Wellbeing Newsletter
School of Clinical Medicine

Five Ways To Wellbeing
Welcome to the final 2016 edition of the Clinical School’s Wellbeing Newsletter.

Since the last newsletter the Wellbeing Programme has been busy promoting positive wellbeing via new resources, topic briefings and the first of the School’s annual wellbeing weeks. Back in September the Clinical School Wellbeing Team were pleased to welcome Jonny Benjamin (#FindMike) for what proved to be a well attended thought provoking screening of ‘The Stanger on the Bridge’. The subsequent Q&A session with both Jonny Benjamin and Sarah Hughes (CEO of Mind in Cambridgeshire) addressed the critical need for raising awareness and reducing the stigma of suicide.

The end of September also proved to be a busy time for the Wellbeing Team as the Clinical School hosted its first annual Wellbeing Week. The week set out to not only raise awareness to the importance of looking after one’s health but to also provide an element of fun and competition. Each day of the week provided something different and included the following;
- Monday – Launch of the Mental Health First Aider Scheme
- Tuesday – Launch of the Pedometer Challenge
- Wednesday – Launch of the new webpage resources
- Thursday – BHF Wellbeing at Work Event
- Friday – Smoothie bikes

Pedometer Challenge
Day two of the Wellbeing Week saw the launch of the Pedometer Challenge where 13 teams from across the School competed in a four week step challenge. The Department of Public Health and Primary Care won the overall challenge with team ‘The Angry Sweats’ clocking up an amazing 1,958,298 steps! CRUK CI also had a winning team as ‘HR Steppers’ won the best team photo category.

As the year draws to a close the School has hosted the last of its 2016 topic briefings, covering topics such as Diabetes and Domestic Abuse. Looking ahead to the new year, staff will be able to access even more webpage resources, topic briefings and the return of the annual Wellbeing Week. The first topic briefing of the year will address the topic of supporting cancer in the workplace and will welcome representatives from Macmillan Cancer Support to the School. The 90 minute session will address the impact of cancer on the workplace, how managers can support those facing cancer and the legal legislation protecting those affected by cancer against discrimination. This session is particularly relevant to those that have direct line management duties, however it is open to all staff. Further details will be circulated via the Departmental Administrators shortly.

With the topic of supporting Cancer in the workplace in mind, we encourage anyone with direct line management or HR responsibilities to complete a free E-Learning course provided by Macmillan. The course objectives are as follows;
- Explore some of the issues you might face if someone you manage is diagnosed with cancer, or is affected by cancer
- Gain an overview of the law in relation to cancer in the workplace
- Identify appropriate ways to respond to an employee who has received a cancer diagnosis, or is caring for someone with cancer
- Find further sources of information and support

To access the E-Learning course please visit the following link: http://learnzone.org.uk/courses/course.php?id=33

The new year will also prove to be an exciting time for the Cambridge Biomedical Campus Wellbeing Network Group as it plans its collaborative wellbeing projects for the next 12 month period. Previous wellbeing events that have taken place on the campus include the CUHT Open Mind Night (in aid of time to Talk Day) and the free weekly lunchtime walks which have proven to be very popular. For further details about the walks turn to page six.
Staying Well This Winter

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Seasonal Affective Disorder is a form of depression that is often more severe during the winter months and is known to improve, or disappear, during spring and summer. Although the exact cause of SAD is yet to be confirmed, the Royal College of Psychiatry reports a prevalence rate of 3 in 100 people and that women are three times more likely to be diagnosed with SAD than men.

For some people SAD can be severe enough to have a significant impact on their day-to-day activities. Symptoms of SAD can include:

- Irritability
- Persistent low mood
- Feelings of despair, guilt and worthlessness
- Feeling lethargic and sleepy during the day
- A loss of interest in everyday activities that would usually give you pleasure

SAD can be treated in the same way as depression and as such treatment may include self-help, lifestyle changes, talking therapies and antidepressants. In recent years light therapy has also become a popular method of treatment and is based on the theory that SAD is linked to reduced expose to sunlight during the shorter autumn and winter days.

If you are concerned that someone close to you may have SAD or you yourself feel that you are no longer coping, you may wish to consider whether a visit to your GP is required. For further information with regards to SAD please visit the NHS.UK website.

Top Tips for Surviving the Winter Months

The winter months are often associated with coughs, colds and various bugs but this does not always need to be the case.

1) Sleep– The Sleep Council recommends seven to nine hours sleep each night and yet the average adult only manages six and a half. With winter bringing darker afternoons and mornings, it is perfectly natural to adopt hibernating habits; so take advantage of a few extra hours sleep if possible.

2) Exercise– Regular exercise helps boost your immune system which is vital when trying to battle the numerous bugs we face each winter. Whilst the cold weather may deter you from exercising outside, try to swap this activity with a session in the gym or swimming pool.

3) Keep warm– cold homes have a significant impact on people’s health. Keeping warm over the winter months can help prevent coughs, colds, flu and more serious conditions such as pneumonia. If you are tempted to turn your thermostats down, in a bid to tame your energy bills, ensure that you consume hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day and layer up in warm clothing.

