

# Advice for Supporting Staff Psychological Wellbeing During and Beyond COVID-19

Phases	Issues and likely impact on staff	Needs and recommended approach
<b>Pre-phase:</b>  <b>No cases on unit</b>	<p>Anticipatory anxiety about what's on its way.</p> <p>Inability to think clearly, feeling overwhelmed, planning.</p> <p>Communication errors.</p> <p>Tension in working relationships.</p> <p>"Readiness" burnout.</p>	<p>Increase a sense of control - the team are in a safe pair of hands.</p> <p>Reassurance and planning.</p> <p>Communication updates are key (you may be thinking ahead, they are thinking now).</p> <p>Escalation plan.</p> <p>Support to managers who are making plans and holding the stresses.</p>
<b>Initial phase:</b>  <b>Case 1</b>	<p>Starting to get going, lots of trying out, lost time, repetition and frustration.</p> <p>Further anticipatory anxiety.</p>	<p>Open-planning centrally to allow for clear communication.</p> <p>Management are visible and available.</p> <p>Regular communication bulletins and open forums.</p> <p>Have runners in PPE areas.</p> <p>Promote peer support.</p>
<b>Core phase:</b>  <b>Full scale -Multiple cases</b>	<p>Biggest risk period.</p> <p>Fear infection and implications for families.</p> <p>Overwhelming workload.</p> <p>Full go mode - adrenalin and automatic pilot.</p> <p>Exhaustion.</p> <p>Moral distress as healthcare rationed.</p> <p>Distress linked to personal or family experience of COVID-19.</p> <p>Experience fear or stigma when out in public.</p>	<p>It's okay to say you are not okay - Senior staff to model this.</p> <p>Rotate workers from high-stress to lower-stress functions.</p> <p>Small pre-brief and debrief at beginning and end of day or shift.</p> <p>Partner inexperienced workers with their more experiences colleagues.</p> <p>Psychological first aid - drop in sessions for staff with employee wellbeing if you have it.</p> <p>Ensure the basics: breaks, facilities (food trolley in staff room), sleep, days off.</p> <p>Manage visitors.</p>
<b>End phase:</b>  <b>Immediate aftermath</b>	<p>Potential for exhaustion, post trauma stress and recovery.</p>	<p>Reflective forums for staff teams.</p> <p>Staff 1-1 and group sessions.</p> <p>Learning and preparation for the future.</p>
<b>Long term:</b>	<p>Some experiences of post traumatic stress.</p> <p>Some opportunities for post traumatic growth.</p> <p>Reflection and learning.</p>	<p>Organise thanks and reward.</p> <p>Look out for signs of PTSD in staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on edge and hyper arousal, poor sleep</li> <li>• flashbacks or re-experiencing</li> <li>• avoidance of reminders.</li> </ul>