Health & Wellbeing Newsletter:

February 2026 Edition

As we move through the final month of winter, the days are slowly getting lighter, hinting that Spring is just around the corner. It's a welcome shift and one that often brings a renewed sense of energy and motivation.

We're also excited to share that this month marks the start of something special, our Health and Wellbeing Newsletter now brings together colleagues from both Stockport and Tameside & Glossop trusts into one shared space! By combining our efforts, we can offer even more ideas, resources, and support to help everyone thrive. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn from each other, celebrate successes, and strengthen our sense of community across the trusts.

In this edition, we're sharing practical tips, upcoming events, and helpful resources to support your health and wellbeing across our NHS trusts. Inside, you'll find information on **Heart Month**, **World Cancer Day** and **Time to Talk Day** alongside other important national campaigns. It will also include a range of internal and external resources including local health and wellbeing activities all designed to help you feel your best and look out for one another.

As we step into the month ahead, we hope this edition gives you a moment to pause, reflect, and feel supported. Together, let's continue building a culture where wellbeing is valued, conversations are encouraged, and every colleague feels connected.



Amanda Bromley
Director of People and Organisational Development

National Campaigns

Heart Month

February is Heart Month – a perfect reminder to prioritise our cardiovascular health. Small everyday actions, such as moving more, choosing heart-healthy foods, staying smoke-free and managing stress, can make a big difference to long term wellbeing. Throughout the month, we're encouraging all colleagues to take simple steps to look after their hearts and to look out for one another. Let's use this opportunity to check in with ourselves, build healthy habits, and keep our hearts strong.
To find out more visit Heart Month 2026.

In support of Heart Month, Occupational Health will be displaying promotional boards in the reception areas of both trusts featuring information on cardiac and heart related health and wellbeing information. They will be offering blood pressure checks through drop-in sessions Monday to Friday 08:30-15:30 and are also open to discussing referral routes and providing leaflets to support everyone's wellbeing. You can contact **0161 419 5491** for Stockport and **0161 922 6437** for Tameside & Glossop.

World Cancer Day

4 February

4th February marks World Cancer Day, a global moment to raise awareness, promote prevention, and support everyone affected by cancer. This year's theme, "**United by Unique,"** places people at the centre of care, recognising that every experience of cancer is different and that compassionate, personalised support leads to better outcomes.To find out more visit World Cancer Day.

Both Trusts are holding a series of in person events in aid of World Cancer Day. On **Tuesday 3rd February Stockport's 'Get Clever Cancer Day'** is available to all and will be hosted in Pinewood Education Centre. Find out more here: Stockport #Get Cancer Clever Cancer Education Day and **Tameside & Glossop's 'Cancer Education Awareness Day'** will be held in Werneth House and you can email ETandDReception@tgh.nhs.uk for more details.

The Health and Wellbeing Team has also organised a **live webinar** on Wednesday 4th February with **Answer Cancer.** You can find more details and sign up here**:** Let's Talk Cancer: Screening, Symptoms & Awareness

Time To Talk Day

5th February

This is the nation's biggest mental health conversation day, led by the charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness. Its aim is to break the stigma surrounding mental health by encouraging people to talk openly and listen without judgement. It's about helping conversations feel natural and comfortable giving friends, families, and colleagues the chance to connect and have meaningful chats about how they're really doing.

How to get involved:

- **Start a Conversation**: Text a friend, chat with a colleague, or ask someone how they are really doing
- **Organise Events**: Host a coffee morning, set up a pledge wall, or run workshops at your workplace or school
- **Use social media:** Share your story and use the #TimeToTalk hashtag to spread awareness

You can find out more here: Time to Talk Day - Mind

A reminder that you have access to the Time to Talk toolkit to support in having wellbeing conversations at work. Click the following links for more information:

Stockport Lets Talk and Tameside & Glossop: Lets Talk







National Random Acts of Kindness Day

17 February

This National Acts of Kindness Day encourages everyone from patients to NHS staff to embrace small, thoughtful gestures that make a big difference. Simple acts like offering a warm compliment, a hot drink, or sharing a moment of kindness can significantly uplift morale across teams.

Below are some friendly, practical ways to spread kindness in your everyday NHS environment and find out more information here: National Random Acts of Kindness Day.

- **Make someone's day**
  Bring a hot drink to a colleague in a busy shift or write a quick thank you note for a job well done.
- **Support a colleague**
  Offer to cover a task or share your expertise. Especially helpful during high-pressure moments when we all need backing.
- **Pause & listen**
  Take a moment to check in, ask how someone's doing or simply share a smile. That small connection can make a huge difference.
- **Celebrate kindness openly**
  Use team huddles or staff celebrations to share stories of kind acts. Acknowledging these moments encourages more of them.

