

**NHS**

**North West  
Ambulance Service**  
NHS Trust



# Wellbeing conversations workbook

Learning & Organisational Development

# Wellbeing conversations quick tips

#BeThinkDo



## Wellbeing Conversations



Make time to have regular wellbeing conversations.



Consider using the Wellbeing Conversation Template to help prepare for the conversation.



If you require a more in-depth conversation use the Wellbeing Passport or Carers Passport. This may lead to signposting or referral into other processes, such as Reasonable Adjustments.



Other supporting resources are available on the Green Room, such as the Mental Health Continuum Matrix.



If you need further support please email:  
[wellbeing@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:wellbeing@nwas.nhs.uk)

# Good practice for wellbeing conversations

## Wellbeing conversation are:

- ✓ **Caring and compassionate** – they give space to enable employees to holistically explore their wellbeing.
- ✓ **Employee led** – they enable the employee to lead the conversation and focus on the most important things to them.
- ✓ **Supportive** – they signpost employees to the most appropriate support.
- ✓ **On-going and dynamic** – wellbeing changes over time, therefore these conversations should be held regularly.
- ✓ **Inclusive** – every NHS employee should have ongoing supportive conversations that enable their unique and diverse personal wellbeing needs to be met.

## Wellbeing conversation are not:

- ✗ **Therapeutic interventions** – employees should, where necessary, be signposted to access appropriate support from trained professionals.
- ✗ **Judgemental or performance related** – wellbeing conversations should not be used for performance management or as a way of judging the quality of someone's work.
- ✗ **A formal risk assessment** – all NHS colleagues should be invited to complete a risk assessment at their place of work. A wellbeing conversation does not replace this requirement.

# Wellbeing conversation hints and tips



## Planning for the conversation:

- Regular wellbeing conversations should take place.
- Agree when and where to hold the conversation.
- Complete the wellbeing conversation template before the meeting. The [Mental Health Continuum](#) can be used to help self-reflect.
- Consider if a wellbeing or carers passport may be useful as a supporting document to aid the conversation.

## Having the conversation:

- The conversation will start with a focus on how the person is... the rest can be led by them.
- During the conversation additional notes can be added to the template.

## After the conversation:

- The wellbeing conversation template is a confidential document. Both employee and manager should securely hold a copy.
- The wellbeing conversation date can be recorded in ESR.
- Plan ahead and book in the next wellbeing conversation.
- Be flexible, arrange further conversations as required.
- Follow up on any agreed actions, such as completion of the wellbeing or carers passport, looking at the information signposted to.

## Exploring wellbeing:

The conversation should be open and honest; a wellbeing conversation is a safe space to explore how NWAS can help people thrive in work. Typical questions asked may include:

- *How is your general wellbeing at the moment?*
- *What might be having an impact on your wellbeing?*
- *How are things going, both inside and outside of work?*
- *Can you tell me more about that...?*
- *Can you give me some examples...?*



The [Mental Health Continuum](#) can be used to help you self-reflect.

## Manager actions:

- Book regular wellbeing conversations with employees.
- Follow up on any actions identified during the wellbeing conversations.
- The wellbeing conversation date can be recorded in ESR.

## Employee actions:

- Prepare for your wellbeing conversation by completing the wellbeing conversation template and reflect using the Mental Health Continuum.
- Follow up on any actions identified during the wellbeing conversation.
- Let your manager know if you need additional wellbeing conversations.

## Further support and information:

- [Wellbeing / Carers Passport](#)
- [Mental Health Continuum](#)
- [Reasonable Adjustments Procedure](#)
- [Flexible Working Procedure](#)
- [Menopause Policy – NWAS Green Room](#)
- [Staff Networks](#)
- [Wellbeing](#)
- [HR Portal](#)
- [CPD & Learning Hub](#)

Contact The Wellbeing Hub if you need any further support:  
[wellbeing@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:wellbeing@nwas.nhs.uk)



# Wellbeing conversation template



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## Managing my wellbeing

What challenges do I face that impact my wellbeing at work?

What helps me to stay healthy and look after my wellbeing at work?



The [Mental Health Continuum](#) can be used to help you self-reflect.

## My wellbeing action plan

Actions to maintain, improve and/or support my wellbeing:

Manager actions:

Wellbeing / Carers Passport in place? Y/ N

Name:

Manager:

Date of conversation:

ESR updated? Y/ N



# Notes for your wellbeing conversation



# When a REACT conversation might be useful

- Prolonged exposure to a challenging role
- Out of character behaviour/performance
- After significant adverse life events
- When you are asked to have 'a chat'
- When a person is experiencing a crisis

Recognise

Engage

Actively listen

Check risk

Talk to them about specific actions

# REACT – Recognise

- You think someone might have a problem:
  - Behaviour (performance, time keeping, irritability, withdrawal)
  - Emotionality (tears, anger, despair)
  - Thoughts (negative, pessimistic, self-deprecating)
  - Physical symptoms (not readily explained)
- Try ***“how are things?”***, ***“how are you doing?”*** (ie. open questions)
- Say what changes you have recognised: ***“I hope you don’t mind me saying but I’ve noticed your time keeping has been off lately and you seem to be quick to anger. This is not like you. Is there anything can I help with?”***
- If someone starts to open up, seize the moment – stop talking and let them speak



