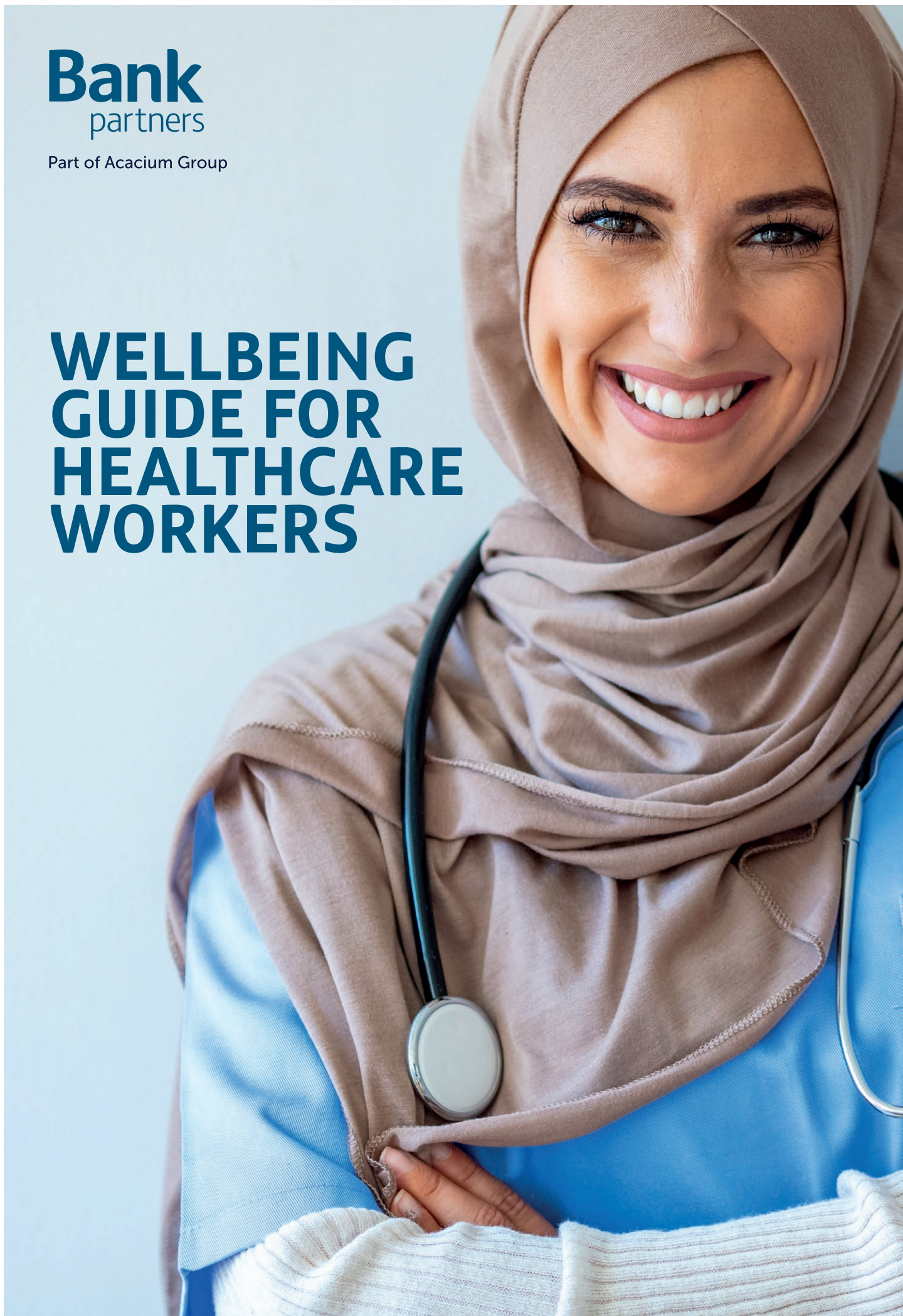


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WELLBEING GUIDE FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS



WELCOME

Welcome to your guide to wellbeing as a bank worker for one of the Bank Partners family of partners. We would like to say a massive thank you for your hard work in supporting our partners – you all make such an incredible difference.

Your dedication helps our partners provide fantastic standards of care and support to their communities through challenging times

Your compassion, care and commitment does not go unnoticed, and we understand the impact that some of the challenges faced in during the pandemic will have had on roles you work within and, in turn, on yourselves.

As a result, we have put together this guide to support your wellbeing, and beyond for any struggles you might be facing. We have included a quiz, top tips and even discount codes which we hope you will enjoy and find very useful.

