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To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Royal Mail Group Wellbeing – Launch of ‘Moments That Matter’ New Series of ‘Support Guides’

Royal Mail Group’s Head of Health and Wellbeing Fiona McAslan has confirmed to the CWU Health, Safety and Environment Department, the launch of a new series of support guides called **‘Moments that Matter’** which have now gone live and are available for everyone on the Royal Mail Group (RMG) ‘Wellbeing Hub’ website. They are available and accessible directly via this link: <https://view.pagetiger.com/nxsfs/moments-that-matter> or via the **RMG ‘Wellbeing Hub’** which is accessible via this link: <https://view.pagetiger.com/nxsfs/home>. They are also available on the People App under the ‘Your Wellbeing’ tile. Copies of the new ‘Moments that Matter’ Guides are also attached to this LTB as pdfs.

These new guides cover a number of challenging topics enabling accessible advice and guidance when the need arises for supporting a work colleague/member when there are concerns about their wellbeing mentally or physically. The guides are being shared widely across Royal Mail Group this week following on from this week’s 2024 National **‘Time To Talk’** day on 1 February supported by RMG and the CWU.

The new series of Guides have been launched under the new re-badged ‘Your Wellbeing’ banner which replaced the previous ‘Feeling First Class’.

The ‘Moments That Matter’ Guides are designed to help spot potential symptoms that colleagues in the workforce may be displaying and offer suggested questions that can safely be asked of the individual concerned who may be unwell or in distress.

By asking the right questions it can help someone feel comfortable and gain a better understanding of the situation. There’s also information and signposting to further wellbeing support which can be shared with work colleagues.

The new set of 12 Guides are designed to be a significant help in responding and reacting to work colleagues facing one of the situations.

The Guides are:

1. Supporting a colleague when you’re worried about them

2. Supporting a colleague facing financial difficulty
3. Supporting a colleague who has lost a baby
4. Supporting a colleague as they start or extend their family
5. Supporting a colleague through their fertility journey
6. Supporting a colleague facing financial abuse
7. Supporting a colleague who decides to transition
8. Supporting a colleague through the menopause
9. Supporting a colleague facing relationship separation
10. Supporting a colleague dealing with bereavement
11. Supporting a colleague facing serious illness
12. Supporting a colleague facing terminal illness

Wellbeing Ambassadors

The circa 1,300 Wellbeing Ambassadors, including CWU Reps, First Aiders and members have been briefed and asked to drive local activity, working with the workforce in the Units, using a new RMG **'Time To Talk Resource Pack'**, ensuring employees understand the importance of having open mental health conversations and accessing the early support when it is needed.

Additionally, Wellbeing Ambassadors along with CWU Reps, ASRs and WSRs are asked to raise awareness and let employees/members know about the new **'Moments that Matter Guides'**, and the important role of all the services, resources and tools available on offer to assist the workforce.

RMG 'Help@Hand' gives employees/members and their family access to fast, free, wellbeing support, resources and services including:

- Unlimited Mental Health Consultations
- Online GP Appointments
- Online Physiotherapy Sessions
- Consultations/Second Medical Opinions
- 1:1 Lifestyle Coaching
- Wellbeing Employee Assistance Programme 24/7 Helpline
- Cancer Assist Service

Attachments:

- **RMG Wellbeing 'Moments that Matter' - 12 Guides**

Links:

- **RMG: Occupational Health, Wellbeing Hub:**
<https://view.pagetiger.com/nxsfsf/home>
- **RMG Wellbeing 'Moments that Matter' 12 Guides:**
<https://view.pagetiger.com/nxsfsf/moments-that-matter>

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Supporting colleagues when you are worried about them

Most of us will at times feel overwhelmed. A certain level of pressure is natural and can, in the right doses, be helpful and healthy. But if the feelings of pressure linger and grow, they can become damaging and affect relationships with others, general health, wellbeing, and job performance.

Symptoms

You are not a doctor or expected to 'fix' everything but having an awareness of the common signs of stress will enable you to support others early before things snowball. Some signs and symptoms you might notice, or they might talk about that may be linked to stress: **Difficulty sleeping, headaches, working to exhaustion, being irritable or withdrawn, loss or increased appetite, stomach pain or upset stomach, loss of interest in other people, anxiety or worry, erratic/confused conversation, fatigue, tearfulness/unusually emotional, smoking/drinking, loss of confidence, obsessive behaviour, inability to focus.**



What questions can I ask to diagnose the situation?

"I've noticed you're <refer to symptoms> and I wanted to ask if everything is ok?"

"Are there any big changes in your life that you're dealing with?"

"How is your workload/pressure at work?"

"What Can I do to help things change?"



What treatments can support my colleague?

"Have you spoken to a doctor about how you're feeling. Have you registered for Help@hand?"

"If your workload is creating unhealthy levels of stress let's talk about what needs to change"

"Our wellbeing Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) has some great articles and tools on stress and stress management techniques, why don't you have a look?"

"You could try keeping a wellness action plan. This can help you understand the most important and frequent stressors in your life and how you react to them"

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What information is available to help my colleague?

- **Wellbeing Employee Assistance Programme:** The EAP is a free 24-hour helpline and support service. You can call them on 0345 266 5060 or access through Help@hand.
- **Online Wellbeing Workshops:** Register today for our workplace wellbeing workshops so you can confidently address and improve your own wellbeing as well as supporting others. Topics include stress and mental health, lifestyle management, menopause, cancer support, suicide awareness, financial wellbeing, and burnout.
- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the **Wellbeing Hub** for support relating to Mind, Health, Money, and Life.

You can also find support through the links below:

- [Home - Mind](#)
- [Mental health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

A few things to remember



Show you care and act early: The longer stressful feelings are bottled up the more difficult it can be to share and overcome them. The person might be scared or embarrassed to share how they're feeling. Being approached can, in many cases, be a relief – it's better to be turned down than to regret never having asked and missing an opportunity to support.



Don't get stressed yourself: When you're worried about someone it can be a stressor. You might feel under pressure to help but feel unqualified. Remember you aren't a doctor or a counsellor. Show you care and you know the different support you and your colleagues can draw



Role Model: You should role model the behaviours that lead to a healthy working culture. How you react when people work late or leave on time, for example, sets the tone. Making wellbeing part of your 1:1 meetings by asking how people are feeling shows that you care and gives your colleagues an opportunity to raise concerns early – before they become a bigger problem.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Follow up on any commitments you've made. If you need your manager's support to make those changes happen, do this quickly.

Keep checking in on the situation. If things don't get better, you should contact Hr for support and advice on next steps.

Try writing things down if you're nervous about any conversation.

And remember **you might need support** as a manager – the wellbeing Employee Assistance Programme is there for you too and you can always ask for help from your peers, your manager, and our Wellbeing Ambassador community.

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Financial Difficulty

Anyone can find themselves in financial difficulty. Events such as changes in your family, unexpected costs, changes in your income, or a build-up of debt can all cause money problems for colleagues. No matter how big or small, money worries can be stressful and affect people in different ways. This guide will help you support a colleague if they share that they are struggling financially.

Symptoms

Colleagues may not share their personal financial situation with you and it's not appropriate to ask. Watch out for signs that they may need your support:

- Signs of stress/anxiety
- Appear distracted
- Secretive behaviour
- Cancelling arrangements or panicking when team events are suggested



What questions can I ask to diagnose the situation?

“Do you have support at home?”

“What support or resources have you looked at so far?”

“Is there anything that has caused the situation?”

“How can I support you?”



What treatments can support my colleague?

Are there flexible working options that could help in the short term?

Look at the possibility of increasing their hours if they work part time if this is something they want to do.

“Let’s look at what support the Employee Assistance Programme can give you. You don’t need to be in work to access this, you can call them on 0345 266 5060 or access through Help@hand. You can also access it via the ‘Your Wellbeing’ tile on the People App. It’s free, confidential, and available 24/7”

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- **Wellbeing Hub:** Go to the [Wellbeing Hub](#) for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.
- **My Bundle+:** Review your Royal Mail benefits to see how you can make your money go further with shopping discounts, tax savings on cycle to work, special rates on health and lifestyle insurance products and practical solutions for managing existing debt.
- **Online Wellbeing Workshops:** Register today for our workplace wellbeing workshops so you can confidently address and improve your own wellbeing as well as supporting others. Topics include stress and mental health, lifestyle management, menopause, cancer support, suicide awareness, financial wellbeing, and burnout.
- [StepChange Debt Charity](#)
- [Rowland Hill Fund | The Charity for Postal People](#)
- [Citizens Advice](#)

A few things to remember



Be supportive, not judgemental:

Colleagues might worry that their financial status will affect their job. We would never discipline any colleague for struggling financially. Your role as their manager is to offer support where you can.



