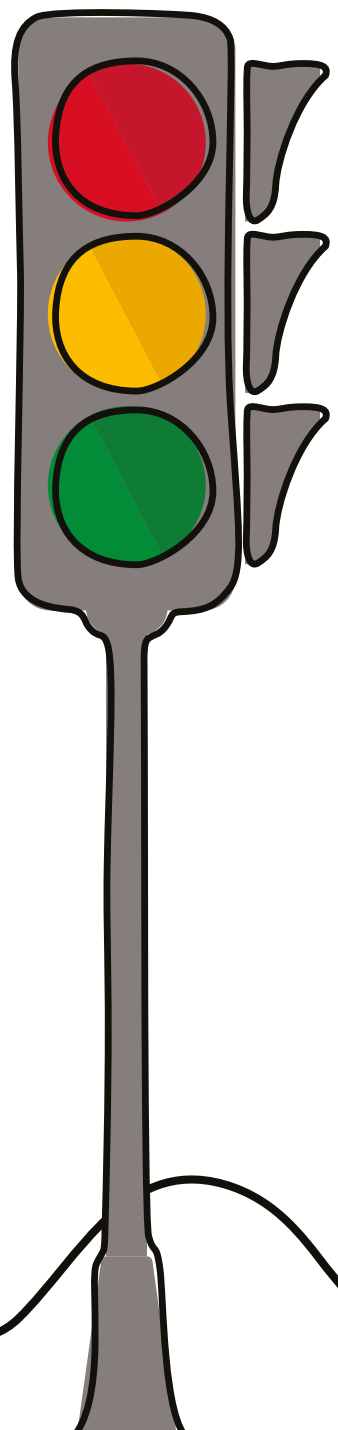


If you are doing this activity virtually, you could use a virtual pinboard to capture team members' responses to the prompt questions. You could ask team members to make notes on the virtual pinboard before a team meeting/huddle.



The Inspiration Library also contains further background information about the NHS Health and Wellbeing Framework and NHS Values.





Using the traffic light tool to understand your current team's wellbeing culture

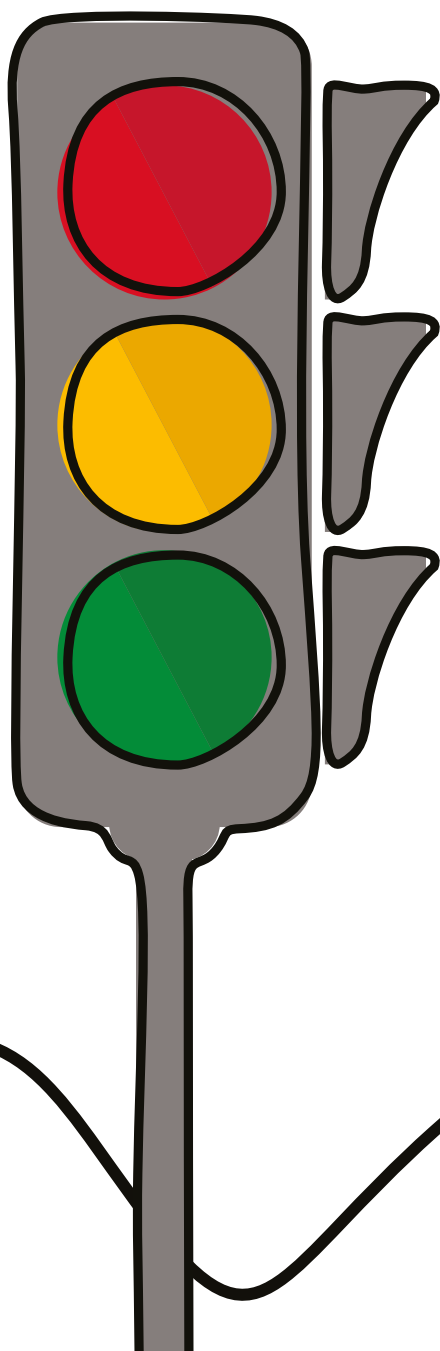
Many factors influence team wellbeing. We know that wellbeing is not a one size fits all concept. The following activity will help team members to review the team wellbeing culture and agree on the areas the team would like to focus on.

You can use the traffic lights to score the team's current position when it comes to wellbeing. Some ways you could approach the activity are to:

- e-mail each team member and ask them to complete the traffic light tool and email it back to a colleague to collate responses

- display the statements on a whiteboard or flip chart and invite team members to rate
- set up an online whiteboard and ask team members to rate
- print out the traffic light tool and give each team member a copy to complete and put in a box – agree who will collate the responses

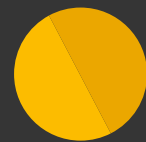
Compile the feedback – taking an average from all the responses – to create an overall picture for your team. You can now agree on where to start your team wellbeing journey, from all the sections, based on the team ratings. As you do this, you could also ask for volunteers to lead individual sections.