Thank you once again for your support, we look forward to working with you and caring for you, as you care for them.

Many thanks

Fran Currie
Chief Operating Officer

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YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

TOP TIPS FOR WELLBEING

We know that recent times have been some of the most, if not the most, uniquely challenging any of us remember for healthcare workers, and recognising the impact on the health and wellbeing of workers like yourself is crucial.

Supporting your mental health is a top priority for us, so we've compiled some tips to help support your mental health, as well as resources where you can find help.

1 TAKE TIME TO RELAX

We know it's easier said than done, but when your job is both physically and mentally demanding, it can be hard to switch off after a long day. Take steps to prioritise your self-care, so you can return to work one hundred percent present for your patients.

If you struggle with anxiety, not taking time to stop and relax could worsen your symptoms and make you feel overwhelmed.

Key tip: Reduce your screen time - you can monitor this in the settings of your phone, there are apps that allow you to block your access to particular apps after set times. It could be that you scroll Instagram before bed and five minutes turns into an hour before you know it! Ensuring you're getting the NHS recommended 6-9 hours' sleep a night is so important for your mental and physical health.

Evidence shows taking care of your wellbeing improves patient outcomes, so remember to always rest, rehydrate and refuel. You can read about this in more detail later on in the guide!

2 STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR LOVED ONES

If it's meeting up for a coffee, going for a walk or even spending 15 minutes on the phone with a friend or loved one, this communal time can give you a chance to discuss anything that's been bothering you or help your friend out and make yourself feel better at the same time.

Key tip: Think about a time of day when you could make the time for this. Do you have a commute that you have to do? We know the underground isn't best suited for phone calls, but you could definitely text to catch up with people when you grab those seconds of signal! If you drive to work, consider getting a handsfree device (safety first) and calling a friend on the way to or from work.

This may sound simple, or it may already be part of your routine, but try and be present in those moments and enjoy that time with someone you care about.

3 STAY ACTIVE

It's scientifically proven that exercise releases chemicals and endorphins in your brain that make you feel happier, so although it may be difficult to find time, it's worth it.

If you can spare even 20 minutes to do some sort of exercise, you'll feel the psychological benefits straightaway.

Staying physically fit impacts your health as well as your mental wellbeing. We often hear the phrase "we all have the same 24 hours in the day" whilst that may be true, we know that everyone has different responsibilities and it can be hard to find time in the day, but it is so worth it, especially during the winter to stay fit and care for your health.

Key tip: With a variety of apps and classes out there, it can be overwhelming to know where to start. Couch to 5K is a great one for slow, guided regular exercise to help you build up activity each week. Alternatively, there are several fantastic "10 minute" workouts available on YouTube. You could do a 10-minute arms workout before your shower in the morning and a 10-minute yoga or stretch session before bed. Introducing these small regular workouts into your routine will make the world of difference.

4 EAT AND DRINK WELL

Support your new exercise routine by eating and drinking well. Eating on the go during shifts can easily lead to bad dietary choices. Beat this by being prepared! Meal prepping will not only help you eat a better-balanced diet but is also less wasteful and therefore good for the environment.

The NHS have an Eatwell Guide, that identifies the basics on how to eat a healthy balanced diet.

It is recommended by health professionals that everyone should consume 2 litres, or half a gallon of water a day. With the nature of working in the healthcare sector, as a Doctor, Nurse, AHP, HCA, administrator or in any other role, you spend a lot of time on your feet! If you do not drink enough water, studies have shown that you have an increased risk of headaches and your concentration will be impaired, all these factors affect how you go about your day-to-day life and put a strain on your positivity and concentration.

5 SMILE AND SHARE THE LOVE

Smiling! It seems too simple, but it's easy to forget to smile about the little things. You may have made great progress with a patient, you may have received positive news in your personal life, or it may be as little as your train turning up on time!

Smiling elevates your mood and not only that, it's also contagious! Your smile may indirectly make someone else's day better without you even knowing.

Key tip: Find a reason to be thankful every day. Some people keep gratitude journals but if that's not your thing, you could save it in a note on your phone with reasons from each day. When feeling down, look back to bring back your smile and remind yourself of the wonderful things in your life!

6 TAKE TIME FOR WHAT YOU ENJOY

At the start of the year, lots of people become swallowed up by work whether as a "resolution" or simply because it's a less social time of year. Remember, it's still important to make plans and take time for yourself. Focus on what you would like to spend your free time doing, rather than what you feel you "should" be doing.

