



# hello.

Welcome to our second issue - thank you for all of your feedback and comments about our first newsletter. Our 'publishing house' is small and working remotely across Scotland, so thanks also to them, our team of contributors and everyone who is submitting ideas for inclusion.

Whether you're at work, or at home, the lock-down is undoubtedly having a huge impact on how you live your life. This week, in addition to wellbeing, we look at some resources to help those of you working from home to stay safe.

Our next issue is going to look at ways to make the most of our personal time, whether it's to relax, connect with others, or learn new skills. Let us know what you're learning in lock-down - for inspiration, look no further than our First Minister, who alongside managing a national health emergency, is having to master other new talents:



## KEY INFO

### 24/7 SUPPORT

Through the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) you have access to both advice and one-to-one telephone counselling. This could be related to something in the workplace, stresses outside work, or a combination of both.

**To speak to someone in absolute confidence call 0800 854 562 at any time, day or night.**

## STOP PRESS - COVID-19 TESTING

The Scottish Government is committed to Coronavirus testing for key workers or their family members to allow them to get back to work as soon as it is safe to do so. Testing for SPS staff and family members has been ongoing since the beginning of April, however, as you may have read in the media there has been a recent expansion of the UK Government Testing programme for priority key workers in Scotland.

SPS is pleased to announce that further options for testing SPS Staff and their households are being made available including the potential to access home test kits, smaller sites and mobile testing units. Further details will be in the next edition of Connect and full details will be published in [Staff Notice 029/20](#) or staff at home can access information through their local HR team.

## #IWMD20

Every year on April 28th, the trade union movement unites to mark International Workers' Memorial Day. It is an opportunity to remember those around the world who have lost their lives at work, or from work-related injury and diseases. This year it was particularly poignant with the coronavirus pandemic affecting every worker regardless of sector or locality. SPS joined with colleagues throughout Scotland to take part in a minute's silence.

It was a moment to pay tribute to the sacrifice made of so many workers during the pandemic, to remember those who've sadly lost their lives, and to thank all those who continue to do vital work.

## TUS Update

The TUS continue to contribute to the SPS' response to Covid-19 and we are grateful for their support during this time. Following Phil Fairlie's successful appointment as Assistant General Secretary for the POA (Scotland), we can confirm :

- Mick Grattan is Chair of the POA(S) until next month, when Jim McCabe takes over, again, on an interim basis.
- Stuart Johnston (Prospect) is interim Chair of the TUS.

As well as wishing Mick, Jim and Stuart well in these roles, we would like to use this opportunity to thank Phil Fairlie for his tenure as TUS Chair - with 30 years of service in the SPS, including representing POA(S) members for 25 years, Phil has made a significant contribution to the profession and has been a champion for promoting its purpose and value in Scotland. We wish him the very best of luck as he continues his work within the POA(S).

## How You Can Help Protect Your Family at Home

We know protecting your family is important to you. To do this you should follow social distancing wherever possible at work and outside work and follow hygiene guidance. If anyone has a household member who is shielding and it is not possible for them to apply strict social distancing in their work then SPS will provide special leave. We ask that you also follow the advice below from the Pandemic Plan.

During a pandemic it is likely, along with all other public service workers, you will come into contact with individuals with coronavirus during the course of your work. It is important that you follow your general infection control guidance to reduce the risk of spreading infection to others.

- Always wash hands before you leave work and soon after you arrive home.
- Remove your uniform before leaving work and place in a bag to transport home.
- Wash your uniform as soon as you arrive home.

Whilst the appropriate use of personal protective equipment will protect clothes from contamination, during the pandemic you may wish to consider not travelling to and from work in any work clothes. Work clothes should be transported home in a sealed plastic bag and washed separately from other linen, in a load not more than half the machine capacity, in order to ensure adequate rinsing and dilution. The water should be as hot as the fabric will tolerate, and then tumble dried (where possible) and ironed.

To view the pandemic plan or guidance on PPE please see the [Covid-19 SharePoint site](#).



## How chaplaincy can support staff

Chaplaincy Services in SPS exist to support both those in our care and our staff. We are very aware that staff may be experiencing difficult times just now and felt it important to remind staff that the chaplaincy team is there for them. Our support and services are for people of all faiths and for those with no faith and accessible to you whether you are at home or in work. We are available to support regardless of the scale of the challenge you face. Chaplains can offer a range of support from simply being available to listen, confidentially, to what is happening in your life right now to helping you and your families through the most difficult times.

