



# North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group

May 2020

## HR update 19 May 2020: Celebrate the power of kindness and an update on coronavirus symptoms

Thank you for your ongoing and outstanding support during these unprecedented times. We understand that these are challenging times and many of us are under extraordinary pressure at work and at home.

We appreciate that there are many messages currently being delivered – not just across North Central London but also from NHS England and Improvement and through many other channels. The COVID-19 situation is changing rapidly, and we are thankful for your time in reviewing these key communications.

This week's update focuses on the following areas:

- **Mental Health Awareness Week**
- **Update on symptoms of the coronavirus**

### **Mental Health Awareness Week (18-24 May 2020): Be kind to yourself and others**

Looking after our mental health has never been more important than right now. The coronavirus pandemic has transformed the way we live and the way we work. The crucial social interactions and routines that keep everyone – from children to older people - mentally resilient have been replaced with 'lockdown' and social distancing restrictions.

#### **Why kindness?**

One thing we have seen all over the world is that kindness is prevailing in uncertain times. We have learnt that amid the fear, there is also community support and hope. The added benefit of helping others is that it is good for our own mental health and wellbeing. It can help reduce stress and improve emotional wellbeing.

#### **Be kind to yourself**

The pandemic is affecting mental health in general, creating rising levels of anxiety, worry and stress. The CCG recognises that it is important to look after your own health and wellbeing, whilst supporting and caring for your family, friends and

patients. In turn, we wanted to remind you of some of the support that is available to all NHS staff to support you during the COVID19 outbreak:

- [Access to free Health and Wellbeing Apps](#) (such as [Unmind](#), [Headspace](#), [Sleepio](#), and [Daylight](#))
- [Information on looking after your mental health](#)
- [Looking after your health and wellbeing](#)
- [Employee Assistance Programme](#)
- [Staff Wellbeing Guide](#)

### **Be kind to others**

The [Mental Health Foundation](#) has provided some good examples of kindness that we can all do:

- Keep connected online with friends and family – call a friend you haven't spoken to in while; arrange to have a cup of tea and virtual catch up with someone you know.
- Community – Offer to send someone a takeaway or a meal; offer support to vulnerable neighbours; donate to a charity; donate to foodbanks.
- Work – Arrange to have a video lunch with a colleague; give praise to your colleague for something they've done well; lend your ear and call a colleague to ask how they are.
- Hold a virtual quiz with friends and/or family.
- Join the movement challenge and get active for 30 minutes a day.

Further information and inspiration is available via [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

### **Update on coronavirus symptoms**

The Government has updated the main symptoms of the coronavirus as follows:

- **High temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
- **New continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- **Loss or change to your sense of smell and taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

**Use the [111 online coronavirus service](#) if you have any of the above symptoms. They will tell you what to do and help you get a test if you need one.**

### **Further information and dedicated HR address for COVID-19 enquiries**

*If you have any further questions or would like any further information, please contact your the HR team via the dedicated COVID-19 email: [nclccg.hrcovid19@nhs.net](mailto:nclccg.hrcovid19@nhs.net) in order to arrange to speak to a member of the HR team.*