Key tip: Do what makes you happy! Why not enjoy a nice long bath, take a walk in the fresh air, play games, or simply do nothing!

7 ASK FOR HELP

We've shared with you our tips to help support your mental health while working in healthcare, but we know that this is not always enough. Please know that it is always fine to ask for help.

If you ever find yourself in need of professional support, the Mind charity provides confidential mental health information services. Similarly, Papyrus and Young Minds are also great resources if you need help.

STRATEGIES TO AVOID BEING OVERWHELMED AT WORK

Do you sometimes feel like there are not enough hours in the day to get everything done that you need to? This feeling is not uncommon, both at work and in your personal life. So, how can you manage these feelings and avoid becoming overwhelmed?

Practice **POSSIBLE** because anything is possible when you are feeling positive! These simple steps can help you to better manage stress and prevent you feeling overwhelmed:

Prioritise – do what's most important first, and don't try and do everything all at once.

Open up – whether this is to a family member, friend, colleague, member of our bank team or a therapist. Speak to someone about how you are feeling and explore with them how you can move forward.

Set boundaries – it is fine to say “no” or “not right now” if you aren't able to manage something. Perhaps you have been asked to take observations and then someone else asks you to update patient files on the system. Be polite, but firm and say you are happy to do whatever the task is once you finish your current task for someone else. If they believe their piece of work is more important, then they can discuss that with the person who set your current work. Unless it is something urgent, it is fine, and correct to set boundaries to ensure you are completing tasks to the best of your ability.

Self-compassion – practising self-compassion is not selfish. When you are feeling overwhelmed, it can feel as though you are failing somehow or losing purpose. This is not the case. What would you say to a friend or family member who shared that they were feeling the same way that you are? Give yourself the same love and support that you would them. You don't have to be perfect to be happy. It's fine to take a break and not feel guilty.

Identify your needs – make time to ensure you are getting a full restful sleep. Ensure you making the time to do the things that matter to you. This could be hobbies, exercise or spending time with loved ones, but whatever it is, the most important thing is that you take chances to do what makes you happy.

Breaks – taking breaks is so important for your own health and we know that on busy wards it can be hard to find the time, but they are absolutely vital. When on a break, try to go outside or near an open window to allow yourself to get fresh air before you return to work. This can make a huge difference to your mood and leave you in a better frame of mind than doing the same thing with your break all the time.

Leave work, at work – working in healthcare carries with it a huge mental load and it can be easier said than done to leave it behind at the end of a shift, but try and create separation between your work and home. This way, you can enjoy your personal life more, and feel more rested at work.

Empathy – as healthcare workers you often have compassion and empathy in bucketloads for patients but may not apply the same care to yourself. Ultimately, you can only do your best with the strength and skills you have. It will be a lot easier to make the best use of those strengths and skills if you are happier and less overwhelmed! Have empathy for yourself and what you are going through.

Working to feel less overwhelmed is not an immediate fix but it can help to avoid suffering from burnout. Do you think you might be suffering from burnout? Check the quiz on the next page to find out.



AM I SUFFERING FROM BURNOUT QUIZ?

It can be hard to identify if you are suffering from burnout and difficult to recognise the situations that can trigger it. Burnout often leads to you feeling overworked, underappreciated, anxious and unable to cope. Whilst we hope that our wonderful bank workers like yourself would never feel like this, we know that it is more common than many people realise. Check out this quick quiz to identify how you might be feeling a little more clearly.

How do you feel about going to work?

- A.** I always enjoy going into work and feel positive about it
- B.** I sometimes enjoy going into work but overall feel positive about what I do
- C.** I don't really enjoy going to work and feel anxious about going in
- D.** I don't enjoy going to work and knowing I have a shift affects my mood long before it starts

I feel like I have too much to do and too little time (both at work and in my personal life)

- A.** Never
- B.** Sometimes
- C.** Often
- D.** Constantly

Do you ever feel down or isolated, at work or at home?

- A.** I don't feel like this
- B.** I sometimes feel like this
- C.** I quite often feel like this
- D.** I always feel like this

I often feel unappreciated or like my heart isn't in my work?

- A.** I never feel unappreciated and love what I do
- B.** I sometimes feel unappreciated but overall enjoy what I do
- C.** I often feel unappreciated and struggle to find joy in my work
- D.** I always feel unappreciated and find no joy in my work

How often do you feel physically tired during the day?

- A.** Never
- B.** Some days
- C.** Most days
- D.** Almost every day

How optimistic do you feel in general compared to a year ago?

