



## Health & Safety

**Working remotely from staff:**  
Supporting you and your team

We know that many of us are worrying about the current situation around coronavirus and how it might affect our lives. It's likely that we'll be working from home for longer periods of time to help keep us all safe during the coronavirus outbreak. Therefore, it's important we recognise how it may affect our mental health and ensure we are taking care of ourselves and our colleagues.

ECA has provided some tips for line managers about how they can support their team's wellbeing as well as their own while working remotely or from home.

### **1. Maintain a positive work/life balance and encourage your team to do the same**

It's easy to get stuck into work and do longer hours and take fewer breaks when working from home. Why not put a reminder in your diary when you plan to finish working? You can also make sure you take at least a 30-minute lunch break. If you can, try to get some fresh air and go for a short walk. It's important you look after your own wellbeing so you can also be there to support your team.

### **2. Check in with team members regularly**

Working from home can be isolating; ensure you and your team have set up regular check-ins virtually. Find an online tool that works for your team whether it's Microsoft teams, Skype, Zoom or by phone. Try to ensure that these regular check-ins are scheduled in advance with your team members: have some daily scheduled chat time with each of them and regular time in the diary as a team. Also think about your team members and what will work best for them depending on their working styles and other commitments they have.

### **3. Establish new ways of working**

Working remotely will require consideration as to how you will deliver work as a team - what collaborative working platforms will be used, how you will communicate and how you support each other through challenges. Some of it might be trial and error so it is also important to think about how you will reflect on what's working and what isn't.

### **4. Ask your team to create Wellness Action Plans**

This is an uncertain and worrisome time for some and your team may need additional support. MIND has a Wellness Action Plan (WAP) tool to help team members to share about their mental health. If you already use a WAP then it would be helpful to review considering recent developments and changes. This can be looked at and kept up to date during 1-2-1s.

Everyone can complete a WAP, you don't need to have a mental health problem in order to feel the benefits. It just means that you already have practical steps in place to ensure you are supported when you aren't feeling great.

## 5. Take advantage of technology

Use Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype or other communication/collaborative working platforms to connect with colleagues and work together. It's can also be good idea to use a range of technologies so you're not always typing or looking at a screen – switch things up with a telephone call or video call so you can see someone face to face.

## 6. Encourage your team to use the support tools available

Whatever wellbeing support your organisation has available, make sure your team knows about it and how to access it.

EIC the Electrical Industries Charity, MIND and other organisations are offering counselling sessions via skype or phone and some free online services are providing remote physical activity classes. You could also ask your team what tools they might find useful.



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