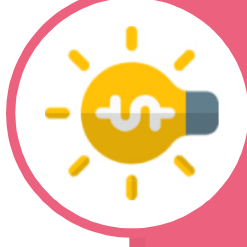


Health & Wellbeing

COVID-19 Support Pack



 **Think before you print**

 22/06/20

Last Updated:

Introduction

During these uncertain times it's so important that we all take time to look after our own health and wellbeing. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we've been keeping you up-to-date with the latest Government advice as well as providing tips, resources and support services to help you to continue to be your best self.

This pack contains all of the health and wellbeing information that has been shared and will continue to be regularly updated.

Contents:

- [COVID-19 - General Advice](#)
- [COVID-19 - Shielding](#)
- [COVID-19 - If you become unwell: managing the illness](#)
- [Physical Health](#)
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [Financial Wellbeing](#)
- [Carers](#)
- [Managers: Supporting the Health and Wellbeing of Others](#)
- [Employee Assistance Programme](#)
- [Access to Work Mental Health Support Service](#)



You should read this alongside the latest information from [Public Health England](#) and [Government guidance](#).

In addition, you can refer to [COVID-19 Working from Home Pack](#) which contains important information for staff and managers about working from home.

This is an active document

As more information becomes available this guidance will be updated. Check it regularly for the latest information.

COVID-19 - General Advice



[Read advice on how to report COVID-19 related time away from work](#)



Staff who feel unwell and are displaying [COVID-19 symptoms](#), a new, continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), must stay at home and [self isolate](#)

- Those in a 1 person household should remain at home for 7 days after symptoms begin
- Staff in a multi-person household should remain at home for 14 days if anyone in that household displays COVID-19 symptoms (new, continuous cough and/or a high temperature)



If you, or a colleague, feel unwell in the workplace with these symptoms, you must go home immediately, notify your manager and follow the [Government's guidance to self isolate](#)



Colleagues with symptoms, or people in their households can now book a test [online](#) or via 119. Essential workers should notify their manager and ask for a referral via the GM Hub.



Specific guidance about social distancing in the workplace is available in [Returning to Site pack](#)



Staff absence, relating to COVID-19, should be recorded accurately using SAP absence codes. All staff are reminded to keep in touch with their manager if their situation changes. You must seek medical advice if symptoms worsen. Follow Public Health England and/or NHS advice.

COVID-19 -Shielding



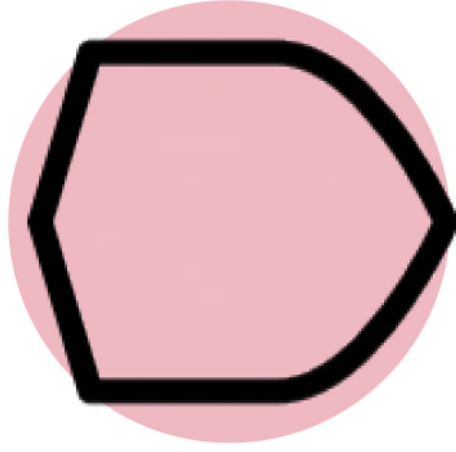
[Read advice on how to report COVID-19 related time away from work](#)

On the 21 March, [shielding advice](#) was issued by Government to adults and children who are defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable to severe illness as a result of contracting coronavirus. Individuals with conditions listed within the guidance were contacted by the NHS.

The Council instructed staff in this category to stay at home, and to work from home if possible.

On 22 June, the Government announced that the [advice for those shielding](#) would be relaxed, in two stages. **From 6 July**, those shielding can spend time outdoors in a group of up to six people (including those outside of their household). Extra care should be taken to minimise contact with others by maintaining social distancing. All adults who live alone or with dependent children only (including the clinically extremely vulnerable), can also form a 'support bubble' with one other household. All those in a support bubble can spend time together inside each other's homes, including overnight. **From 1 August** the Government has advised that people who are shielding can go to work or to the shops, as long as they are able to maintain social distancing.