Rare Disease Day

28 February

Rare Disease Day takes place on 28 February 2026, shining a light on the experiences of the 300 million people worldwide living with a rare disease.

This year's awareness efforts continue to focus on visibility, community support, and ensuring equitable access to diagnosis, care, and treatment for those affected. The global campaign encourages people to "share their colours" by **raising awareness, sharing stories, and taking part in local or online events.**

As NHS colleagues, it's an opportunity to reflect on how we can better support patients with rare conditions, listen to their lived experiences, and connect them with the right resources and services. Together, we can help build a more inclusive, informed, and compassionate approach to rare disease care.

To find out more visit Rare Disease Day.

Eating Disorders Awareness Week

23 February to 1st March

This this year's theme focuses on the power of ***community*** and the importance of ensuring no one feels alone in their journey. Led by Beat, the UK's eating disorder charity, the campaign highlights how support networks, from family and friends to workplaces and online communities play a vital role in helping individuals feel understood and supported.

It's also a reminder that eating disorders are complex mental health conditions that can affect anyone, and early recognition and compassionate conversations can make a real difference. As NHS colleagues, this week encourages us to continue promoting awareness, reducing stigma, and guiding those affected towards the right support and resources

If you would like to know more or share your support, visit Beat Eating Disorders.

Health and Wellbeing Activity





Winter Wellbeing Support

As you know our **Winter Wellbeing Guide** went live at the end of last year, and we'd like to take this opportunity to remind you that all the information is still available to you to help you get through the remainder of the cold weather.

As a reminder the guide offers a wide range of information, practical tips, and resources to support your emotional, mental, physical, and financial wellbeing. There are details on local council support, tips for keeping well from staff across our trusts, details on the flu campaign and many other useful resources.

Stockport: NHS Staff: Winter Wellbeing Guide 2025

Tameside & Glossop: NHS Staff: Winter Wellbeing Guide 2025.

Financial Support: Salary Finance

Money worries are one of the most common sources of stress, yet they're often the hardest thing to open up about. That's why Salary Finance is hosting a live Money Q&A with money expert Stacey Lowman, giving you a safe, anonymous space to ask questions and get clear, expert answers to your money questions.

The session will cover everyday topics like budgeting, borrowing, and saving - and will also look at how the recent UK Budget announcement has brought new changes and questions, prompting many of us to think more carefully about how we manage our money.

When: Wednesday 25th February
Where: Online - join from anywhere! Register here

While the Q&A is a great opportunity to get tailored guidance, don't forget that you also have ongoing access to your Salary Finance benefits. This includes:

- **Affordable loans**: Repaid through your salary and designed to help with consolidating expensive debt or borrowing at a lower rate. **Representative Rate 13.9% APR (fixed).**
- **Learn**: a free online hub with tips and tools on budgeting, credit scores, emergency savings and more.

SALARY FINANCE

HEALTH AND WELLBEING CHAMPIONS



Health and Wellbeing Champions

We are still looking for colleagues to join us in supporting and shaping Health and Wellbeing across the organisation.

You don't need to be an expert; we're simply looking for people who care about staff wellbeing and want to make a positive difference.

All roles are **voluntary** and can be **flexibly adapted around your role and availability**, whether you're able to contribute ideas, support initiatives, or help promote wellbeing in your area.

Getting involved is a great opportunity to have your voice heard, work collaboratively with colleagues from across the organisation, and help influence wellbeing initiatives that matter to staff.

If you are interested, please email HealthandWellbeing@stockport.nhs.uk to receive an Expression of Interest form.

Wellbeing activities in your area

Remember, there's plenty happening across our boroughs to help you look after your wellbeing outside of work.

From local community groups and activities to free events and support services, there are lots of opportunities to unwind, connect with others, and recharge.

Making time for things you enjoy whether that's being active, getting creative, or simply spending time with others can have a positive impact on both your physical and mental wellbeing.

Taking time for yourself is just as important as the work you do every day. Have a browse through the links below to see what's happening near you there might be something new to try this month.

What's on in Stockport

What's on in Tameside

Spotlight on….

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)



In this month's Spotlight section, we're taking a closer look at topics that can affect our wellbeing as the seasons change. With winter still with us, it's the perfect time to talk about **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**, a condition that many people experience but often goes unspoken about.