# REACT – Engage

- They might not accept your offer of a chance to talk
- You might need to find ways to overcome resistance, gently and sensitively
- Try disclosing some personal information: ***“I remember when I first joined the team, I found it incredibly tough. Talking to someone helped”***

OR

- Try disclosing what others have said: ***“A number of your colleagues have told me that they have been finding it really tough lately”***
- Gentle persistence is key, with a clear focus on their situation (not your situation / others’ situation)
- Ensure your behaviour is encouraging, without any distractions

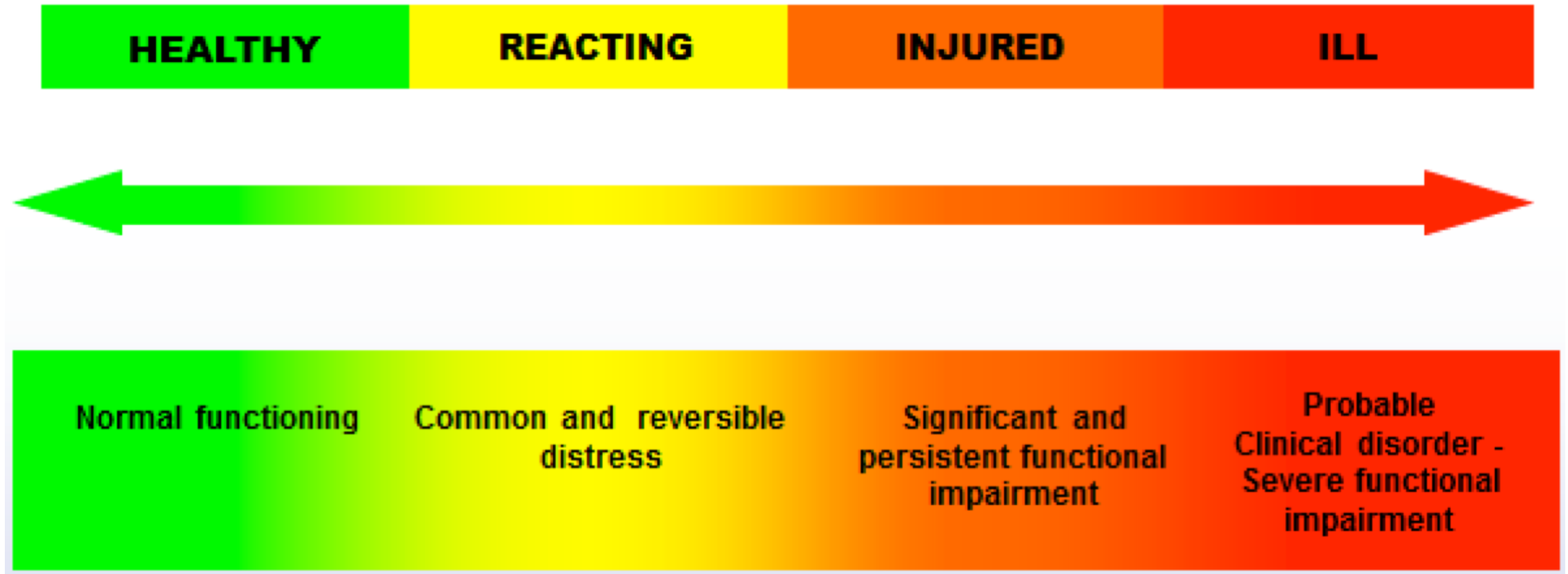
# REACT – Actively listen

- Let them talk (don't problem-solve until the end)
- Good eye contact and non-verbal cues (eg. nodding)
- Reflect and acknowledge emotions (*"That sounds really tough"*)
- Acknowledge possible concerns in speaking to you (*"I guess you might be worried about speaking to me about this"*)
- Paraphrase regularly to ensure they know you are listening
- Remember that listening is an action

# REACT – Check risk

- Ask forward focussed questions: *“What does tomorrow hold for you?” / “What’s top of your to-do list when you leave here?”*
- Check for dark thoughts (such as self-harm, harm to others)
- Don’t be reluctant to ask direct questions, using a stepped approach: *“Have you ever felt that there’s no point in going on?” “Have you thought that you won’t bother coming back?”*
- If in doubt, make sure you put their (and others’) safety first. The **level of questioning** depends on the nature of their situation
- You must **ask enough** to be sure (including difficult questions)
- Even when you’ve tried your best, some people will not want to talk about their mental health

# How to rate someone's state of mental health



# REACT – Talk to them about specific actions

- If someone is suicidal, you must take action straight away
- End the discussion with a specific plan to improve their situation
- You may wish to schedule a further time to talk
- If you are in doubt or have concerns about them, direct them to additional welfare-focused resources (such as found on the Invest in Yourself site)