However, the Council's position has not changed, and those who are shielding should continue to remain at home. All staff who are affected will be contacted individually with further information.



COVID-19 - General Advice



[Read advice on how to report COVID-19 related time away from work](#)

If you become unwell: managing the illness



If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), you **should not** visit your GP, pharmacy or hospital



You can visit [NHS 111 online](#) where you can answer a few questions and get advice on what to do next



You should only call the NHS on **111** if you cannot access NHS 111 online, if you feel like you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, if your condition gets worse, or if your symptoms do not get better after 7 days. For a medical emergency call **999**



Relieve your symptoms in the same way as you would a cold - take paracetamol, maintain a healthy diet and drink plenty of water



Use a thermometer to monitor your temperature if you have one



Some people with symptoms have found this [breathing technique](#) to be beneficial



You **do not** require a sick note if you are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 - but inform your manager and keep in regular contact with them.

Physical Health - Staying Active

[Government guidance](#) continues to change, and people can now leave their houses to exercise whenever they like, and some outdoor courts and pitches are now open for use. You can now also meet with groups of up to 6 people outside, or in private gardens. In all cases social distancing – staying 2m apart – is recommended.

- **Be specific about what exercise you will do and when** – this will help with structuring your day and give you a goal to focus on.
- **Make use of online resources** – there's a wealth of fitness regimes and videos online – some are listed on the next slide.
- **Do it together** – exercise with other members of your household so you can motivate each other. Alternatively, challenge a friend to join you with an exercise regime and keep each other updated on how you're getting on by sending messages and photos, or even do it together over Facetime. You can now exercise outdoors together, keeping a 2m distance.
- **Warm up and cool down** – prepare your body for exercise by stretching muscles and starting with more gentle movements. Finish exercising by reducing the intensity and stretching again to reduce the chance of injury.
- **Vary your exercise** – try a mixture of aerobic, strength, balance and resistance exercises to keep things interesting and challenge different parts of the body.



Physical Health - Staying Active

Development and Special Project Manager, Dave Roscoe, is hosting regular virtual circuit classes via his [YouTube channel](#)

Neighbourhood Officer, Andy Clarke, is hosting weekly virtual bootcamps. To get involved email a.clarke1@manchester.gov.uk



Resources

- [Join the Movement](#) - Sport England's new national campaign designed to give you the advice and tools you need to help you stay physically active. The website contains a range of resources for both adults and children, including free access to the Nike Training Club, exercises for older adults, home workout routines for disabled people, and Disney dance-alongs!
- [MCRactive](#) - promoting daily messages of support, inspiration, guidance and updates to the city around physical activity, and wellbeing across their [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) channels – tagging in #MCRactive.
- [Online PE lessons](#) - with The Body Coach, Joe Wicks, Monday to Friday at 9am
- [Online dance classes for kids](#) - with Strictly Come Dancing's Oti Mabuse
- [Online workouts](#) - the NHS Fitness Studio has a range of videos at different levels to follow
- [Couch to 5k](#) - a programme for those new to running to help gradually build up to running 5k
- [Children's Health and Wellbeing Challenges](#) - ideas for children to help them to stay well.



Physical Health - Diet



Your appetite may have changed if your routine has changed, or if you're less active than you usually are. Eating regularly and keeping your blood sugar stable can help your mood and energy levels. Drinking enough water is also important for your mental and physical health. It could help to set an alarm or use an app to remind you when to drink water or have a healthy snack.

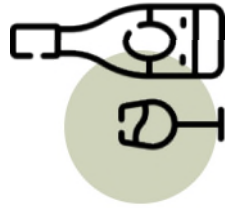


Resources

- [The Eatwell Guide](#) - NHS information about how much of each food type we should eat to make up a healthy diet
- [Food and mood](#) - mental health charity Mind about the relationship between what we eat and how we feel
- [Water, drinks and your health](#) - NHS information about which drinks are best for our health
- [Keep Cooking and Carry On](#) - recipes from Jamie Oliver's daily TV show based around store cupboard and freezer foods
- [BBC Good Food](#) - a collection of 39 store cupboard recipes
- [Budget recipes](#) - by Jack Monroe, food writer, journalist and activist
- [Online baking](#) - with Bread Ahead bakery.



Physical Health - Alcohol & Smoking



Health officials have advised that drinking alcohol excessively or smoking to cope with the stress and anxiety caused by the current situation are unhelpful coping strategies.

We are advised not to regularly consume more than 14 units of alcohol per week (approximately 7 pints of lager or 7 medium glasses of wine). Drinking more than this increases the risk of developing a range of health problems and can lead to feelings of depression and anxiety, and make existing feelings worse.

Did you know that smoking makes the symptoms of coronavirus worse? This is because smoking can reduce lung capacity and cause lung disease, which increases the risk of serious illness from coronavirus.



Resources

- [Drinkaware](#) - advice on how to cut down on alcohol at home
- [Smokefree](#) - NHS information about smoking and services to help you quit
- Smokefree app - download from your App Store. A 4 week programme that supports you to gradually quit smoking
- [Greater Manchester Health Hub](#) - more information on alcohol and smoking, and local and national support services.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Managing difficult feelings

Now more than ever you might be experiencing signs of stress, low mood or anxiety. Concern at this time is perfectly normal. However, some people may experience intense stress, depression or anxiety that can affect their day-to-day life. Recognising the signs that we are stressed, depressed or anxious is important for maintaining good mental health. Some common signs include: trouble sleeping, headaches, muscle tension, feeling irritable or angry, changes in appetite and worrying more than usual.

Try to focus on the things you can control, such as how you act, who you speak to and where you get information from. Remember: it is healthy to share your concerns with others you trust – this is a difficult time for everyone and sharing how you are feeling and the things you are doing to cope with family and friends can help them too.



Resources

- [NHS Mood Self-Assessment](#) - can help you to better understand how you're feeling and the support you might need
- [E-learning](#) - courses relating to stress and mental resilience
- [Every Mind Matters](#) - more about stress, low mood and anxiety
- [NHS mental wellbeing audio guides](#) - coping strategies for low mood and anxiety
- [Silver Cloud](#) - a new online therapy programme, includes stress and resilience modules
- [Employee Assistance Programme](#) - support online or over the phone 24/7
- [Access to Work Mental Health Support Service](#) - longer term 1-1 support.
- [Samaritans](#) - offer a safe place to talk anytime you like about whatever is getting to you. Freephone **116 123**

[Greater Manchester Support Agencies Directory](#)

[Where to get the support you need across Greater Manchester](#)

Mental Health and Wellbeing



Establish a new daily routine

- Write a plan for your day or your week
- Have set times for regular activities like a daily home workout, cleaning, reading, watching a TV programme, or cooking
- If you're working from home, try to stick to a similar routine as you would when going into work, with the same hours and sleeping schedule where possible
- Working from home whilst caring for children can be very difficult. Try to work flexibly. Don't be too frustrated if you can't work your standard work hours. Perhaps you can work earlier or in the evening. Speak to your manager about your working pattern.



Resources

- [COVID-19 Working from Home Pack](#)
- [Google+ community](#) - working at home with children
- [Celebrity homeschooling](#) - celebrities running daily virtual lessons
- [Children's Health and Wellbeing Challenges](#)
- [Educational Psychology Helpline](#) - for parents of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities who want support with home schooling

If you are working from home your manager will contact you to do the following:

- Understand your needs and personal commitments during this time
- Establish the reasonable adjustments that you'll require and what you hope your working pattern will be
- Agree what your programme of work will be and the key priorities
- Plan how and when you will keep in touch and schedule these in your calendars