Sadly, the impact of Covid-19 means more of us will experience bereavement than usual. As our Chief Executive highlighted in a previous message, the impact of losing family and friends cannot be underestimated at a time when comfort cannot be offered in the normal ways we would respond to personal loss. For those of you experiencing bereavement we are here to provide spiritual, emotional and practical support. This includes assisting with funeral arrangements which are more complex due to the current restrictions.

For any help or advice please contact your local chaplaincy team or at HQ, Chaplain Sheena Orr [sheena.orr@sps.pnn.gov.uk](mailto:sheena.orr@sps.pnn.gov.uk) or contact [SPSConnect@sps.pnn.gov.uk](mailto:SPSConnect@sps.pnn.gov.uk)



# HOME WORKING

**It is important that you stay safe and healthy while working from home**

Ensure your work station is comfortable, safe and fit for purpose.



## TOP TIPS FOR WORKING FROM HOME

**With many organisations now operating a work from home policy it is important that whilst we acknowledge the many benefits, we also consider the good practice to support and protect our mental health and wellbeing whilst working from home.**



Start each day with the basics. Set your alarm, get up, and get ready by dressing in something comfortable but suitable as daily clothing - put yourself into "work mode" by following your normal routine.



Open windows to allow the fresh air to circulate. Phone meetings whilst walking are a great way to get those steps in whilst still working, even if it is only around your own home or garden.



Create a productive working space that is just for you with no distractions. Prioritise and organise your space each day before starting work so everything you will need is within your reach.



Make sure everyone around you knows you are working and ask them to respect your time. This allows you to set boundaries and not to get distracted with non-working commitments.



Build physical activity into your new daily routine, and avoid sitting for long periods - stand up every hour and move positions. Try out some home exercise workouts to keep active.



Work life balance is a core component to living a healthy and fulfilled life, our work should compliment our lives and vice versa, together they create a fantastic foundation for positive wellbeing.

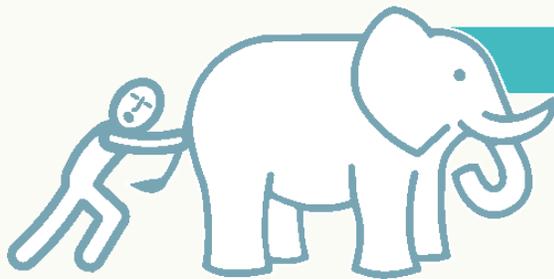
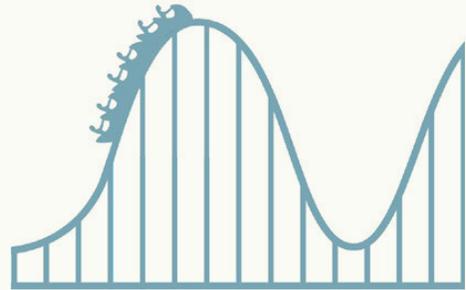
We found this information for those in critical care to be as useful for those working in prisons.

## MANAGING YOUR WELLBEING

Striking a balance between the positive factors and resources at work and the negative factors or demands at work isn't always easy. It is normal to have difficult days, but the following can help:

### Effective “rollercoaster riding”

Some people describe working in critical care as an emotional rollercoaster, so ways to counter this are important. Remember to take your breaks. Create a few minutes to step away from the unit, take a breath and relax. Outside of work allow enough “down time” where you can switch off.



### Acknowledge you are only human

The clinical work can provoke strong emotions. Sometimes when you have other issues outside work, coping with those emotions can feel even harder.

### Space to reflect, share and beware using avoidant coping strategies

We see a lot in critical care, and we need space to reflect and make sense of this. Keeping very busy, avoiding discussing things, over-eating, and drinking to excess are all risk factors. Your support networks inside and outside work are good places to discuss the day.



**There are times when our psychological wellbeing is so challenged that self-care is not enough. If you are finding things difficult, consider talking to your line manager or someone you trust about the impact of your work.**

**You may want a referral to your local employee wellbeing service.**