 THE  
AMBULANCE  
STAFF  
CHARITY

## Ambulance Staff Crisis Phonenumber

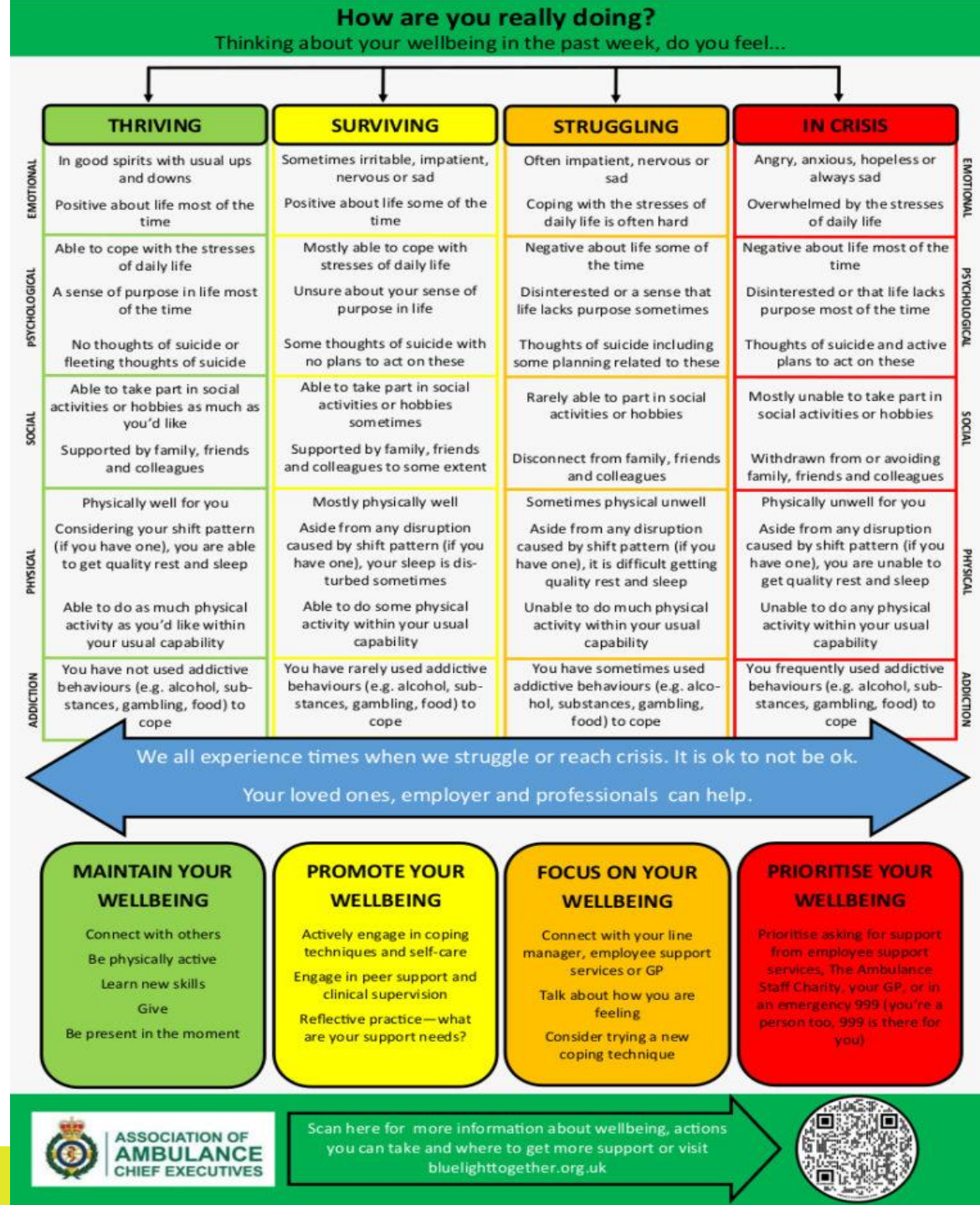
Immediate and ongoing suicide and  
mental health crisis care for  
all UK ambulance staff

**Call 0300 373 0898**

Independent and confidential

[www.theasc.org.uk/crisis](http://www.theasc.org.uk/crisis)  
#TASCP  
Registered UK Charity: 1163538/SC046384

# Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) mental health continuum





# Useful resources

- CPD & Learning Hub: <https://cpd.nwas.nhs.uk/>
- Top tips videos: <https://cpd.nwas.nhs.uk/module-page/top-tips/>
- Trauma Risk Management (TRiM): <https://greenroom.nwas.nhs.uk/resources/trauma-risk-management-trim/>
- NHS staff experience video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXGPmwAXpcc&t=91s>
- NHS England guide: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/looking-after-your-teams-health-and-wellbeing-guide/#introduction-and-getting-started>

#BeThinkDo

What's important for you  
and your team's wellbeing:

- Physical wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing
- Emotional wellbeing
- Social wellbeing

# Blank for your notes

#BeThinkDo

