

Wellness Action Plan (WAP)

Working Remotely

# Version control

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| Version | Date approved | Approved by | Notes / changes |
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# Wellness Action Plan (WAP) Working Remotely

A tool which helps all employees manage their mental health and wellbeing at work

# Introduction

Denbighshire County Council is committed to supporting employee wellbeing and in order to support employees in maintaining their own health and wellbeing, we have devised this plan, which is based on the resources put together by the mental health charity Mind.

It is focused on encouraging employees to explore for themselves steps they can take to improve and maintain their mental health.

The focus is shifting from reactive management of sickness absence to a more proactive approach of prevention through promoting wellbeing and improving employee engagement.

Work plays an enormous part in all of our lives; it is important that all employees feel healthy and well and be able to talk about the issues they may be having. It is therefore encouraged that this plan is shared with between employees and managers.

It is also recognised that the environment in which employees work from has changed, with working at home becoming the norm. Therefore the support which employees may have had in the office may not be there, therefore it is important that all employees reflect on their own wellbeing whilst working from home. It is important that there is support available to all employees who are adapting and continue to adapt to the new ways of working.

More information and support for both physical and mental wellbeing can be found on the dedicated mental health and wellbeing pages. [https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/jobs-and-employees/my-employment/mental-health-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing.aspx](https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/jobs-and-employees/my-employment/mental-health-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing.aspx%20)

This action plan is more for employees who are finding remote working a challenge. If there are other factors which are causing the employee stress or anxiety or any other issues please use the General Wellness Action Plan.

## What is a Wellness Action Plan and how can it help?

A wellness action plan is a personalised, practical tool which can be use by all – whether an employee has a health problem or not. It will help identify what keeps someone well, both inside and outside of work, what causes someone to become unwell, and how to address a health problem, particularly in relation to mental health at work.

It also opens up a dialogue with managers and/or supervisors, in order for everyone to better understand the employees’ needs and experiences and ultimately better support their health, which in turn leads to greater productivity, better performance and increased job satisfaction.

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## What Should a Health & Wellbeing Plan Cover?

* The approaches that can be taken and behaviours that can be adopted to support physical and mental health
* Diet and lifestyle changes which may be of benefit
* Early warning signs that health may be declining
* Any workplace triggers for poor mental health or stress
* Potential impact of physical and/or mental health condition on work performance and what help and support may be needed with this
* What support is required from the line manager
* Actions and positive steps that can be taken by employee and the manager if an employee is struggling with either a physical or mental health condition
* Awareness of support mechanisms which are available in the workplace – i.e. employee assistance programme, mental health first aiders and physiotherapy.
* Agree review timeframes together with any support mechanisms which have been put in place to ensure they are working.
* Any external support required – advice from Occupational Health for example.

The wellness action plan is intended as an agreement between employee and manager in order to promote wellbeing and/or address any existing health needs, including any reasonable adjustments that can be discussed.

The wellness action plan should be written and owned by the employee, expressing their own personal choices, reflecting their voice, their personal experience and their needs.

## Working Remotely

A wellness action plan can also be helpful for employees who are adapting to the new ways of working and finding working at home and/or remotely a challenge. It is therefore important whilst employees are working at home, that they create a home workstation.

It’s important to try create boundaries if home is now the office and having a dedicated area of the house or room to work from can help delineate your work time from leisure time.

Spending time for oneself is essential for wellbeing, and helps everyone to be more resilient. It’s vital to prioritise personal needs sometimes, rather than the demands of work. Ignoring personal needs can lead to stress and burn-out. It is important to take short breaks throughout the day as well as at least half-an-hour to get some food. A short break can help recharge and refresh. It can also give a different perspective on any work problems.

Not having to get formally dressed for work can be great. But if someone is feeling low, putting on some nice clothes or having a five-minute grooming session is an easy boost for their self-esteem that can help someone feel work- ready.

Some employees may see that working remotely and moving from one location to the other with no base a challenge. They may not know colleagues that are based within some locations and find it a challenge as they are constantly moving around the county.

Depending on the circumstance, working from home and/or remotely can be a lonely job. Evidence suggests that feeling close to, and valued by other people is a basic human need. Good relationships are important to our wellbeing, so it is vital that teams meet on a regular basis or a buddy system should be set up to ensure that no-one feels lonely whilst working at home.

## Reasonable adjustments and the Equality Act 2010

As a result of completing a wellness action plan, a discussion may take place with the manager whether any reasonable adjustments are needed. You will find a Reasonable Adjustments Guide on our Attendance Management internet pages [https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/jobs-and-employees/my-employment/leave-and-attendance/health-related-absence/attendance-management.aspx](https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/jobs-and-employees/my-employment/leave-and-attendance/health-related-absence/attendance-management.aspx%20%20)

## Wellness Action Plan Working Remotely Template

### What details would you like to share with your manager about your current working situation?

(For example, it might be helpful to highlight if you are working in a shared space with housemates, or that you’re working from your bedroom.)

### In your usual working environment, what helps you stay mentally healthy at work?

### How might you adapt these to your new working environment?

### What are the triggers that you’re facing in your new working environment?

### Given your experience of working from home to date, what helps you stay mentally healthy?

(For example taking an adequate lunch break away from your workspace, regular wellbeing catch-ups with your manager, getting some exercise before or after work or in your lunchbreak, having a routine, or simply having a clean and tidy workspace.)

### How might experiencing poor mental health impact on your work?

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

### Are there any early warning signs that you, your manager or colleagues might notice when you are starting to experience poor mental health?

(This could include things like changes in your normal behaviour or becoming disengaged in video calls, remote team meetings or work platforms such as Microsoft Teams)

### What support can your manager or colleagues put in place to minimise triggers and/or support you during this difficult time?

(These could be things like taking adequate breaks, reducing your amount of information intake or getting away from work for a little while.)

### Are there any early warning signs that your family or members of your household might notice?

(This could include things like changes in your normal behaviour, withdrawing from the people you live with or becoming agitated or angry.)

### What support can members of your family or household put in place to minimise triggers and/or support you during this difficult time?

If you would like to share your WAP with someone - this could be your manager in the first instance but also a family member, a member of your household or a friend - then you can write them a message here on how you would like them to support you.

Employee Signature:

Line Manager Signature:

Date to be reviewed: