

BMA Mental wellbeing checklist

The BMA Mental wellbeing charter sets out practical actions employers can take to develop a wellbeing strategy and build a supportive culture. This new checklist has been developed in recognition of the exacerbating effects that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on doctors' mental health and wellbeing. It is designed to help doctors on the ground by providing them with specific 'asks' to help secure improvements and implement positive change locally.

Accessing support services

- Does your employer/trust provide a range of different options for accessing support? Offering reflective practice sessions and voluntary drop-in sessions alongside the traditional occupational health and psychological support services could encourage greater take-up and flexibility.
- Does your employer/trust ensure that the range of support services available are clearly signposted, free, and easily accessible? An annual Wellbeing Week, for example, would help to showcase the range of support structures available.
- Do supervisors, line managers, and senior staff positively refer to and encourage the use of the support mechanisms? Active encouragement by managers can help foster a more positive wellbeing culture for staff.

Creating safe and healthy workplaces

- Does your employer/trust support inclusive representation in forming their wellbeing strategy? Including representatives from across the medical workforce – (e.g. consultants, SAS and resident doctors) - on boards, divisional structures and incident management structures would help to ensure that everyone's voice is heard.
- Does your employer/trust take an active role in encouraging and enabling supportive team working? Implementing a peer-to-peer mentorship program or making active use of the NHS Employers ['How are you feeling today?' toolkit](#) are ways to encourage peer support and reduce social isolation.
- Does your employer/trust ensure that staff are consulted on the proposals for hospital developments? Establishing local staff consultation for all new projects will help ensure that all plans include sufficient rest facilities.
- Does your employer/trust take steps to value feedback, both positive and negative? Regularly presenting relevant exit surveys, NTS reports, guardian reports, and feedback from doctor forums to the trust board would help channel feedback to senior leadership, while positive feedback mechanisms such as [GREATix](#) would help to promote and reward excellence among staff.
- Does your employer/trust ensure that staff have access to basic necessities? Access to drinking water and food facilities, including an out-of-hours 24/7 menu, alongside designed car parking spaces for night shifts and on-call make a big difference in alleviating unnecessary stress.

Developing better workplace systems

- Does your employer/trust regularly assess rota design? Supporting fatigue-friendly rota design and committing to annual reviews of rotas would help prevent workload intensity and decision fatigue.
- Does your employer/trust support access to flexible working opportunities, including working remotely where possible? Allowing staff to work flexibly encourages agency and a better work-life balance.
- Are processes in place to ensure that locum, bank or temporary staff can access the areas and systems necessary to do their jobs? Being able to access trust software for example would prevent unnecessary frustration and stress.
- Are protocols in place to ensure staff self-harm or suicide is thoroughly investigated? Treating these incidents as an organisational SUI (or equivalent) should prompt a root-cause analysis assessment, including an evaluation of working conditions and their role in the incident.
- Do managers support work to ensure bleep-free teaching and uninterrupted breaks for trainees (excluding emergencies)?



British Medical Association
BMA House, Tavistock Square,
London WC1H 9JP
bma.org.uk

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