Be practical: You can't fix things for your colleague but by giving them access to practical tools and support, you can help them to take productive steps to becoming financially fit.



Be flexible: If your colleague is struggling to get time outside of their working hours to access support, try to accommodate where you can.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Send on all of the resources you mentioned.

Check in with your colleagues to see if they found the resources helpful and if it prompted any questions.

Agree how you'll both continue to talk about their situation – do they want to come to you when it suits them or are they happy for you to ask how things are going in your normal 1:1's?

MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Losing a baby

Losing a baby at any stage of pregnancy is devastating and is usually completely unexpected. Unfortunately, many women and men experience this trauma and, as a colleague, it can be difficult to know what to say to do or say to show your support.

This guide will help you be there for your colleague, friend or family member when they need it most.

Symptoms

A routine antenatal check-up may have shown that the baby's heart had stopped beating. The parents may have had to make the difficult decision to end the pregnancy following medical advice. Their baby may have died suddenly during labour. Or their baby may have been born alive but was too ill or premature to survive. In every case, the death of a baby is traumatic. Following the death, the parents have to cope with telling people, including their work colleagues, about their loss. It's likely that the employee will contact their line manager to tell them what's happened, but they may ask a family member or friend to do this. Everyone deals with loss differently, but these are some of the emotions they're likely to experience: Anger, Fear, Anxiety, Vulnerability, Guilt, Sadness, Isolated, Depressed.



What questions can I ask to find out how I can support?

When you're told you'll probably feel like you don't have the words to convey how you feel. Acknowledging their loss may help them feel less isolated.

Asking how you can help gives them the opportunity to ask questions. You could say "I'm so sorry, I really don't know what to say, is there anything I can do to help?"

"How do you want to stay in touch?" Take the lead from your colleague – they might be more comfortable talking to a friend in the team or rather that a family member contacts you initially.



What treatments can support my colleague?

There are some practical things you'll need to take care of: Ask what they would like to say to their team and when they want that message to be shared.

When they are ready to talk more, you'll want to talk to them about what time they need off. If you need advice on what is reasonable, you can contact HR via the People App.

There's also lots of support you can direct them to: "When you're ready and if you want to, we can have a look at what support the Employee Assistance Programme can provide"

When your employee is ready to return to work this is likely to be very daunting. Talk to them about what you can do to make that easier. E.g. do they want colleagues to know about their loss or not.

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- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the [Wellbeing Hub](#) for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.

You can also find support through the links below:

- www.sands.org.uk
- <https://www.tommys.org>
- [Aching Arms](#)

A few things to remember



Everyone is different: Grief is a very private and individual experience: each person reacts differently. Some parents may want to talk about it, others will not. Men and women tend to express grief in different ways.



Think about you and the team: You and your team are likely to experience grief as well and be in shock. Remember to take time to look after yourself and the rest of your team. Also, it might be that people in your team have had a similar experience. The loss a colleague experiences may remind them of their own pain. Be aware the impact might be wider than you'd first expect so you can help if it's needed.



Moving forward: The acute grief that follows the death of a baby may last for months and years. At some point the intensity of the grief will fade but an event or anniversary can reawaken a parent's grief. Being aware of this can help you be ready to support.



What to say: Many people worry about saying the wrong thing to a bereaved parent. They might avoid them or may speak to them but not mention the baby who has died. Simple acknowledgement of their loss may help them feel less isolated. It is important not to try to provide false comfort, diminish the significance of the baby's death, or to try to 'cheer up' a bereaved parent.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Send your colleagues any resources you have discussed to help them access support.

Keep in regular contact if your colleague is not at work, agree with them where, when and how often you will stay in touch. They may be happy for you to visit them at home.

Send your colleague a note from you and your team, simply saying how sorry you are. If there is a funeral, you may want to send flowers or attend.

You and your colleagues may also want to show your support and sympathy by arranging a collection or fundraising for a chosen charity in memory of the baby that has died.

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Supporting a colleague as they start or extend their family

Expanding your family is exciting but can be a big change for a colleague. Starting or extending their family may mean they are expecting a baby, planning to adopt, looking at IVF, planning to foster a child, using a surrogate or becoming a stepparent. Becoming a parent brings joy, questions and concerns, but there is guidance and support available to help colleagues as they take these important decisions in life. Make sure you show your colleague you care by helping them prepare for one of life's biggest events.

Symptoms

Once your colleague has shared their news, they may need some additional support, look out for the following signs but always be led by them.

- Hospital/doctor's appointments
- Change in behaviour
- Change in performance
- Asking questions about policy
- Emotional or tired
- Short term frequent absence



What questions can I ask to diagnose the situation?

"How are you feeling?"

"What can I do to support you?"

"Would you be comfortable sharing the process you're going through?"

"Do you know your schedule of appointments?"

"Do you have any questions that I can answer or take away for you?"



What treatments can support my colleague?

Advise they look at a copy of the maternity/adoption/parental leave policies.

Sit with them and look at scheduling time off they will need for their appointments.

"Let's look at what support the Employee Assistance Programme can give you. You don't need to be in work to access this, you can call them on 0345 266 5060 or access through Help@hand. You can also access it via the 'Your Wellbeing' tile on the People App. It's free, confidential, and available 24/7"

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What information is available to help my colleague?

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- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the Wellbeing Hub for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.

You can also find support through the links below:

- [BabyCentre](#)
- [Mumsnet](#)

A few things to remember



Show you care: Some colleagues may be apprehensive about sharing their news. Acknowledge their news, take them somewhere private and create a space where it's easy to speak openly.



Arranging cover: Arranging cover is important to continue to serve our customers well, but you don't want to put colleagues under pressure to share when they will return to work. Most colleagues will recognize that plans need to be made. Be open with your colleague about how you plan to cover their role and what that means for them.



Be flexible: Colleagues don't always know how they are going to feel or what they are going to want. This means they might change their mind about how they want to use their holiday, when they plan to return or what working pattern they think will work best for them. Being as flexible as possible shows you recognize the significant change your colleague is dealing with and will help them adjust.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Be thoughtful about the activities you ask your colleague to take part in at work and think about what changes need to be made i.e. lifting heavy equipment.

Consider how you will cover the role during the period of leave.

When the baby or child arrives or your colleague finishes work before going on leave, you might want to mark the occasion with a card or gift from the team.

Remember when you tell us the date that your colleague's leave ends, this won't always be the date they return to work. They make take holidays before coming back.

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Supporting a colleague through their fertility journey

Infertility affects millions of people of reproductive age worldwide - and has a impact on their families and communities. Estimates suggest that between 48m couples and 186m individuals live with infertility globally, and it will affect both men and women, mixed and same-sex couples, and individuals. Infertility is, unfortunately, often a conversation which is avoided in the workplace and many colleagues will face the challenge of coping with this hidden burden. Everyone's fertility journey is unique, and there are various different forms of fertility treatment that may be undertaken by individuals or couples.

Symptoms

We're not expecting line managers to be doctors but it's helpful to understand some of the signs your colleague might be displaying:

- Increased hospital/doctors' appointments
- Change in behaviour/performance
- Some colleagues may have underlying medical conditions impacting fertility.
- Asking questions about policy
- Emotional or tired
- Short term frequent absence
- Low mental health



What questions can I ask to understand what support may be required?

"How are you feeling?"

"What can I do to support you?"

"Would you be comfortable sharing the process you're going through?"

"How can we accommodate your upcoming appointments?"

"Do you have any questions that I can answer or take away for you?"



What treatments can support my colleague?

Tell them you'll look through their working pattern together, giving them the flexibility that they need.

"Let's look at scheduling the time off you might need"

"Let's look at what support the Employee Assistance Programme can give you. You don't need to be in work to access this, you can call them on 0345 266 5060 or access through Help@hand. You can also access it via the 'Your Wellbeing' tile on the People App. It's free, confidential and available 24/7"

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What information is available to help my colleague?

- **Wellbeing Employee Assistance Programme:** The EAP is a free 24-hour helpline and support service. You can call them on 0345 266 5060 or access through Help@hand. You can also access it via the 'Your Wellbeing' tile on the People App.
- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the Wellbeing Hub for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.
- **Contact HR:** Go to the People App and the 'My App and HR Help' tile. Here you can access frequently asked questions or submit a question to the HR team.