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Be prepared

- Think about who you can get help from locally in case you need it – as well as people you know, your local council may be able to provide support and lots of community help groups are being set up
- Think about how you can get any supplies you need - perhaps you might need help from a neighbour, family, friends or a delivery service so you don't worry about running out. Those who are 'shielding' can get support from an [NHS Volunteer Responder](#) to help with collecting groceries and prescriptions, transport to essential medical appointments, or simply as someone to check in and chat with
- You may be worried about work and money if you have to stay home – these issues can have a big impact on your mental health. See the slide on **financial wellbeing** in this pack for further guidance and support
- If you care for other people, you may be worried about how to ensure care for those who rely on you continues. See the slide on **carers** in this pack for further guidance and support.



Resources

- **Local Councils** - your local authority will have information on coronavirus and community support on their website. All councils within Greater Manchester have set up helplines for vulnerable residents – see details in the image above.

Help and support with **food and medical supplies** for anyone living in Greater Manchester.

Bolton	01204 337 221	Mon to Fri: 8.30am to 5.30pm, Saturday: 9am to 1.30pm
Bury	0161 253 5353	Every day: 9am to 5pm
Manchester	0800 234 6123	Monday to Saturday: 8.30am to 5.30pm
Oldham	0161 770 7007	Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm, Sat and Sun: 11am to 2pm
Rochdale	01706 923685	Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm
Salford	0800 952 1000	Mon to Fri: 8.30am to 6pm, Saturday: 9am to 1pm
Stockport	0161 217 6046	Mon to Fri from 9am to 5pm, Saturday: 10am to 4pm
Tameside	0161 342 8355	Mon to Fri: 8.30am to 5pm, Saturday: 10am to 4pm
Trafford	0300 330 9073	Monday to Friday: 8.30am to 5.30pm
Wigan	01942 489018	Mon to Fri: 9am to 5pm, Sat and Sun: 9am to 12 noon

Mental Health and Wellbeing



Help and support others

Think about how you could help those around you – it could make a big difference to them and can make you feel better too. Could you message a friend or family member nearby? Are there community groups that you could join to support others locally? Remember, it's important to do this in line with [Government guidance](#) to keep yourself and others safe.

Look after your sleep

Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how we feel, so it's important to get enough. Try to maintain regular sleeping patterns and keep up good sleep hygiene practices – like avoiding screens before bed, cutting back on caffeine and creating a restful environment.



Resources

- Keep an eye on the Council's [opportunities to support essential services and help our communities](#)
- [Every Mind Matters](#) - provides practical advice on how to improve your sleep
- [NHS mental wellbeing audio guides](#) - provide further information on how to manage sleep problems
- [Silver Cloud](#) - a new online therapy programme available to staff and residents across Greater Manchester, includes a module on sleep

Mental Health and Wellbeing



Manage media and information intake

Try to limit the time you spend watching, reading or listening to coverage of coronavirus, including on social media, and think about turning off breaking-news alerts on your phone. You could set yourself a specific time to read updates. Try not to share information without fact-checking against credible sources.



Relax and focus on the present

Focusing on the present, rather than worrying about the future, can help with difficult emotions and improve our wellbeing.



Connect with others

Maintaining healthy relationships with people you trust is important for your mental wellbeing. Lots of people are finding the current situation difficult, so staying in touch could help them too.



Resources

- [Public Health England](#) and the [Department of Health and Social Care](#) are the only sources to be used for trusted news, information and advice. The [Public Health Matters](#) blog will also have the latest information.
- [NHS](#) - the benefits of mindfulness
- [Video mindful breathing exercise](#) - there are plenty more mindfulness videos to follow along on YouTube
- [Silver Cloud](#) - a new online therapy programme available to staff and residents across Greater Manchester, includes a module on mindfulness.
- List of group chat and video conferencing [software](#).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Do things you enjoy

If we are feeling worried, anxious, lonely or low, we may stop doing things we usually enjoy. If you can't do the things you normally, try to think about how you could adapt them, or try something new. Online there are lots of ideas.



