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# Mental Health and Wellbeing in PPD

Marta Sabate-Gilarte and Ben Smart



# Introductions

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- Who are we?
  - **Marta Sabate-Gilarte** – PPD Wellbeing Ally
  - **Ben Smart** – PPD Mental Health First Aider

But what do 'Wellbeing' and 'Mental Health' even mean?

# What is Wellbeing?

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- Wellbeing is defined by the UK Department of Health as:

*‘feeling good and functioning well and comprises each individual's experience of their life  
and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values’*

- Wellbeing can be both subjective and objective.

# What is Mental Health?

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- Mental health is emotional and psychological health:

*We talk about 'physical health' for our bodies, and 'mental health' for our minds*

- Mental health encompasses all types of health related to the way we think, feel, and behave
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# Effects when low

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- Consequences of poor wellbeing or poor mental health at work:
  - **Work-related Stress**
  - **Burnout**
  - **Presenteeism**
  - **Absenteeism**
  - **High Turnover**
- Poor mental health has a negative impact on how we think, feel, and behave
  - It can cause distress or inability in social, work, or family settings, and impact daily living, including how we relate and interact with those around us



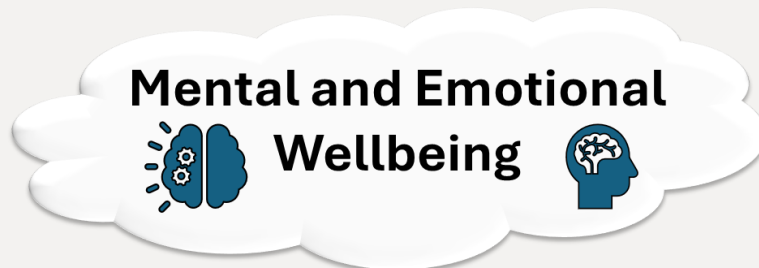
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# Wellbeing Ally



# Purpose of a wellbeing ally

- Make people feel comfortable to talk about their wellbeing at UKRI.
- Facilitate the culture of respect and openness.
- Help others to find help for themselves or for a colleague.
- Support through PAM and other resources.
- The four pillars of Wellbeing:



*Spread the word!*

*Encourage others to take the training  
and become a Wellbeing Ally.*



# The Four Pillars of Wellbeing



## Financial Wellbeing

How you feel about money and how that impact your personal life.

## Social Wellbeing



It is a measure of your interpersonal relationships.

It relates to your sense of belonging, social inclusion and social stability.

## Physical Wellbeing



The ability to maintain healthy quality of life without undue fatigue or physical stress on our daily activities:  
Sleep, Activity, Nutrition

## Mental and Emotional Wellbeing



A dynamic mental state.

Feel relatively confident, cope with daily life stresses, maintain good relationships, feel engaged with the world and resilience.

*poor wellbeing can lead to ...*

**Detriment  
mental health**

**Loneliness**

**Tiredness  
Difficult  
concentrating  
Irritability**

**Stress  
Anxiety  
Depression  
Psychological disorders  
...**



# The role of a Wellbeing Ally

## What it is ...

- **Listen** to you without judging and impartiality.
- Give you **support** in a safe environment.
- Enable that you handle the situation forward by finding your own way and solutions.
- **Signpost** people on the right direction to support.
- Stay connected: follow up.
- We can be allies also in remote.
- Provide support in crisis situations.
- **Your conversation is confidential.** *Unless handling a crisis situation as there is any indication of immediate harm to you or others.*

## What it isn't ...

- We do not have the clinical governance.
- We cannot tell you what to do.
- We do not 'diagnose'.
- We are not arbitrators.

# The Four Pillars of Wellbeing



## Financial Wellbeing

- ▮ Reduce stigma around money pressures.
- ▮ Provide education, support and tools for financial management to help reducing financial stress.
- ▮ Raise awareness of available rewards and benefits.

- ▮ Promote collaboration and create opportunities for connection.
- ▮ Improve sense of belonging.
- ▮ Provide inclusive and participative wellbeing events and promotions.