Read the following seven statements and identify if the team self-assessment is red, amber or green.



Red = we think this would be useful to focus on, but haven't started yet or this isn't a priority for us



Amber = we already do this in our team and want to do more



Green = we do this well in our team, and we need to make sure we keep doing it





In this team we....

regularly review our wellbeing and the things that influence our wellbeing
(Identify your team's wellbeing goals)



demonstrate collaborative and supportive team working *(Collaborative and supportive relationships that promote social wellbeing)*



create a safe space to talk about our wellbeing and think about how we role model healthy leadership behaviour *(Creating a safe and inclusive space to talk about wellbeing)*



find meaning in the work we do and enable each other to be ourselves at work *(Finding meaning in the work you do and bringing your whole self to work)*



support each other to look after our emotional, physical and mental health *(Looking after your emotional, physical and mental health)*



help one another to find and access wellbeing support when we need it *(Knowing where to go when you need wellbeing support)*



ensure our work environment is safe and supports our wellbeing *(Ensuring you have a safe working environment)*



The approach to developing the team's wellbeing culture will constantly be evolving. Keep these traffic light ratings under regular review as part of your wellbeing journey.





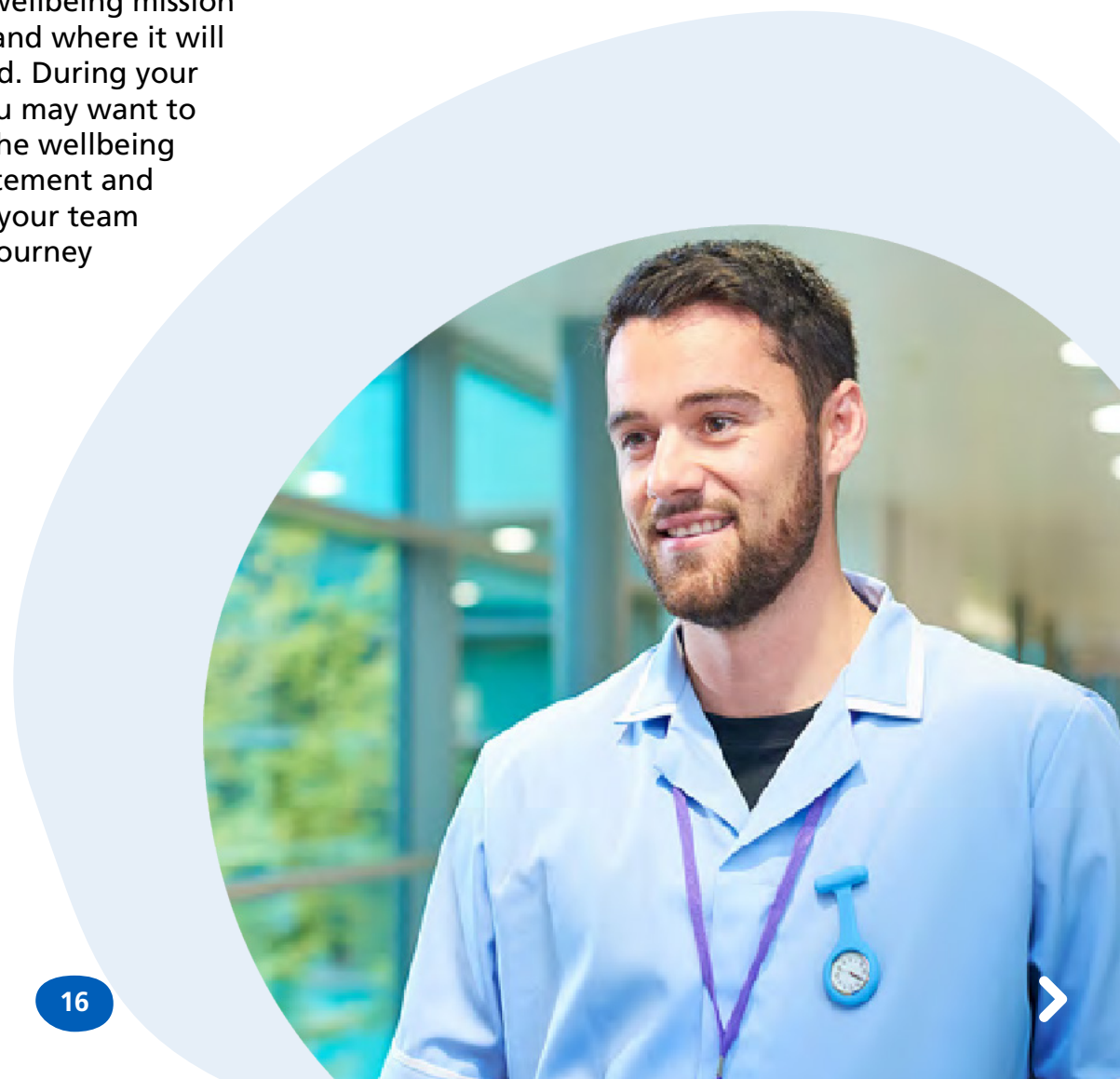
Identify and connect with your team's wellbeing ambition

This gives team members a common goal to work towards on their wellbeing journey. This activity will enable team members to develop an understanding of the team's reason for promoting and focusing on wellbeing and be something everyone can personally connect to.