4) Flu Vaccines– Flu is a highly infectious illness that spreads rapidly through coughs and sneezes. If you are at risk of complications from flu, make sure you have your annual flu vaccination which is available on the NHS. The vaccine is available to anyone aged 65 and over, mums-to-be at any stage of pregnancy and children/adults with a long-term health condition. Children are also eligible for the vaccination, although the criteria is not as clear cut as it is for adults. For further information visit the NHS Flu webpages.
Christmas and Mental Health

By now many of you will be eagerly awaiting the arrival of Christmas and who can blame you. What with decorating the tree, eating copious amounts of food, spending quality time with loved ones, the extended Christmas break and presents galore, it is certainly the highlight of the year for many. It can however prove to be a particularly difficult time for individuals with a mental health condition. With this in mind here are our top five tips to help those that struggle over the Christmas period.

Get in contact

Research has shown that direct interaction with others can improve one’s wellbeing. With this in mind, Christmas is the perfect time to reach out to those you may have lost contact with. For those of you that may prefer quiet nights in over a large social gathering, you can still connect with loved ones via Christmas cards and phone calls.

For those of you that may be spending Christmas alone, it is important to remember that many of the mental health and talking support services will be available over the holiday period. The Samaritans talking service is open 360 days of the year and recognises that Christmas can be a hard time for many. Last year they received 198,000 calls over the festival period and they will be on hand again to help those that may be struggling. If you or someone close to you is in need of a non-judgemental ear this winter please call 116 123. If you are in need of urgent support, outside of the Samaritans service remit, then we recommend that you contact NHS 111 Option 2. Further details about the service can be found on page 5.

Limit your alcohol consumption

It is all too easy to increase your alcohol intake over the festive period and excuse it as taking part in the ‘festive spirit’. Alcohol, in moderation, is relatively harmless however it is important to remember that alcohol is a depressant and can exacerbate pre-existing symptoms of depression and anxiety. With this in mind try to include a few ‘alcohol-free’ days over the festive period and limit your alcohol consumption to the recommended daily allowance.

Try To Relax

The worry of catering for everyone’s specific food requests and making the rounds to ensure you see all your loved ones can be stressful to say the least. With this in mind it is important to take some time for yourself. Stress and the feeling of pressure can often lead to anxiety and difficulty sleeping which when prolonged can have long-term implications. During the busy Christmas period try to set aside some time for yourself, whether that is going to the gym, reading a book or practicing mindfulness. Try to remember that as much as Christmas is a time for socialising it is always important to look after yourself.

Food

It’s all too easy to over indulge at Christmas and let’s face it who doesn’t eat one too many mince pies and regret it later! Maintaining a healthy diet can positively impact on your mood and reduce the chances of lethargy & irritability. NHS-UK recommends that we eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day so really when you factor in those brussel sprouts and roast parsnips you’re almost half way there.

Flexible Routine

Having a well established routine is essential requirement for many of us. Routines can often require adjustments over the Christmas period and with this in mind it is a case of knowing your limits in terms of what structures you need in place in order to keep you grounded. It is important to remember that it is a balancing act between what you need and what you want.
National Wellbeing Dates 2017

**January**
- 1st-31st Alcohol Concern’s Dry January
- 9th-15th National Obesity Awareness Week

**February**
- 2nd Time to Talk Day
- 4th World Cancer Day
- 27th– 5th Eating Disorders Awareness Week

**March**
- 8th No Smoking Day
- 27th-2nd World Autism Awareness Week
- 30th- World Bipolar Day

**April**
- 7th World Health Day
- 10th-16th Parkinson’s Awareness Week

**May**
- 1st-31st Stroke Awareness Month
- 8th– 14th Mental Health Awareness Week

**June**
- 12th– 18th Men’s Health Awareness Week

**July**
- 16th Disability Awareness Day

**August**
- 1st-7th World Breastfeeding Week

**September**
- 10th World Suicide Prevention Day
- 29th World Heart Day

**October**
- 9th-15th OCD Awareness Week
- 10th World Mental Health Day

**November**
- 1st National Stress Awareness Day
- 14th– World Diabetes Day

**December**
- 1st-7th Anger Awareness Week
- 1st World AIDS Day

Support Service Update

Residents living in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are now able to access a new mental health team when they dial 111. The pilot scheme was launched in September 2016 by care provider Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT).

Who can call?
If you are unable to make the call yourself then anyone can call on your behalf, for example a friend, carer, loved one or even your GP. The service is available to anyone, of any age, currently living in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in mental health crisis, which could include:

- Changes to your mood
- Withdrawing from people (close family, friends or work colleagues)
- Not taking care of yourself like you usually would
- Having increased thoughts about your life not being worth living
- Excessive worry
- Feeling out of control or unable to cope
- Feeling anxious about leaving the house
- Hearing voices or seeing things that others can’t
- Thinking about harming yourself.

What happens when I call?
The phone will be answered by a trained mental health professional who will be able to listen to your concerns and help you get the support you need. With your permission, they can also access your medical records to better meet your needs and to avoid you repeatedly having to tell us your situation. They can offer advice over the phone, put you in contact with our crisis services or even refer you to a local Sanctuary. The Sanctuaries offer short-term practical and emotional support between 6pm and 1am, seven days a week and is run by the local mental health charity, MIND in Cambridgeshire.
Walk Local
Cambridge

FREE walks at Addenbrookes Hospital
weekly led lunchtime

Fun and friendly
Open to all – staff, visitors, patients & local residents
Improve your health

Meeting every Tuesday at 12pm or 1.30pm at Reception, near the entrance to the Concourse

Maximum of 30 minutes

To find out more, contact Sustrans on
01733 319 981 or
walklocal@sustrans.org.uk

Live & Work Well
Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Sustrans
Cambridgeshire County Council

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Sustrans in the East of England