- A.** I am more optimistic now
- B.** I am about the same
- C.** I am less optimistic now
- D.** I am significantly less optimistic now

Have you changed the way you deal with people in recent weeks/months?

- A.** I am about the same and socialise as much as I always have
- B.** I am about the same but don't socialise as much as I used to
- C.** I feel more reserved now and don't socialise as much as I used to
- D.** I feel more reserved and isolated and hardly socialise now

Overall, are you happy with your life at work and at home?

- A.** Yes, very happy
- B.** Yes, reasonably happy
- C.** No, although I am sometimes happy
- D.** No, I don't enjoy things the way I used to

Mostly A's

You are happy and enjoying your work which is just what we like to hear!

Mostly B's

You are managing well and currently coping with stress in healthy ways. You may benefit from some of the tool in the next article but it's likely you're already doing some of them.

Mostly C's

This indicated you have some of the symptoms of burnout and we would suggest looking into how you can address your levels of stress before it worsens.

Mostly D's

You are probably suffering from burnout right now. It can be hard to get out of this point and we recommend reaching out to a friend, colleague, or family member to talk about how you might be struggling. The following article contains tips and advice on how you can manage burnout and get back to loving yourself and your job again to feel more positive.

HOW TO RESET AND RECHARGE WHEN YOU'RE FEELING BURNOUT?

Healthcare professionals everywhere have spent 2020 working through exhaustion, the daily risk of being exposed to the virus, and the stress of risking their family's safety as well as their own. According to a new study conducted in the UK, nurses are experiencing high levels of burnout and depression, and 28% of NHS nurses are quitting within three years – a 50% increase since 2013.

Whilst COVID-19 is the most obvious suspect behind the increase burnout is not a new thing it's something that does need better support. It can be hard to realise that you are suffering from burnout as it often happens gradually, and you may not notice the symptoms initially. However, once it takes hold it really can impact all areas of your life.

So, what are the signs you might be suffering from burnout?

- Exhaustion
- Insomnia
- Muscle pain or tension
- Difficulty concentrating
- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty maintaining relationships with friends, family and colleagues
- Irritability
- Losing sense of self and pride in your work
- Lack of motivation and inability to set goals

If these sound like you then you could be suffering from burnout or be on your way to suffering from it. Burnout can affect more than just your performance in work. It can affect your social life, ability to enjoy hobbies and things that used to bring you joy and also put you at risk of health concerns such as cardiovascular disease, type two diabetes and depression.

So what's the first step to **recovery**?

Identify the source. Are you finding areas of your job challenging? Perhaps you are struggling with the types of patients and colleagues you are dealing with in the area you choose to work? One of the fantastic parts of working on the staff bank is that you are not isolated to just working in one area.

Identify immediate changes you can make. Why not speak to a member of the team and ask them which other wards they might recommend so you can book elsewhere and see if that makes a difference? If you're feeling overwhelmed in your personal life, look at why that might be. Are you a people-pleaser who takes on too much to avoid letting people down? If you are running out of hours in the day, review what you are doing and prioritise the things that matter. It's ok to say no, in favour of protecting your own wellbeing.

How can you **reset** your mindset?

There is never going to be a simple overnight fix for this unfortunately. Here are our top tips for to help you reset and improve your outlook:

Change your scenery – No, we aren't talking about taking a holiday (although that would probably be pretty nice too!). Change up the space you use to unwind. Why not buy some new cushions or curtains to change the look of the room. You could get a new candle or add a cosy blanket. It doesn't have to cost money. Why not move your sofa to a new spot or repaint some shelves you already have? Shifting your physical space can help improve your emotional one.

Get outside – As much as changing your indoor relaxation space can be beneficial, so can just getting out of the house. Why not make the time to go for a walk twice a week, explore new places or just wander around the area you live? We all got out for walks during lockdown as the only outdoor exercise we were allowed and discovered new places on our doorstep. That doesn't have to stop outside of lockdown!

Remember to breathe – It may sound silly but take the time to stop a few times a day and just breathe in and out slowing and calmly. Count your breaths and empty your mind. It is so easy to get bogged down in the million and one things you need to do but it doesn't have to always be that way. Take a breath and remember that you matter, you can only do so much!

How can I **recharge**?

Perhaps you've realised you are only showing a few signs of burnout, or perhaps you've already made steps to change things. Either way, it's important to remember to recharge occasionally.

