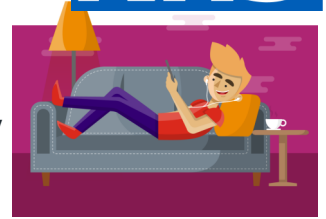# 10 Evidence based behaviours for leading through COVID-19

1. Look after yourself

You are not super-human! Who's got your back? Where is your space to recharge and make sense of the chaos? Paying attention to your own wellbeing will maximise your ability to help patients and colleagues through the crisis.

2. Speak candidly and compassionately

To be prepared for what is to come, people need a clear sense of direction and your full and clear assessment of the situation. Balancing your frankness with empathy is essential when your team is under pressure.

3. Set the emotional tone

Don't under-estimate the impact on your team of your actions and the way you come across. Your calm confidence will have a powerful influence.

4. Be inclusive in the way you lead

This crisis is highlighting how healthcare inequalities and biases persist, and even become magnified, in pressurised conditions. Consciously and actively inclusive leadership matters now more than ever.

5. Maintain routines

Teams who are newly formed and are under pressure need stability. Robust routines for starting and finishing shifts, for instance, can do a lot to ground, induct and connect team members who don't know each other.

6. Give yourself space to make the right call

To make hard decisions in the heat of the moment, you will need to be both rational and intuitive: STOP-BREATHE- REFLECT-CHOOSE. Just a brief moment's pause will allow you to reconnect with your purpose and values.
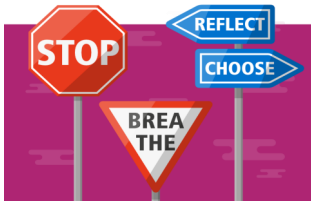
7. Create safe spaces

Share your own vulnerability. Let your team know that it's OK to 'wobble', to experience doubt, grief or fear. They will need times and physical spaces to de-stress. They will also need to feel safe to offer constructive challenge to ways of working regardless of hierarchy.

8. Encourage everyone to talk

Crisis situations get worse and last longer without continuous, open and inclusive communication. And the hardest part can be attentive listening when the pressure is on.

9. Look out for your team

Look out, in particular, for those driving themselves beyond reasonable limits, those team members who withdraw and seem to reject offers of help, and for those who might feel excluded from the team.

10. Acknowledge the hurt

Being a compassionate leader means empathising with the pain your people experience, recognising that it may endure and taking action. We have a diverse workforce and inclusive leaders recognise the equally diverse spectrum of issues that colleagues face due to their different backgrounds, workload and current restrictions and offer support accordingly.