You can also find support through the links below:

- [The Fertility Foundation Charity](#)
- [Male Infertility Support and Statistics | HIMfertility](#)
- [Fertility Network \(fertilitynetworkuk.org\)](http://fertilitynetworkuk.org)

A few things to remember



Show you care: Some colleagues may be apprehensive talking to their line manager about fertility. If they choose to share, take them somewhere private and create a space where it's easy to speak openly.



Be flexible: Colleagues don't always know how they are going to feel or what they are going to want. This means they may require extra support, need unexpected time off, have several appointments to attend and someone to cover their work. Being as flexible as possible shows you recognize the significance of their fertility journey and how it is impacting your colleague.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Discuss with your colleague if and when they would like to check in.

Ask your colleague if they are comfortable with where they can go for support if they need it.

Check in with your colleague to understand if their working pattern is suitable.

Discuss with your colleague how the team can support.

MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Financial Abuse

Financial abuse is a form of domestic abuse where abusers interfere with their partner's access to money and finances through control, exploitation or sabotage that restricts their freedom. Financial abuse involves someone using or misusing money which limits and controls their partner's current and future actions and their freedom of choice. It can include using credit cards without permission, putting contractual obligations in their partner's name, and gambling with family assets. Creating financial instability can often make one partner dependent on the other, which can prevent people from leaving the abusive relationship and rebuilding their lives.

Symptoms

Spending - Restricted spending and access to finances – For example, if a friend frequently uses money as a reason for cancelling plans.

Joint Finances – Problems with joint finances – You might become aware of 'conflicts' between a friend and their partner concerning money, earnings or savings. Or a partner taking complete charge of their joint finances.

Shopping behaviours – Unusual shopping behaviours – Might be a friend obsessively asking for every purchase and becoming anxious when this isn't possible. Or someone hiding purchases from their partner.

Working habits – A change in working habits – For example, a close friend unexpectedly quitting a job they love with no real explanation. Or someone expressing a desire to work but their partner not supporting them to do so.



What questions can I ask to help start a conversation?

Asked you to account for everything you spend?

Stopped you from having access to your bank accounts or insisted their name be added to your accounts?

Forced you to take out credit agreements for products that they then use e.g. car finance.

Forced you to put all the household bills in your name?



What further questions can I ask?

Stopped you from going to work/college or university?

Cashed your pension or other cheques without your permission?

Stopped you from spending on essentials?

Insisted you give them your income from salary or benefit payments?

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- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the [Wellbeing Hub](#) for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.

You can also find support through the links below:

- [Surviving Economic Abuse](#)
- [Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men](#)
- [Getting help for domestic violence and abuse](#)

A few things to remember



Show you care: Acknowledge your colleague immediately, take them somewhere private and provide your full attention. Acknowledge the courage of the employee and how difficult it must be to talk. Allow plenty of time and space for them to speak.



Be aware of your response: Do not be judgemental and avoid language that indicates blame or fault. Have an open posture. If your colleague is emotional or angry, reassure them that you're there to help. Reassure your colleague that this is not their fault.



Confirm confidentiality: Following disclosure, let your colleague know that you'll only share this information if it's absolutely necessary. For example, to access help and support.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Let your colleague know you are there for them, whenever they want to talk about it.

Send your colleague any resources you have discussed to help them access support.

Check in with your colleague to see if they found the resources helpful and if it prompted any questions.

It's important to provide ongoing support to your colleague and allow them to discuss their situation when they are ready.

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Supporting a colleague who decides to transition

Transgender (or trans) people identify with a gender which differs in some way from the sex they were assigned to at birth. For many trans people, talking to friends, family, and colleagues about being trans can be difficult as they fear a negative response. If one of your colleagues decides to tell you that they are trans and are planning to transition to a different gender, this is likely to be a big decision for them, and they will be hoping for a positive, supportive response. How you respond and support them will be an important factor in making them feel comfortable and happy at work. Remember that it's entirely up to any individual to open up about their gender identity when and how they want, and whom they want to.

*Trans is a term that identifies the spectrum of those who feel that their assigned sex at birth does not match or sit easily with their sense of self. Some people may choose to use medical intervention in order to align their body and their outside appearance with their internal feeling.



What questions can I ask to understand the situation?

If your colleague hasn't told you anything but you've noticed changes in behaviour and are concerned for their wellbeing you could say "I've noticed you're a bit withdrawn, is everything

If your colleague tells you they're trans and have decided to transition, you could say "Thanks for sharing this with me – I appreciate that might not have been an easy thing to do"

"How are you feeling?"

"Have you shared this with anyone else?"

"Do you want to tell anyone else in the team or do you want this to remain confidential at the moment?"



What treatments can support my colleague?

Reassure your colleague that they have the full support of yourself and Royal Mail.

Discuss what time they need off and agree any periods of special leave and/or absence.

Agree how, when and who will talk to the rest of the team – remember this is their decision.

Agree with your colleague how they want to discuss things going forward,

Do your research - they will appreciate you taking an interest and taking your role in their transition seriously.

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- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the Wellbeing Hub for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.

You can also find support through the links below:

- [Stonewall Scotland](#)
- [RUComingOut - LGBT Coming Out Support Charity](#)
- [Home | Gendered Intelligence](#)
- [LGBTQ+ and Friends ERG | Group | Workplace](#)

A few things to remember



Respect: Listen to your colleague's requests and respectfully follow what they would like to do next. For example, what name they would like to be known by? What pronouns to use when referring to them (e.g. he/she/they)?



Provide reassurance: Ensure them that all their concerns matter and that you are committed to supporting them.



Understand there is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to transition: Its is different for everyone.



Watch out for your own bias: You'll work with lots of different people and their background, beliefs and opinions won't always align with your own. This shouldn't impact how you work with them.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

The best thing you can do is listen and be supportive, and make sure they have been able to access further information and support.

Arrange follow up time with your colleague, follow up on any questions your colleague asked you.

When the time comes, certain administrative processes will need to be put in place for your colleague's new identity at work.

Reassure your colleague that you are there for them and there to provide support.

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Supporting colleagues through the menopause

The menopause can be a subject that is rarely discussed in the workplace. Everyone's experiences are different, but for many women, the physical and emotional symptoms they experience can have an impact on working life. It typically affects women around the age of 50, but symptoms can begin as early as 40 and, for some women, it can begin even earlier. Research shows that some women feel they're unprepared for the arrival of the menopause, and the majority felt they needed further advice and support.

Symptoms

We're not expecting line managers to be doctors, but to help you understand what your colleague may be going through, here's some things women can experience:

Hot flushes | Mood swings | Tiredness | Headaches | Palpitations | Anxiety | Low mood | Depression | Forgetfulness



What questions can I ask to find out how I can support?

“How are you feeling?”

“Is there anything worrying you?”

“Would you prefer to speak to someone else about this?”

“How can I help?”

“Are you getting support?”

“Are you happy to share how you're feeling with your colleagues... How would you like to do that?”



What treatments can support my colleague?

Discuss current working arrangements (e.g. hours, working patterns, location etc).

Look at useful changes that might help (e.g. desk fan, time off for appointments).

Arrange how often you will check in

Remind them of all the useful tools and resources on the Employee Assistance Programme.

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- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the Wellbeing Hub for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.
- **Online Wellbeing Workshops:** Register today for our workplace wellbeing workshops so you can confidently address and improve your own wellbeing as well as supporting others. Topics include menopause and many more.

You can also find support through the links below:

- [Menopause Matters](#)
- [The Menopause Exchange](#)
- [Menopause Hub](#)

A few things to remember



Show you care: Acknowledge your colleague immediately and take them somewhere private. They may find the menopause difficult to talk about - create a space where it's easy to speak openly.



Don't make assumptions: Everyone is different. Be careful about generalizing symptoms and don't assume everyone is comfortable talking openly about it.



Listen: You may feel uncomfortable discussing this, or can't relate to, or understand, what your colleague is going through. It's important that you show empathy, ask the right questions and try and learn more about what they're experiencing.



Reassure them: Many women may be worrying about the effects of the menopause on their job. Reassure them that you are there to support their wellbeing and discuss any concerns they may have.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Follow up on any commitments you made. If you need your managers support to make those changes happen, do this quickly.

Discuss and agree how to best follow up with your colleague. They may not want to talk about how they're feeling all of the time, but make sure they know your door is always open.

Check in to see if they found the resources helpful.

Be led by your colleague – they will let you know how little or often they want to talk about their symptoms.

MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Relationship Separation

The ending of a relationship can be a stressful and complicated time. It's one of those life 'crises' that can completely wipe a colleague out. The fog and distraction that goes with trying to cope will inevitably impact how a colleague feels when they're at work. If one of your colleagues is going through separation, this guide will help support them.

Symptoms

A relationship breaking down is a very sensitive and personal situation. Some colleagues may choose to share what's happening to them, others may prefer to keep it private. It's not your job to pry, but it's important that your colleagues feel supported.

Some signs that your colleague needs support:

Late or poor attendance | Change in eating habits | Tired | Withdrawn | Emotional | Distracted

If a colleague has shared their going through a breakup/divorce, these are some emotions they're likely to experience:

Rejection | Anger | Anxiety | Vulnerability | Guilt | Sadness | Fear | Worry



What questions can I ask to find out how I can support?

If your colleague hasn't disclosed anything but you're concerned about some of their changes in their behaviour you could say "I've noticed that ... is everything ok?"

If a colleague has shared they're going through a breakup/divorce you could say "Is there anything I can help with?"

Simply acknowledging what's happening might help them feel less isolated and asking how you can help gives them the opportunity to ask questions. You could say "I'm so sorry to hear that, is there anything I can do to help?"



What treatments can support my colleague?

Find out what (if anything) they want people to know.

There's lots of difficult practicalities that people need to deal with when separating. For example, legal appointments, financial separation, moving out and supporting children with the change. Being as flexible as you can shows you care and will help your colleague get through these painful necessities.

"Let's look at what support the Employee Assistance Programme can give you. You don't need to be in work to access this, you can call them on 0345 266 5060 or access through Help@hand"

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What information is available to help my colleague?

- **Wellbeing Employee Assistance Programme:** The EAP is a free 24-hour helpline and support service. You can call them on 0345 266 5060 or access through Help@hand. You can also access it via the 'Your Wellbeing' tile on the People App.
- **Wellbeing Hub:** For support on any issue you may be facing, go to the Wellbeing Hub for support relating to Mind, Health, Money and Life and more information on Help@hand.
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A few things to remember



It will take time: No matter how much notice someone has had, if it was their decision, or how long they've been together; break-ups can be emotionally draining and challenging for a long time. Whilst on the surface they 'seem' ok, your colleague might still be finding things hard. Remembering this will help you spot signs they need your support.



Everyone is different: Some people will want to talk, others won't. Some people will be visibly sad or angry, others might appear like nothing's happened. People won't always react or behave as you would, and that's ok. Follow their lead when assessing how you can best support them.



What to say: It's tempting, in an attempt to make someone feel better, to say things like "you're better off" or "you'll find someone else". Whilst meaning well, it's better to simply ask how they are, how you can help or just to listen whilst they're processing their emotions.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Send on any resources you talked about.

Check in with your colleague has agreed.

When the time is right, you might want to remind your colleague to update their primary contact

Let your colleague know you are there to talk to if they need your support.

MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Colleague Bereavement

There may be a time when someone in your team passes away. This guide tells you what to expect during this difficult time and where to access support so that you can be there for your team and the family of your colleague.

Symptoms

Typically, a family member will tell you that your colleague has died. This can on occasion be unexpected and in traumatic circumstances. Even if your colleague has been ill, it is still a difficult situation for you and your team to deal with.

When the news is shared, you, your team and your colleague's family may experience:

Sadness | Anger | Anxiety | Vulnerability | Guilt | Confusion



What questions can I ask to diagnose the situation?

Questions for the family

“Are you comfortable with me sharing this with the team?”

“Is there anything in particular you would or wouldn't want me to say?”

Agree contact with the family, who will that be.

Questions for the team

“How are you feeling?”

“How can I support you?”

“What support do you have outside of work?”



What can I do to support the family and my team?

Ask your colleagues if they need time away from their desk and make sure to check up on their wellbeing.

Share what to do with pension and benefits with the family members.

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A few things to remember



Show you care: Acknowledge your colleagues immediately. Create a space where it's easy to speak openly.



Impact on the team: The death of a colleague will have an impact on you and the team. Communication will be key, so, you can keep the team up to date and monitor how they are feeling. Remember people act very differently to bad news.



Listen: You may not know what to say or feel awkward because you don't know how to comfort or reassure them. Often, just being there to listen will help. This will apply to dealing with the deceased's family too.



