

## THE WAY PEOPLE WORK IS CHANGING.

We need to look at ways to support wellbeing and help people feel psychologically safe back at work, wherever work is going to be.

So, we have developed a **Wellness Action Plan (WAP)** to support you, your teams and individuals back to work.



### Who is this for?

WAP is designed for anyone going back to work, or anyone who is experiencing ill mental health. It's there to support:

- People currently experiencing a mental health issue and wanting to find out how a WAP can support them get back to work and at work
- Managers interested in using the WAP as a proactive tool, to support individuals and teams
- A team member who is well and wants to use this as a proactive way to let their manager know what support they need

### What is a Wellness Action Plan (WAP) and how can it help me?

Given the high levels of stress and mental health issues we are seeing, there is a growing demand for innovative and proactive ways to support safe ways of working.

WAP is a personalised, practical tool anyone can use to help identify what keeps us feeling safe at work.

It also opens conversations between you and your manager or leader, so they can better understand your needs and experiences and, ultimately, better support you to get back to work. This might mean working from home too.

If you are currently isolating or shielding, a WAP can help you identify how best your Manager can support you and overcome the barriers, which this style of working can present.

### What should WAP cover?

- Approaches and behaviours you can adopt, to support being back at work
- What support you need from your manager or leader
- Actions and positive steps you and your manager can take, if you are experiencing stress or poor mental health
- An agreed time to review the WAP and any support measures that have been put in place, to see if they are still working
- Anything else that you feel would be useful in supporting you to get back to work in a safe and well way
- What challenges have arisen because of COVID-19, such as being a vulnerable person, looking after children or elderly relatives, which means your working patterns have changed.

WAP is not legally binding, but is intended as an agreement between you and your manager in order to promote your wellbeing or address any existing mental health needs, including any adjustments you may wish to discuss.



# HOW TO GET STARTED

1. Plan some time on your own to fill in your WAP
2. Schedule some confidential time with your manager or team leader to discuss it
3. Consider what would be helpful for your manager to know before you meet together, so they can prepare

## What if my manager has never used a WAP?

If your manager or team leader has not used a WAP before, let them have a copy of a blank one and explain that it is a helpful way to start a conversation, for helping you back to work.

Let them know you are completing it in advance. By sharing it, you are helping them have an awareness of what does and doesn't work for you, in terms of your wellbeing and being back at work.

## Confidentiality

The WAP should be held confidentially by your manager or team leader. Make sure you are fully aware of how the information will be used, and only provide information that you are happy to share.

It should be up to you whether you are happy for it to be shared with HR or kept confidential between yourself and your manager. If in doubt, check your company policy on this.

## Wellness Action Plan Template

A WAP reminds us what we need to do to stay well at work and feel safe.

It also helps us develop an awareness of our working style, stress triggers and responses, and enables us to communicate these. It will help communicate any changes that need to be made, to support you being ready for work again.

The information in this form should be held confidentially and regularly reviewed by you and your manager together. You only need to be able to provide information that you are comfortable sharing and that relates to your role and workplace. This form is not a legal document, but it can help you and your manager to agree, together, how to practically support you in your role and address any health needs.

It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that data gathered in this form will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone, without the permission of the member of staff.

WAP should be written and owned by you, expressing your own personal choices, reflecting your voice, your personal experience and your needs. Your manager's role is to discuss the plan with you and provide support, including guidance, on which reasonable adjustments are possible. It should be a collaborative process.


 START

### 1. What will help you feel safe at work?

(For example: social distancing, having your own desk, cleaning products to hand, needing to leave early so not on crowded transport, working from home -WFH)

### 2. What can your manager do to proactively support you to stay mentally healthy at work?

(For example: regular feedback and catch-ups, flexible working patterns, explaining wider organisational developments, supporting regular breaks etc)

### 3. Are there any situations at work that may trigger anxiety or stress that is different than before?

### 4. How might experiencing these things/feelings impact your work?

(For example: you may find it difficult to make decisions, struggle to prioritise work tasks, difficulty with concentration, drowsiness, confusion, headaches)

### 5. Are there any early warning signs that we might notice, when you are starting to experience stress or anxiety or other mental health issues?

(For example: changes in normal working patterns, withdrawing from colleagues)

### 6. What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or help you to manage the impact?

(For example: extra catch-up time with your manager, guidance on prioritising workload, flexible working patterns, considering reasonable adjustments)

### 7. Are there elements of your old working style that we need to change?

If working from home, what are the best times to keep in touch with you? Have you got preferred working times that fit best with how you need to work now? What else?

### 8. What would help with your wellbeing and mental health when working and help you feel psychologically safe?