- Ask individual team members to write down what they hope to achieve by undertaking the wellbeing journey as a team, and then share. Some things to think about include what could your team wellbeing be like in 6/12/18 months? How will the future feel to us as a team?
- As a team, agree on how to combine individual ambitions into a wellbeing mission statement for the team. Some criteria for a good mission statement include easy to remember, short –

aiming for no more than a sentence or two, uses simple language, speaks to team members.

- Agree what the team will do with their wellbeing mission statement and where it will be displayed. During your journey, you may want to reflect on the wellbeing mission statement and refine it as your team wellbeing journey progresses.





Agree the principles for working together on team wellbeing

For all team members to have open, safe and inclusive conversations about wellbeing, setting some ground rules is a good place to start.



As a team, discuss “What processes and what behaviours will help us to feel safe to speak openly with one another in this team?”



Capture the behaviours/processes starting with “We will....”
Some example behaviours and processes are listed on this page.



Write up the team behaviours and processes and display them somewhere everyone can refer to it (e.g. on your team meeting agenda, on the wellbeing noticeboard, on a whiteboard during meetings).

Example Behaviours:

In this team, we will:

- be open and honest with one another
- treat each other with dignity and respect
- listen to each other’s ideas and opinions
- offer one another constructive and positive feedback
- celebrate one another’s accomplishments

Example Processes:

In this team, we will:

- be on time, prepared and ready to contribute
- hold regular team meetings/huddles to check in on and progress our team wellbeing journey
- recognise our interdependencies – if we can’t meet a deadline, it could impact others – so let each other know ahead of time
- we will do a wellbeing check in at the beginning of team meetings/huddles

“The validation with the team has improved cohesion, by just knowing people are not on their own in their views and issues. It is also validating to know the Trust is promoting this and the team felt it was really positive.”

Feedback from a guide pilot site





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Devon Partnership NHS Trust

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Acute Trust

East Cheshire NHS Trust

East Lancashire Hospital Trust

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Health Education England - North West

Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Innovation Agency

Isle of Wight NHS Trust

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Kings Mill Hospital

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Lancashire and South Cumbria Primary Care Training Hub

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Leeds Teaching Hospitals

Liverpool University Hospitals NHS

Foundation Trust

Local Primary Care Federation

Manchester Health and Care Commissioning

Manchester NHS Foundation Trust

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

Mid Cheshire MHS Foundation Trust

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NHS Blackburn with Darwen CCG

NHS Bury CCG

NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group

NHS East Lancashire CCG





NHS England

NHS England London

NHS England North West

NHS England North West (Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership) & NHS England (Cheshire & Merseyside)

NHS Liverpool CCG

NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit

NHS Norfolk and Waveney CCG

NHS Surrey Heartlands CCG

NICE

Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

North Bristol NHS Trust

Northern Care Alliance NHS Group

Northumberland County Council

Nottinghamshire County Council

North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Ltd

Royal College of Midwives

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust

Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Foundation Trust

South East Leadership Academy

Southport & Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust

St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust

Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

The Christie Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The Confederation, Hillingdon

The Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust

Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

West Midlands Ambulance Service University NHS Foundation Trust

Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Wrightington Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust





Pilot Teams

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Educational Clinical Team, George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust

Digital Transformation Team, Gateshead NHS Trust Queen Elizabeth Hospital

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This publication can be made available in a number of other formats on request.

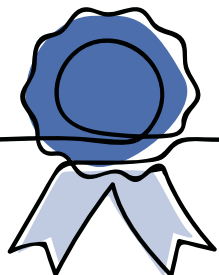
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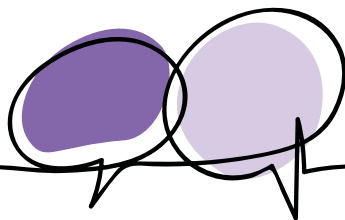
People Promise



We are **compassionate** and **inclusive**



We are **recognised** and **rewarded**



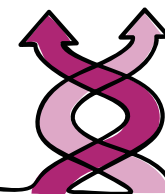
We each have **a voice that counts**



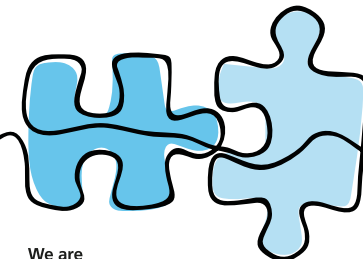
We are **safe** and **healthy**



We are **always learning**



We work **flexibly**



We are **a team**