Denbighshire County Council Logo

Wellness Action Plan (WAP)

# Version control

This document is subject to regular review due to legislative and policy changes. The latest versions of all our publications can be found on our website. Before contacting us about the content of this document, we recommend that you refer to the most recent version on the website and any relevant guidance.

| **Version** | **Date approved** | **Approved by** | **Notes / changes** |
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| v1.0 | 12/11/2021 | AM/LH | New document |

# Wellness Action Plan (WAP)

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.

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).

There is also a template Wellness Action Plan for employees who are finding working differently and more remotely a challenge.

## 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.

A wellness action plan can help employees to develop approaches to support their mental wellbeing, leading to a reduced likelihood of problems such as work-related stress.

## 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.

## 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).

## Wellness Action Plan General Template

### What helps you stay mentally healthy at work?

For example, taking an adequate lunch break away from your desk, taking short breaks away from your desk to stretch and move, ensuring you eat, take medication regularly, taking regular exercise within your limits, having opportunity to interact with work colleagues and other support networks.

### If you have a specific mental ill health issue, or you are feeling particularly low in mood or anxious; have you sought any help or support already? Do you need help in accessing the support you need?

It may help you to list the support you are accessing, to enable you to keep a record of what intervention you have had and when and if it has been beneficial to you or not.

### Is there anything your manager can do to support you in re-gaining, or proactively maintaining your mental health?

For example, regular feedback and one to ones, ensuring that you are given reasonable notice and opportunity to feedback with regards to any changes to your work, or the wider team which may affect you, allowing you to work flexibly, possibly enabling you to temporarily change your work pattern, to enable you to rest in the day or seek counselling. If you are returning from a period of sickness absence, would a phased return in terms of hours help you? How will your workload be managed during any agreed phased return?

### Are there any situations in work that can trigger poor mental health for you?

N. B If the answer to this is ‘yes’ it may be worth completing the stress risk assessment with your manager to identify specific concerns and actions to deal with them.

### How might experiencing poor 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 or headaches. This can be as a result of a mental health condition, severe or chronic physical pain, or as the result of medication

### Are there any early warning signs your manager or colleagues may notice if you are becoming unwell? And what support could be put in place to minimise these triggers or help you manage the impact?

For example, withdrawing from colleagues, struggling to attend work on time. You could also use this space to identify what your manager should do if you are experiencing poor mental health, for example, do you want them to speak with you about it or is there a particular person you would like them to contact on your behalf?

### Are there elements of your individual working style, or the physical effects of your condition that it is worth your manager being aware of?

•For example, would you benefit from more verbal communication, or do you prefer email, are you better able to work in a morning or an afternoon, input into deadlines before they are set? Do you need to break your working day up with more frequent breaks, rather than one lunch break in the middle of the day? Would you benefit from some help in identifying and prioritising work goals?

### What can you do to maintain your own health and wellbeing? Is there anything we need to do to facilitate them?

For example you may like to take a break or go for a short walk or ask your manager for support?

### Is there anything else you would like to share, or you think may be helpful in enabling your manager to assist you in supporting your health?

**Employee Signature:**

**Line Manager Signature:**

**Date to be reviewed:**