Resources

- [All Sorts To Do At Home](#) - the Council's list of organisations and venues across the city who have created all sorts to do at home from music, museums, book borrowing, getting creative, gardening and activities for children
- [Manchester International Festival Live](#) - a weekly schedule of livestreams, discussions and archive broadcasts
- [Virtual museum tours](#) - visit world-famous museums from the comfort of your living room
- [Virtual opera](#) - from the Royal Opera House
- [#HomeTasking](#) - TV series Taskmaster is setting tasks for you to do at home!
- [Board games](#) - a list of the best board games of 2020 for families and adults
- [Online courses](#) - digital learning platform Future Learn has a huge range of free courses
- [Virtual theatre](#) - the National Theatre streaming a free play every Thursday night
- [Digital choir](#) - hosted by British choirmaster Gareth Malone
- [Guitar lessons](#) - three months of free guitar lessons online
- [Learn a new language](#) - Duolingo is the most popular language-learning platform
- [Crafting](#) - with The Crafts Channel on YouTube
- [Ted Talks](#) - check out this list of 20 inspiring TED Talks
- [Children's Health and Wellbeing Challenges](#) ideas for children to help them to stay well

Financial Wellbeing



Greater Manchester Support Agencies Directory
Where to get the support you need across Greater Manchester

We appreciate that this is a difficult and uncertain time financially for many people. Financial worries can have a big impact on our mental wellbeing and so it's important to get the information and support you need.



Resources

- **Money and Budgeting Advice Service** - we have a dedicated Money and Budgeting Adviser who's available to support staff with any money worries. Contact Amanda directly on **07379248431** or email money@manchestercreditunion.co.uk
- [Employee Assistance Programme](#) - access to financial support online or over the phone 24/7
- [JustBorrow](#) - this online short-term loan from Manchester Credit Union allows you to borrow between £100 and £750 over 3-9 months. The loans can be applied for online 24/7 and you will get an immediate decision and, if approved, the money is paid quickly into your bank account with monthly repayments automatically collected via your debit card on your chosen day
- [Money Advice Service](#) - This website offers a range of financial information and the opportunity to speak to someone via web chat, WhatsApp, or over the phone
- [Covid-19: Financial support document](#) - this gives an overview of the financial support that has recently been announced by the Government, as well as the services available locally for staff.

Carers



Greater Manchester Support Agencies Directory
Where to get the support you need across Greater Manchester

Many people are providing essential care for someone else at this difficult time, for example buying their food, collecting their prescriptions, preparing their meals, or helping with their personal care. Please let your manager know if you are a carer so that support and flexibility can be provided wherever possible. You may find the Carers Passport useful.

The medical advice is that if you are well, then you can continue providing essential care, but must take precautions, such as regular hand-washing and keeping two metres apart where possible. If you begin to display coronavirus symptoms, then you must stop providing care for people outside of your household and make alternative arrangements, as you will need to self-isolate for 7 or 14 days.



Resources

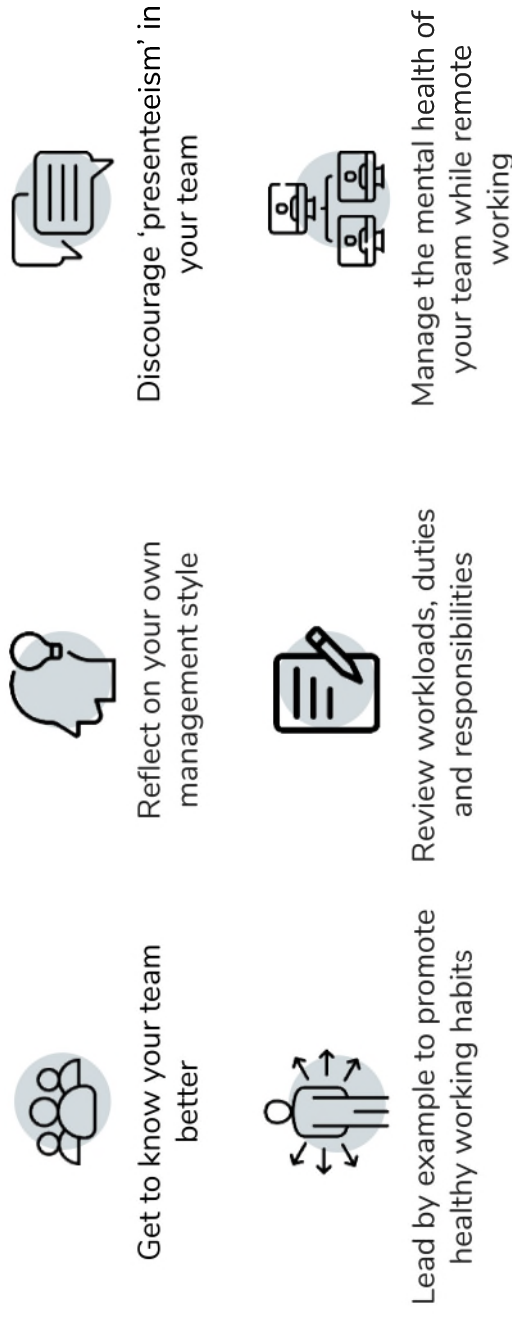
- [Welfare Provision Scheme](#) - carers living in Manchester can apply for funding to ensure the ongoing health and wellbeing of themselves and the person they care for
- [Carers Passport](#) - document to help facilitate a discussion with your manager about your caring responsibilities and any support
- [Contingency planning](#) - it's a good idea to consider what you would do in case you become unable to provide essential care
- [Register those who are most vulnerable](#) for emergency support with the Government
- [NHS Volunteer Responders](#) - those who are 'shielding' can access support from NHS Volunteers
- [Carers UK](#) - lots of guidance for all carers at this time
- [Government guidance](#) - for those who have been asked to 'shield', along with advice for their carers
- [Working Carers Network](#) - a place where Council staff who care for someone can connect and access informal support from one another



Managers:

Supporting the Health and Wellbeing of Others

Managers have a crucial role to play in supporting their staff to enjoy positive health and wellbeing at work. Now more than ever, small, every-day actions can really help your team members to thrive at work:



Resources

- [6 Steps to help your team thrive at work](#) - more detail around each of the above points

Managers:

Supporting the Health and Wellbeing of Others

What do I do if I'm concerned about the health and wellbeing of a team member?

- Have regular honest, open and supportive conversations
- Look to make any required workplace adjustments
- Discuss seeking professional support if this would help. This could be from the employee's doctor, or via the Council's support services. Occupational Health are currently able to provide COVID-19 specific assessments regarding an employee's fitness to work
- Develop a support plan
- Reassure that you are always willing to listen and offer support
- [Contact HR](#) if you require further advice.



Resources

- [Guidance for managers](#)
- [E-learning](#)
- [Having sensitive conversations](#)
- [How to support staff who are experiencing a mental health problem](#)
- [Occupational Health User Guide for Managers](#)

Managers:

Supporting the Health and Wellbeing of Others

What do I do if I'm concerned that a team member is a victim of domestic abuse?

You may have staff who are currently experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse and due to the current restrictions are spending more time with an abusive partner and may not be able to access their usual means of support. As a manager it's important that you remain vigilant when in contact with your staff who are working from home. As always, if someone is in immediate danger please call **999** and ask for the police.



Resources

- The Council's [Domestic Abuse Policy and guidance](#) - includes a manager's checklist to guide managers in offering the appropriate support
- [Safelives](#) - additional advice regarding domestic abuse

Employee Assistance Programme

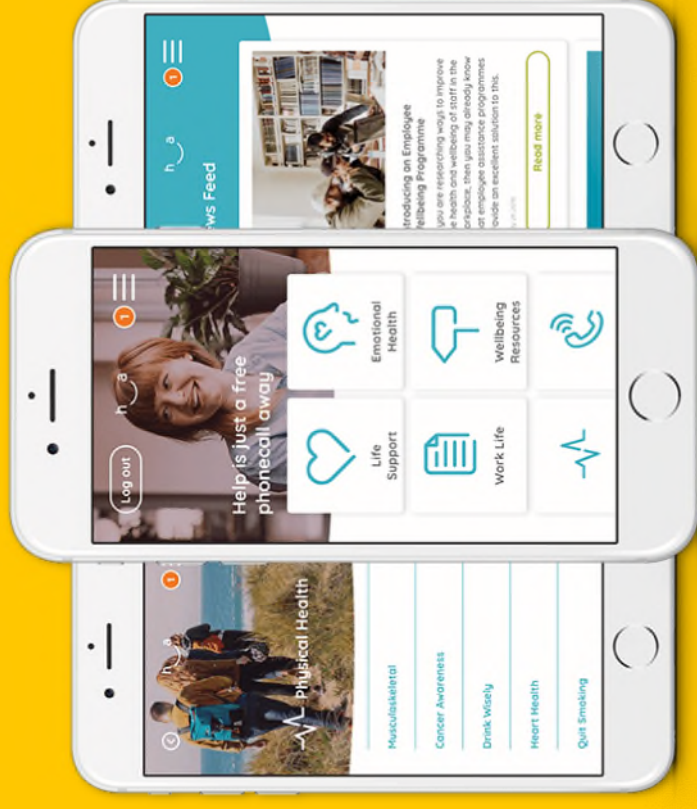
The Employee Assistance Programme is a 24/7 support service for all employees, as well as their partner and children living in the same household. The EAP offers high quality support with immediate access to counselling as well as financial, legal, family and medical advice.

How to access EAP

Online Portal - you can get general information and advice about work/life balance, physical and emotional health and wellbeing. Visit www.healthassuredeap.co.uk (username MCC, password EAP).

Mobile App - there is also an app for Android and Apple smartphones and tablets. Search for 'Health e-Hub' in your app store (username MCC, password EAP).

Telephone Helpline - for more personalised information and support there is also a free confidential phone service available 24/7, where you can speak to experienced, qualified staff. Managers can also refer staff, with their consent, to the service. Call **0800 030 5182**.



www.healthassuredeap.co.uk

Login: MCC
Password: EAP

Access to Work Mental Health Support Service

The Access to Work Mental Health Support Service provides one-to-one flexible, personalised mental health support over a nine month period. The service is suitable if you have mental health related symptoms and are experiencing difficulties remaining in work, or returning to work.

Support is provided by a mental health professional to:

- Help you sustain your attendance at work and perform your job, via coping strategies and workplace adjustments
- Help you return to work if you're off sick and need support for mental health
- Advise line managers, with your consent, about the support and adjustments you need to stay in work or return to work.

This support is currently being given through regular telephone conversations or video-link meetings.

You can receive this support alongside counselling via the EAP, or instead of counselling. You decide what works best for you. Call the confidential referral line on **0300 456 8114**, email a2wmhss@remploy.co.uk, or [find out more online](https://www.remploy.co.uk).

Mental health support in work

Depressed? Not eating? Stressed?
Not coping? Feeling low?
Are you having more bad days than good at work?
Anxious? Not sleeping?

You're not alone.
If you are experiencing mental health difficulties at work, we can help.

There is no charge to access the service and applications are subject to a decision by Access to Work advisers.

0300 456 8114
a2wmhss@remploy.co.uk
www.remploy.co.uk/mentalhealth

Ref: R223-Aug18

The Access to Work Mental Health Support Service delivered by Remploy is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions.

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in partnership with

Remploy in partnership with MAXIMUS