Don't forget you: This will be difficult for you as you support your wider team. Share your thoughts with your peer group and your manager and don't forget the support our Employee Assistance Programme can provide to you as well as your team.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Send your colleagues any resources you have discussed to help them access support.

Follow up on any commitments you made to the family and team.

You could arrange a card and flowers from the team to the family. Check when the funeral will take place and who will attend.

Check back in with your colleagues to see what, if any, support they need.

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Serious Illness

It's not easy to deal with a serious illness (like a chronic condition that deteriorates, an accident or a medical emergency) but guidance and support are available. Showing patience, flexibility and compassion will both help your colleague, and reassure the rest of your team. This guide will help you be there for your colleague, friend or family member when they need it most.

Symptoms

Most people will share with you that they're suffering from a serious illness, but others may not so it's important to look for signs and symptoms. Here are some common ones:

- Change in behaviour
- Change in performance
- Hospital appointments
- Lack of concentration
- Absence pattern



What questions can I ask to diagnose the situation?

“What’s happened?”

“How are you feeling?”

“It must be a really difficult time for you. How can I help?”

“Do you have support outside of work?”

“What would you like me to tell the team?”

“Are you comfortable with your colleagues talking about this with you?”



What treatments can support my colleague?

“Let’s look at how we can take the pressure off you at work by prioritising and sharing your work across the team”

Think about if flexible working adjustments are appropriate.

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A few things to remember



Show you care: Acknowledge your colleague immediately and take them somewhere private. They may find medical issues embarrassing or difficult to talk about - create a space where it's easy to speak openly.



Think about the wider team: Communicate with the wider team as agreed with your colleague and keep them updated on progress. Make sure that they feel supported if they're taking on extra responsibilities during the period of absence.



Reassure them: Many colleagues will feel guilty about taking a long period of time off work. Reassure them that everything's fine at work and that all they need to focus on is recovering fully.



Keep in touch: Regular contact with your colleague will give them the opportunity to talk about how they're feeling and shows you care. Think about if and when it's appropriate to arrange a home visit.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Send your colleague any resources you have discussed to help them access support.

Agree how you'll stay in touch and how often.

Inform stakeholders of your colleague's period of absence.

When the time is right, think about how to make it easy for your colleague to return to work. Can this be a phased return?

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MOMENTS THAT MATTER: Terminal Illness

It's not easy dealing with someone in your team who is terminally unwell, but advice and guidance on what to expect and where to access support can make it easier for your colleague, you and your team.

Symptoms

Your colleague may share the news with you, but before they do, you might spot some signs in the run up to their diagnosis or confirmation that they are terminally ill such as:

Hospital appointments | Change in behaviour | Lack of concentration | Struggling to cope | Quiet | Withdrawn

When the diagnosis is known, it's likely that your colleague may experience:

Anger | Anxiety | Guilt | Sadness | Changes in appetite | Fear | Vulnerability | Fatigue



What questions can I ask to diagnose the situation?

“What is your doctor advising?”

“Do you want to tell the team?”

“What do you want me to tell the team?”

“What support do you have outside of work?”



What treatments can support my colleague?

Ask what they would like to say to the team and when they want that message to be shared.

When they are ready to talk more, you'll want to talk to them about what time they'll need off, if they'll need to alter their hours or look at flexible working arrangements.

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A few things to remember



Show you care: Acknowledge your colleague immediately and take them somewhere private. Create a space where it's easy to speak openly. Be guided by your colleague as to what they are comfortable with or ready to share.



Impact on the team: The terminal illness of a colleague and their eventual passing will have an impact on the team. Communication will be key. Keep the team as up to date as you can and create the time to talk with those who wish to.



Listen: You may not know what to say or feel awkward because you don't know how to comfort or reassure them. Often just being there will help.



Don't forget about yourself: This will be difficult for you as you support your colleague and the wider team. Share your thoughts with your peer group and don't forget the support the Wellbeing Hub provides.



What actions should I take to follow up with my colleague?

Talk to them regularly to understand how they are, and any additional support needs they may have as the illness progresses.

If your colleague is not in the office, see if they are open to home visits – agree what frequency or approach is right for them.

Don't leave communication to chance – agree a communication plan with your colleague, including what information should and shouldn't be shared.

When you receive the news that your colleague has passed away, communicate the passing of your colleague to the team. You may consider attending the funeral to show your respect.