## Social Wellbeing



# The Four Pillars of Wellbeing

- ▮ Support in making positive health choices: sleep, nutrition, physical activities, etc
- ▮ Establish programs for specific areas of needs.
- ▮ Improve ways of working.

## Physical Wellbeing



## Mental and Emotional Wellbeing



- ▮ Create an environment where you can feel supported and be yourself.
- ▮ Culture of open discussion about stress, mental health, confidence in supporting, personal resilience, etc
- ▮ Better access to support, advice and signposting.





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# Mental Health First Aider



# Mental Health First Aider Role



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- *Mental Health Contact Person* might be a better name for the role
- I see the role as having two distinct parts:
  - **General mental health support, discussions, and signposting**
    - Talking with people who might be experiencing low mental health, or are worried about others, and helping them find help, or self-help.
    - This is just the same as the Wellbeing Ally, but focused on mental health
  - **First aid related to mental health**
    - Anything with a risk of harm
      - Suicidal thoughts
      - Psychosis (seeing or hearing things that aren't real)
      - Panic attacks

# Mental Health First Aider Role



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- A mental health first aider is trained to **listen without judgement**, and **provide support**
- We are trained in recognising and understanding a range of things that affect mental health
  - While it's not possible to understand everything someone is going through, we are trained to **empathetically listen, discuss, support, and signpost**
- As with the Wellbeing Ally, **all conversations are confidential, unless there is a risk of harm**
  - For example, if someone even jokes about suicide, I'm obligated to take it seriously and not as a joke, (better that than missing a genuine statement)
- A mental health first aider is not:
  - A clinician
  - A therapist
  - Someone who can make diagnoses



# ‘Mental Bandwidth’

- This is a concept I’ve come up with, but it can help understand the effects of low mental health
- We all have a certain amount of ‘mental bandwidth’:
  - It allows us to process information, think, and deal with things
  - When all your mental bandwidth is being used, you can’t process extra stuff at the same time, (in aviation this is called being task saturated)
  - How much mental bandwidth we have changes day by day
    - One day you might have less bandwidth due to illness or not sleeping well
  - If you are stressed, or have things on your mind, those will take up some of your mental bandwidth, leaving less for other tasks
    - Low mental health will eat up bandwidth, and may cause us to struggle with tasks we would normally find easy



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# Signposting



# Signposting

## The Source

- [The Source: Our Wellbeing](#)
- [The Source: Employee Assistance Programme](#)
- [The Source: Wellbeing Calendar](#)
- [The Source: Wellbeing event recordings](#)

 Employee Assistance Programme	 Our 2025 Wellbeing Calendar	 UKRI Wellbeing Ambassador Network
 Wellbeing Plan	 List of Wellbeing Allies (Excel)	 Wellbeing Ally Training
 Health and wellbeing Yammer group	 Line Manager Toolkit for wellbeing	 Health & wellbeing event recordings
 Action for Happiness	 Civil Service Sports Council (CSSC)	 Everymind at Work

## The Wellbeing App: [PAM-ASSIST](#)

## More

- [Civil Service Sports Council \(CSSC\)](#)
- [Mental Health Matters](#)
- [Health and Safety Executive: Tackling work-related stress using the Management Standards approach](#)



## Mental Health Support directory



**National signposting options**

These support options are available to anyone in the UK and most are open outside of usual working hours. They also support a wide range of issues that an individual may be experiencing.

- SAMARITANS**: Mental health 24/7 for individuals.
- PAPRIUS**: Suicide prevention available 24/7 to anyone aged 16+.
- shout 85258**: Mental health 24/7 for individuals.
- CRASHMATT**: Mental health 24/7 for anyone over the age of 16.
- Refuge**: Domestic violence support available 24/7 to anyone.
- mind**: First support at Open Monday 10am - 5pm.
- Hub of Hope**: Enter your post code to find a mental health support group.

**NHS signposting options**

Signposting through the NHS helps people navigate the healthcare system, find the right care, and get the support they need for their health concerns. They offer information on a wide range of health-related topics, such as conditions, treatments, and healthcare providers.

