

Thrive wellbeing

Health and wellbeing check-in

Ask

Assess

Assist

Approaching health and wellbeing conversations

Compassionate leadership

Being a compassionate leader should underpin everything you do as a manager and wellbeing conversations are no exception. Wellbeing conversations should be...

Caring

Give the individual **time and space** to explore their thoughts in a holistic way

Employee-led

Ensure that the individual is **empowered** to focus on what is most important to them

Supportive

Help the individual in identifying what **support** or next steps are most appropriate for them personally

Non-judgemental

Stay neutral and try to put yourself in their shoes, working to **understand** their perspectives and feelings

Training

Being a UHD manager

Module 1: 'Compassionate and Inclusive Management'
Explores what we mean by a manager, what the role entails and the skills and behaviours required.

Module 2: 'Good People Management'
Helps you to understand why good people management is so important.

[Click here to book your place](#)



Further information



['Caring to change: How compassionate leadership can stimulate innovation in health care'](#) - The King's Fund



['Changing healthcare cultures through collective leadership'](#) - NHS England



[Michael West: Compassionate and inclusive leadership](#)

Approaching health and wellbeing conversations

Adopting a coaching style

Identify where they want to get to

Think about the overarching goal and the place that the individual wants to get to. This doesn't have to be anything formal and it is likely the goal may change, but it's good to explore this early in the conversation to understand how you could best support.

Question before you question

The wellbeing conversation is partly structured around suggested questions, but it is likely that you will need to ask additional questions to establish further detail. These should be open questions that **encourage the individual to reflect and explore possibilities**. Double-check your question before you ask it, thinking about the desired impact for the individual. This is really important in ensuring they feel empowered to lead the conversation.

Non-directive is needed

You do not have to “hold” the individual's challenge, concerns, or worries and your role is to offer support and signpost as appropriate. **It is important that the individual has ownership of the conversation and the outcomes**. It is easy to feel that you have to “take on” other people's concerns as your own, so be clear on your role and the limits of it. People are more likely to commit to their actions if they feel that they have control over what they are and how they go about achieving them.

There is a time for suggestions

Your role is to signpost or inform the individual of the support available to them. When you are offering a suggestion, be sure to adopt an ‘ask’ approach rather than a ‘tell’ approach. For example, saying “have you considered speaking with occupational health about this?”, rather than “you need to speak to occupational health”.

Further information



[‘What it takes to coach your people’](#) - Center for creative leadership



[The ultimate guide to open-ended questions vs. closed-ended questions](#) - Lena Katz

Approaching health and wellbeing conversations

Developing emotional intelligence

Self awareness is key

It is important that you are able to **recognise your own behaviour and reactions** and consider how this might impact upon the conversation. It's about knowing your own limitations and asking yourself 'am I in a good place to be holding this conversation right now?'

Manage your own emotions

Staying focused, even when your staff may be talking about something particularly challenging or upsetting, is essential in order to **ensure that you can think clearly and support them as required.**

Empathy, empathy, empathy

Your ability to **sense, understand, and respond in a genuine way** to what your staff are feeling and communicating with you is crucial. Your overall self-awareness underpins your ability to empathise with others.

Be motivated...be a motivator

Motivating yourself through challenges and obstacles is a skill that you may have to lean on when speaking with your team. **Taking initiative is a core part of a wellbeing conversation** as you may need to signpost someone to the most appropriate support. While these conversations are employee-led, a little motivation goes a long way!

Sociability

Effectively building and maintaining relationships is a sign of high emotional intelligence. Being able to influence and inspire others and establish rapport with your team will set you up well to have a conversation about their wellbeing.

Further information



[Emotional intelligence](#)

- Mind Tools



[How we perceive, evaluate, express and control emotions](#)

- Very Well Mind

Approaching health and wellbeing conversations

Actively listening

Really pay attention

Give the individual your **undivided attention** – non-verbal communication often speaks louder than words! Maintain eye contact and try to avoid being distracted by thoughts or other factors.

Don't just do it, show it

Ensure that your **body language** is showing that you are paying attention. Nodding, smiling, having an open posture and the occasional use of reassuring prompts such as 'I see' or 'Ahh' are all ways you can show this.

Reflect back what you hear

It is important that you **understand what is being said**, and reflecting back and paraphrasing is an effective way to not only clarify, but also to show you have listened. You might say 'what I'm hearing is...' or '...is this what you mean by that?'.