Every recharge method will be individual to you but what matters most is how it makes you feel. Choose an activity that makes you feel lighter, happier and allows you to switch off and step back from the world for a bit. This could be anything from baking a cake, to reading a book, to learning crochet. Take some time away from TVs and phones and reclaim the person you really are.



THE 3R'S ALL HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS NEED TO KNOW

REST REHYDRATE REFUEL

Working in a hospital, your main focus is often the health of your patients. You may even be letting your own health take a backseat as you give all your attention to their care. When the health of people is literally in your hands, can you afford to risk things like dehydration which can have a negative effect your concentration and cognitive function?

So what are the 3R's?

The 3R's is a campaign by the Royal College of Nursing highlighting the need for healthcare professionals to prioritise their own health on shift. There is growing evidence linking the health and wellbeing of the nursing workforce to improved patient outcomes, so with this in mind what are the three key aspects of the campaign?

Rest

Remember breaks at work are a necessity, not a luxury! In the RCN's survey on safe and effective staffing levels, 59% of survey respondents said they did not get to take sufficient breaks on their last shift. Not only does being on your feet all shift lead to exhaustion but in emotionally demanding roles such as yours, taking regular breaks can also be vital to stress reduction and supporting your mental health.

Rehydrate

Did you know that dehydration effects concentration? With potentially life changing decisions in your hands you need your cognitive function to be at its best. Ensure you start your shift well hydrated and remember to drink water during breaks. Caffeinated drinks can dehydrate you so you should drink more water if you have one of these.

Refuel

Try to avoid starting your shift hungry as this could lead to you making poor dietary choices later on. Whilst it can be tempting to grab that chocolate bar, try to instead bring healthy snacks for slow release energy to keep you going throughout the shift. Bananas are a fantastic option for this but healthy snack bars and other fruits are also great options.

Why is this important

Have you ever heard of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs? This concept is often portrayed in the shape of a pyramid with the most fundamental needs in the largest section at the bottom and the higher levels of self-actualisation at the top. The theory of this is that an individual's most basic needs must be met in order for them to achieve higher levels of need.

Now we are not saying that you need to reach transcendence but in order to meet the needs of your patients, you must first meet your own needs. The bottom section identifies the physiological requirements of rest, water and food as key.

As the RCN said in their flyer about the 3R's:

Whenever you travel on an aeroplane you will get the all-important safety briefing, and one of the key phrases they use is *'Put your oxygen mask on first before helping others'*.

In other words, you can't look after others' safety before you have looked after your own. Nursing is a physically and emotionally demanding profession and nursing staff can risk ill health and burn out.

“
Healthy
workplace,
healthy you
”



COST OF LIVING TIPS & TRICKS

With bills, food, fuel and so much more becoming increasingly expensive throughout 2022, we've built a section of this guide to help you out with both money-saving tips, as well as some of the offers and discounts you can take advantage of all year round!

1 MEAL PREP AND BATCH COOK

Taking the time to plan weekly meals and doing some batch cooking may seem like a very simple thing to do, but it can actually save quite a chunk of money – [Prep UK have reported up to £1,000 per year could be saved](#). Less food is wasted, and it means that you may be less inclined to opt for an expensive takeaway or ready meal when you don't feel like cooking. You can save even more money if you focus on creating meals that can be cooked in one pot/dish or a slow cooker.

2 HOMEMADE LUNCHES

When you work in a fast-paced, challenging environment and often return home feeling very tired, you may feel as though the last thing you want to do is prepare a meal. However, if you can take the time to use the evening's leftover portions or prepare lunches at the start of the week, you could save roughly £2 a day, when compared to buying a £3.50 meal deal every day – this tots up to over £500 a year, so it's definitely worth it!

3 MAKE USE OF REPAIR CAFES

Unexpected repairs can be costly and stressful, especially if we don't have the necessary excess funds. Repair Cafes are free meeting places that are all about repairing things! Here you will find all the tools you need to help you repair whatever it is that needs repairing – clothes, furniture, electrical appliances, toys etc. There are also some experienced volunteers on hand to offer support and guidance. Not only can this help you save money on having to pay for potentially expensive repairs, but it can also provide an opportunity to meet and connect with others and learn new valuable skills.

4 USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO RECYCLE/REGIFT

For all the negatives that we can say about social media, it does have some positive aspects and one of those is its potential to enable people to support each other through the recycling/regifting of their unwanted goods. Many areas have local Facebook

groups set up specifically for this purpose, so it's worth checking out if your area has one and if not, then maybe you could start one! It's a little different to Facebook Marketplace where things are typically sold or bought in that having a local recycling/regifting page means it's at **zero** cost. Even if you don't feel like you need to make use of it, you may be able to help by regifting your unwanted items directly to someone in your local community who needs them.