- NHS**: The official website of the NHS provides comprehensive information on healthcare services, treatments, and referrals.
- CALL 111**: If you have an urgent problem and can't go to your GP, you can call 111 for advice.
- Find a GP**: Locate and register with a GP for primary care.
- NHS choices**: Download the NHS app to have quick access to health services on your phone.
- Mental Health Support**: Find information on mental health services and support groups.

**Government signposting options**

The official government website acts as a central hub for accessing government resources. These signposting options ensure that people can access government services and information crucial to their wellbeing, financial stability, and legal matters.

- GOV.UK**: The official government website provides information on a wide range of topics, including benefits, tax, immigration, and more.
- Tax & Benefits Calculator**: Use this tool to calculate your tax, benefits, and entitlements.
- citizensadvice**: Get advice on your rights and responsibilities as a citizen, including help with legal issues, housing, and finances.
- UC Universal Credit**: Learn about Universal Credit, a government benefit for people on low income or out of work.

**General mental health related support**

Whether you are concerned about yourself or a loved one, there are many mental health charities, organisations and support groups that can offer expert advice.

- Anxiety UK**: Support for individuals with anxiety disorders.
- OCD UK**: Support for individuals with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.
- bipolar UK**: Support for individuals with Bipolar Disorder.
- Suicide & So**: Support for those bereaved by suicide.
- everymind at work**: Support for individuals experiencing an eating disorder.
- menopause Charity**: Information, facts, and support for those experiencing menopause.
- MANUP?**: Getting men to open up about their mental health.
- LGBT foundation**: A wide range of advice and support for LGBT communities.
- NHS**: Talking therapies, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT).
- THE MIX**: Mental health support for young people under the age of 25.

**Housing support**

Housing and mental health are often linked. Poor mental health can make it harder to cope with housing problems and being homeless or having problems with your living circumstances can negatively impact mental health. Should someone be homeless or about to become homeless, this section provides information on organisations that can help.

- SHELTER**: Housing information and advice service to anyone experiencing housing issues, homelessness or at risk of homelessness in England, Scotland, and Wales.
- Housing Rights**: Housing information and advice service to anyone experiencing housing issues, homelessness or at risk of homelessness in England, Scotland, and Wales.
- Refuge**: Domestic violence support is available 24/7 to women and children needing a safe place to stay.
- citizensadvice**: Housing advice and support for a range of issues including benefits, legal issues, and homelessness.

**Victim support**

If someone has been a victim of any crime, there are several organisations that can provide support.

- VICTIM SUPPORT**: Support to anyone affected by a crime and a victim of crime.
- Rape Crisis**: Helpline for anyone who has experienced sexual assault or rape.
- women's aid**: Support to women who have experienced domestic violence.
- Safeline**: Information, support, and advice for anyone who has experienced a sexual assault.
- everymind at work**: Support to anyone affected by a crime and a victim of crime.

**Carers support**

A carer is defined as someone who provides unpaid support and care for someone who has an illness, disability, mental health problem and/or addiction. Carers need support too and there is support available for a range of topics, regardless of who you are caring for.

- YOUNG MINDS**: Support for parents who are worried about their child's mental health.
- family lives**: Support for families living with mental health problems.
- National Autistic Society**: Support to the personally experienced.
- Demondale**: Specialist support for people experiencing Caring for someone with a mental health problem.
- we are withyou**: First regional support for addictions such as alcohol and drugs.

**Addiction support**

Here are some organisations that will support those experiencing a problem with alcohol, drug use and/or gambling.

- FRANK**: Information and guidance on finding support services for issues relating to drug abuse.
- we are withyou**: First regional support for addictions such as alcohol and drugs.
- ALCA**: Peer-to-peer support meetings and advice for anyone affected by alcohol abuse.
- TURNING POINT**: Access to local support for alcohol and drug abuse.
- ND**: Peer-to-peer support meetings and advice for anyone affected by drug abuse.
- GA**: Peer-to-peer support meetings and advice for anyone affected by a gambling problem.

**Financial wellbeing support**

Poor financial wellbeing can significantly impact an individual's mental and physical health. Here are some organisations that support those who are struggling financially, have debt or are seeking financial advice.