Defer your own judgements

Be mindful not to interrupt them with your own opinion. This might result in the individual not being as open or honest with you, and above all, interruptions can be frustrating! **Let them finish before you respond.**

Collect your thoughts before responding

Active listening is all about understanding. Make sure that you respond in a **respectful, non-judgemental and honest** way. If you are giving an opinion, do so in a supportive and non-forceful way. It's better to take more time thinking of the best way to respond as this will help to ensure it is value-adding and supportive for the individual.

Further information



[Active listening](#) - Mind Tools



[Active listening](#) - Skills you need

Approaching health and wellbeing conversations

Awareness of unconscious bias

Avoid making assumptions

In these conversations, your team member might choose to share something quite personal with you. Avoid making assumptions about what they've said, instead, make sure that you respond in a **thoughtful and considerate** way.

Share your time equally

We tend to gravitate towards individuals whom we have something in common with, people who are similar to us. When holding wellbeing conversations with your team, make sure that you are giving **equal time and effort to everyone**. If you notice that you aren't doing this, ask yourself why. Having a greater understanding of why we might do this will help us overcome it.

Check-in with yourself

We all have unconscious biases; it is part of being human. But, working to **understand our own biases** is important in working to subdue them. Questioning your decision-making and your rationale can help you to identify whether there is a bias at play.

Inclusivity at the heart of everything

Ensuring that your overall approach to the wellbeing conversations is inclusive will help you in overcoming any unconscious bias. Taking time to think about how to meet the needs of everyone and fostering **an environment where diversity is valued and celebrated** is essential.

Further information



[The impact of stereotyping: unconscious bias](#) - NHS Leadership Academy



[Unconscious bias and the public servant: What can we do to overcome unconscious bias?](#) - Kiana Atkins



[Unconscious bias training](#) - free online learning from nonprofitready.org

Approaching health and wellbeing conversations

Creating psychological safety

Help everyone to speak up

When speaking with someone about their wellbeing, show **genuine curiosity** and facilitate an environment in which they feel able to share and be vulnerable.

Confront unacceptable behaviours

If what someone discloses to you about their wellbeing causes concern, for example bullying, harassment or micro-aggressions at work, take steps to tackle this. This might include setting **clear expectations** with your team about behaviours and conduct.

Be clued up on available support

Schwartz Rounds, which run frequently across UHD, are **proven to improve employee wellbeing** through providing a structured forum for all staff, both clinical and non-clinical, to have conversations about the emotional and social aspects of their work and work experiences. Be sure to have a read of the Health and Wellbeing Check-in Conversation '[Guide for Managers](#)'.

Stay in-tune with your team

In each conversation, assess how psychologically safe you think the individual feels. If you notice that the level of this appears to differ between team members, think of possible reasons for this and **identify what you could do to further support**.

Further information



[Achieving psychological safety](#)
- Simon Sinek

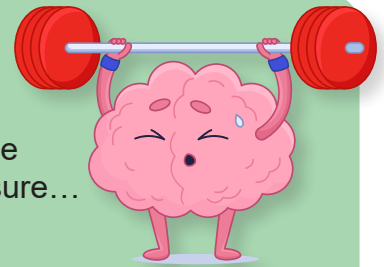


[Leading the Freedom to Speak Up social movement](#)
- FTSU National Guardian

Approaching health and wellbeing conversations

Leadership development workshops

Our leadership development workshops can support you in developing these core skills and lead your teams during times of change and increased pressure...



Coaching Conversations - [Click here to book your place](#)

Develop the skills and knowledge to effectively use a coaching style when working with individuals. Coaching skills are invaluable when working with others both to support them and help them find solutions to their challenges.

Feedback Skills - [Click here to book your place](#)

Develop the skills, knowledge and motivation to give positive and developmental feedback. Learn to understand your role as a leader by identifying and overcoming barriers and gain the confidence to start those sometimes difficult conversations.

Courageous Conversations - [Click here to book your place](#)

Develop techniques for managing the more tricky conversations with colleagues and staff members in a safe space for you to practice and develop your own style. We ask that delegates complete our Feedback Skills workshop first so they can attend with basic knowledge of giving feedback.

Leading Your Team Through Change - [Click here to book your place](#)

Tools and strategies to lead teams during uncertain times, helping you to gain greater understanding of the importance of communication and time to reflect on some of the emotional challenges and the strategies to help you deal with them.

Leading Your Team Through Integration - [Click here to book your place](#)

Merger and integration can be unsettling and impact on wellbeing. It is important that team members are involved and feel part of changes affecting them. You will be empowered to be proactive and have the confidence and capability to facilitate exercises around basic team principles.