SAD is a **type of depression that usually occurs during the winter months**, when reduced daylight can affect mood, energy levels, and sleep patterns. Common symptoms include low mood, increased tiredness, changes in appetite, difficulty concentrating, and a loss of interest in everyday activities**.** Although SAD can be challenging, **support and treatment are available**, including talking therapies and light therapy, which aims to mimic natural daylight. Reaching out early can make a real difference, and no one should struggle alone. These tips might be helpful:

- **Using a sunrise alarm clock**
  Great tip. Light exposure especially in the morning helps regulate your body clock, improves sleep quality, and can reduce winter low mood.

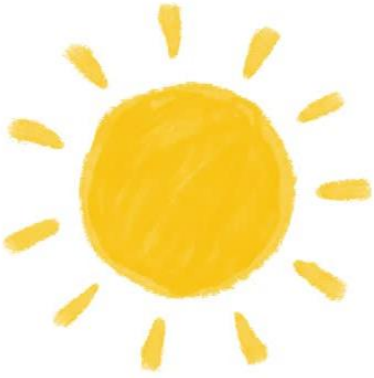
- **Morning exercise (or yoga/stretching)**
  A strong evidence-based suggestion. Movement boosts endorphins, improves cognitive functioning, and helps regulate stress.

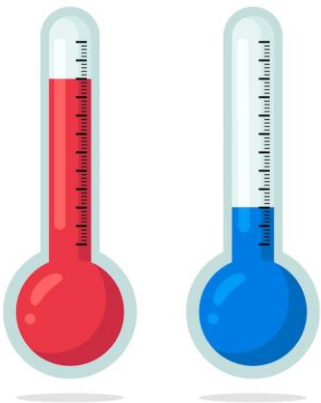


- **Staying well-hydrated**
  Yes. Indoor heating can increase dehydration in winter, and hydration is linked to better concentration, mood stability, and reduced fatigue.

- **Setting the thermostat to around 21°C**
  This is commonly suggested as a comfortable, productive indoor temperature though it's not essential for wellbeing, it can support comfort and focus.

- **Finding sunlight wherever possible**
  Perfect. Natural light exposure boosts serotonin and helps balance your sleep–wake cycle, significantly supporting mood. Walking adds additional mental health benefits.





External support resources

The NHS Talking Therapies

This is the national programme in England that provides **free, evidence-based psychological therapies** for adults experiencing common mental health conditions, specifically anxiety disorders and/or depression. Details of local NHS Talking Therapies are available on the here..

Maximus

This is the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service that can help you to stay in or return to work. If you are feeling low, anxious or stressed, the service can provide easy-to-access, one-to-one support. This is a free and confidential service and to find out more call **0300 456 8114** or visit Maximus.

Samaritans

If you feel like you need their support, you can contact a Samaritan on many channels please visit Samaritans to find out more information. You can also call **116 123**

Andy's Man Club

The initiative is a UK men's suicide-prevention charity offering free, confidential peer-to-peer support groups to help men open up about their mental health and reduce stigma. Find your local club Facebook page here: Ashton-Under-Lyne., Denton or Stalybridge.

Unmind

This is a mental health platform to help improve and manage your mental health needs. This free access offer to NHS staff which has been extended to **30th June 2026.** To access visit Unmind.

ShinyMind

This is an evidence based proven mental health and wellbeing app co-created with the NHS to help improve your wellbeing, build confidence and transform lives with a personalised service and a range of different tools. For more information visit ShinyMind

Mind

Mind is a leading mental healthy charity who can provide and support to ensure everyone feels listened to. You can find out more here: Stockport and District Mind and Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind

Shout Service

This is a free confidential 24/7 support text service you can access by texting **SHOUT to 85258.** This is delivered by specially trained volunteers overseen by clinical supervisors who offer immediate health and wellbeing support advice and signposting. You can find more information here: Shout

GM Resilience Hub

The hub continues to provide specialist psychological support for health and care staff related to incidents at work this could be current or historical. The service primarily addresses work issues, but they do appreciate that work and personal issues will be intertwined, and all staff can self-refer. Find out more information here: Greater Manchester Resilience Hub

The Zero Suicide Alliance (ZSA)

This is a UK-based initiative hosted by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, dedicated to suicide prevention through education, awareness, and training. You can find more information here: **ZSA**

The **Stay Alive app**,

The app, developed by **Grassroots Suicide Prevention**, is a free, award-winning suicide prevention resource designed to support individuals in crisis, those experiencing suicidal thoughts, and people concerned about someone else. Find out more here: Stay Alive

The Greater Manchester Wellbeing toolkit

The toolkit has been designed to help make it easier for you to look after yourself, your teams at work, and your families at home. This is an interactive toolkit full of links, resources supporting your mental, emotional and physical needs. To find out more click GM Wellbeing toolkit

Mental Health Crisis Helpline.