- StepChange**: Advice and debt and credit advice.
- MoneyHelper**: Bring support services of a financial adviser.
- turn2us**: Support to help anyone aged 16+.
- MONEY**: Information of financial planning.
- everymind at work**: Help with debt and credit.
- Cruse Bereavement Support**: Support, peer-to-peer groups and counselling for anyone affected by grief.
- Sands**: Support to anyone who is affected by the loss of a child, before, during or shortly after death.
- Child Bereavement UK**: Support for young people, parents and families to help them cope with the loss of a child or when a child dies.
- ALCA**: Guidance on finding regional support during bereavement.
- WINSTON'S WISE**: Helpline for guidance on supporting a young person or child during bereavement.
- ALCA**: Information, online support, peer-to-peer support for anyone impacted by a bereavement, suicide or mental health problems.
- SafeSpace**: Provides palliative, neurological and bereavement support.

**Bereavement support**

Help is available for anyone experiencing grief, recently or historically, who may need counselling or further support.

# Courses in Oracle

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- **Wellbeing Ally Training**
- Stress Awareness
- Understanding Emotional Intelligence
- Building Resilience
- Assertiveness
- Mindfulness

# Wellbeing: Meaningful May



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- [World Environment Day: your own superhero](#) – 4 June, 12pm to 1pm
- [Autism and ADHD: grandparents and extended family](#) – 11 June, 10am to 11am
- [What about you? Wellbeing for carers](#) – 11 June, 12:30pm to 1:30pm
- [Deputyship: how to apply and what the role involves](#) – 12 June, 11:30am to 12:30pm
- [Pride: past, present and future](#) – 18 June, 12pm to 1pm
- [What makes men healthy, physically and mentally?](#) – 19 June, 10am to 11am
- [Menopause drop-in](#) – 23 June, 12pm to 12:40pm





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# Self Care



# Self Care

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- Self care is doing things to take care of our health, and actively managing illness when it occurs
  - This is just as applicable to mental health as it is to physical health
- Some self care might be small things we do each day, or it could be bigger less-frequent things
- Different self-care will work for different people



# Self Care Examples

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- Drawing
- DIY
- Walking in nature
- Unplugging from technology
- Doing kind acts
- Taking a break
- Dancing
- Learning
- Cooking
- Meditating
- Watching a film
- Going on holiday
- Alone time
- Having a bath
- Laughing
- Connecting with others
- Making things
- Spending time with animals



# Self Care in our Brains



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- Sometimes it can be useful to think about what brain chemistry is going on during self-care that makes us feel good

## Happiness Chemicals and How to Hack Them

### DOPAMINE

#### REWARD/MOTIVATION CHEMICAL

- Finishing a task
- Celebrating small wins
- Self Care Activities
- Exercise
- Listening to Music
- Gratitude



wishinguwelltoday

### OXYTOCIN

#### LOVE /CONTENTMENT HORMONE

- Healthy Relationships
- Hugging Family
- Playing with a Dog
- Helping others
- Holding Hands
- Helping others



### SEROTONIN

#### THE MOOD STABILIZER

- Meditating / Yoga
- Deep Breathing
- Running
- Sun Exposure
- Oatmeal/ Bananas



### ENDORPHINS

#### THE PAIN KILLER

- Laughter / Dancing
- Dark Chocolate
- Meditation
- Vanilla or lavender essential oil







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# Becoming a Wellbeing Ally or Mental Health First Aider



# Becoming a WA or MHFA

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- We need more Wellbeing Allies and Mental Health First Aiders in PPD!
- Speak to Marta about Wellbeing Ally training
  - Training is done in-house by UKRI
  - Half a day training
  - Useful for everyone, even if you don't want to become an ally
- Speak to Ben about Mental Health First Aider training
  - Training is done externally by MHFA England
  - 4 day course
  - Expectation is that you become a MHFA afterwards





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# Conclusions



# Conclusions

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- Wellbeing and mental health are important, both in work and outside of it
- PPD has a Wellbeing Ally and a Mental Health First Aider
- Speak to these people, or with a colleague or a friend or a relative, if you want to talk, have concerns, or are looking for help, we are here for you
- External help is available
- Self-care is important too





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# Take care!