5 DROP DOWN A BRAND LEVEL

This is probably quite a well-known concept, but one that's worth mentioning. When out shopping, consider dropping down a brand level from 'branded' to 'own brand' and so on. If you're not able to notice any difference, then stick with the lower level. It's estimated that this can cut **30%** off food bills on average, but even if you only do it for **half** of your shopping list you can still potentially save **15%**.

6 EVALUATE YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS

It can be easy to lose track of what we're subscribed to and how much it's actually costing us. It may be worth setting aside the time to sit down and do an audit of what subscription services you are signed up for, how often you're using them, or if you may be able to drop down a level in the package rather than forego the subscription entirely. Alongside this – make use of free trials!

7 SET ASIDE SOME TIME TO SIT DOWN AND DO A FINANCIAL AUDIT

Get all your accounts together and make a note of what your incomings and outgoings are, then you have a basis on which to build and tailor your own financial requirements from. If you find even the thought of this overwhelming, then maybe reach out to a friend or family member who can offer some support or you could reach out to an established organisation such as Money Helper.

8 DRAW UP A BUDGET AND IDENTIFY SPENDING HABITS

Drawing up a budget can be a useful way to help you gain control over your finances and help you to identify the necessities and the non-essentials. There are also a wide variety of apps that can help you identify spending habits that you may not even be aware of, just search "budgeting" into your smartphone's app store and a huge array of options will appear.



APPS TO SUPPORT WELLBEING

Feeling anxious or stressed can lead to feelings of shame – which they shouldn't – but if they do, you might not feel comfortable talking to someone. In a world where everything is in our phones it can sometimes be easier to use an app to help record your feelings and find better ways to manage them.

We've compiled a short list of some apps for mindfulness, relaxation and generally aiding mental health, here are the very best of them.



WorryTree
Free

The WorryTree app aims to help you take control of worry wherever you are.

You can use the app to record whatever you feel worried about. It uses cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) techniques to help you notice and challenge your worries. It can also help you create an action plan for managing worry. It is one of the only CBT apps recommended by the NHS.



Thrive
Free

Thrive helps you prevent and manage stress, anxiety and related conditions. The game-based app can be used to relax before a stressful situation or on a more regular basis to help you live a happier, more stress-free life.



Stress & Anxiety Companion
Free, with in-app purchases

Stress & Anxiety Companion helps you handle stress and anxiety on-the-go. Using breathing exercises, relaxing music and games designed to calm the mind, the app helps you change negative thoughts to help you better cope with life's ups and downs.



My Possible Self: The Mental Health App
Free, with in-app purchases

Take control of your thoughts, feelings and behaviour with the My Possible Self mental health app. Use the simple learning modules to manage fear, anxiety and stress and tackle unhelpful thinking. Record your experiences and track symptoms to better understand your mental health.



eQuoo: Emotional Fitness Game
Free, with in-app purchases

The eQuoo app uses adventure games designed by psychologists to help you increase your emotional fitness and teach you new psychological skills.

You'll also find tips on how to communicate more effectively and maintain your mental wellbeing.



Catch It
Free

Learn how to manage feelings like anxiety and depression with Catch It. The app will teach you how to look at problems in a different way, turn negative thoughts into positive ones and improve your mental wellbeing.



Headspace
Free Trial

Through science-backed meditation and mindfulness tools, Headspace helps you create life-changing habits to support your mental health and find a healthier, happier you.



The Calm App
Free Trial

This is the most popular app for sleep, meditation and relaxation, with over 100m downloads and over 1.5m five-star reviews, with various courses specially designed for which aspect/s of your wellbeing you're looking to improve.

Healthcare staff play a crucial role in ensuring the health and wellbeing of their patients, and it is essential for them to prioritize their own wellbeing, in order to deliver the best possible care.

Essentially, breaking down your own wellbeing in to seven key areas can make a huge difference in making sure you are looking after your own needs - physical health, mental health, stress management, sleep, nutrition, exercise, and self-care.

When you take care of these (hopefully with the help of this handy guide) you will feel healthy, happy, relaxed and capable of delivering top-class care for patients who are in need.

We really hope you have found this guide useful and instructive, and wish you the very best as you continue to look after those requiring support.



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**WE WILL
CARE FOR
YOU, AS
YOU CARE
FOR THEM.**

**YOUR
HEALTH AND
WELLBEING
MATTERS.**