

## Leadership and Communication during the Coronavirus pandemic

### What is this?

Providing clear leadership and effective communication helps to inspire staff confidence, boost morale, and encourages everyone to support each other. This is particularly important during a pandemic.

### Why should I be paying attention to this?

In times of uncertainty and change, people usually feel more worried, anxious, or stressed. Prolonged stress can affect physical and mental wellbeing. Good leadership and clear communication can foster a sense of team togetherness and support which can help to reduce feelings of stress.

The consequences of the pandemic will continue for some time and it's important to think now about how you will lead your team through this during the months ahead.

### What should my first steps be?

- Ensure that you brief all your staff and volunteers, including those who are working remotely, and that you do so frequently and in ways that they can easily access.
- Update everyone on changes, including reasons for those changes, in a clear and easy to access format where no one is left out because of their role or access to email, notice boards etc.
- Be sure that all employees/volunteers are clear about how to raise any concerns or worries related to Covid-19; listen when they do, agree what you will do, and then be seen to do it.
- Model the behaviour you expect from your team so that they can see you are really committed to the things you ask of them – e.g. following strict infection control procedures, taking breaks etc.
- Make a plan to address any longer-term psychological consequences of delivering care during Covid-19 using the resources provided below.
- Think about how you will support your staff and yourself during the 'recovery phase' of the pandemic – again, using the resources below.
- Take care of our own health and wellbeing; think about who can support you and ask for that support.

### How do I find out more?

A guide for leaders and managers in supporting the psychological needs of healthcare staff:

<https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/psychological-needs-healthcare-staff-result-coronavirus-pandemic>

Evidence base, summary notes on behavioural and psychological topics relevant to COVID-19:

<https://www.supporttheworkers.org/>

Public Health England COVID-19 Psychological First Aid course provides training for frontline and essential workers and volunteers supporting people during the pandemic:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-covid-19>

Resources to support healthcare leader during COVID-19 this includes looking after yourself, working with others and learning from other peoples experience.

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/leading-through-covid-19>