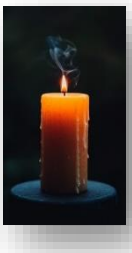
This is open 24/7 all day and night, 365 days per year and free of charge. To contact call 0800 953 0285 or browse/click 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Helpline

NHS Stockport NHS Foundation Trust

Internal support

NHS Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Team



The team provide **a 24/7 service** pastoral, emotional, spiritual and religious support to all patients, relatives and staff. Everyone is welcome to visit the Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care Centre, which is a quiet, reflective space with resources to support people's health and wellbeing, spiritual and religious needs. **Stockport:** The team can be contacted Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.30pm on ext. 115889 or bleep 1928 or 1979. For outside hours please contact switchboard who will call the On Call Chaplain. Email address: chaplaincy.spiritualcareteam@stockport.nhs.uk **Tameside & Glossop**: Please call Switchboard on 0161 922 6000 or the chaplaincy office on 922 5333 (leave a message if unanswered). You can also email: chaplaincy@tgh.nhs.uk

Freedom to Speak up



Speaking up is crucial to address concerns and listening helps us to understand, respond, and create a positive safe culture where you know you will be heard and valued. Nadia Walsh our Freedom to Speak Up Guardian wants to encourage speaking up and listening that can drive positive change. For more information contact her directly at nadia.walsh@stockport.nhs.uk or nadia.walsh@tgh.nhs.uk.

The Staff Psychology and Wellbeing Service (SPAWS) (Stockport only)

Staff Psychology & Wellbeing Service

Stockport staff can access SPAWS for **assessment, brief intervention and planning around any mental health concern**, such as anxiety, low mood, stress and trauma. The service also offers facilitation and training for teams and short courses around staying well at work, emotional coping skills and the emotional impact of work, as well as consultation to managers around mental health and wellbeing concerns in their teams. Email spaws@stockport.nhs.uk for more information.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) (Tameside & Glossop Only)

We know that supporting our staff's mental health wellbeing is very important which is why we provide Tameside & Glossop staff with 24/7, 365 days a year one to one support. The EAP put you through to qualified, trained specialist by calling **03303 800658**. The EAP can be used for staff members dealing with: **Anxiety, Bereavement, Stress, Depression, Workplace Issues, Trauma, Relationships, Finances, Family difficulties and much more**. As well as speaking to someone directly they also offer tailored self-help guidance books relating to all elements of mental health. You can register here: Vivup: Registration

PNA Service

A **Professional Nurse Advocate (PNA)** leads & offers support to nurses in practice utilising the restorative supervision model, advocating & encouraging nurses to be solution focused & leading on quality improvement, which in turn improves high quality of care and patient safety. To find out who your PNA is or information about training to be a PNA for **Stockport** please email PNA@stockport.nhs.uk and for **Tameside & Glossop** staff you can click here for the PNA intranet page, with forms to arrange a session with a PNA or phone 0161 922 4208.

Occupational Health



The Staff Wellbeing & Occupational Health Service offers a wide range of services including help with smoking cessation, alcohol awareness, weight loss, diet & exercise and health and wellbeing lifestyle assessments. Confidential appointments for a clinical opinion are also available via a referral from your line manager. For further information on the services on offer, please contact the Occupational Health Service at Stockport on **0161 419 5491** and Tameside & Glossop on **0161 922 6437.** OH are proud to offer a **specialist menopause service** exclusively for Stockport employees designed to provide compassionate, expert support exactly when it's needed. The service is **open to all Stockport staff**, and staff can **self-refer easily** by emailing: MenopauseHealth@stockport.nhs.uk This dedicated clinic is led by **Dr Lisa Barnes**, Consultant in Obstetrics & Gynaecology, who has a specialist interest in menopause care. Lisa runs **weekly staff-only clinics**, giving colleagues access to personalised advice, clinical support, and a safe space to discuss symptoms or concerns.

Meet the Team!



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Your Health and Wellbeing Team

This newsletter is brought to you by **the Health and Wellbeing Team** within the People & OD Directorate.

We are **Liz Poole and Olivia Cobb** Workforce Health and Wellbeing Leads. Our role is to inform, encourage and support staff to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Knowing what you think about the monthly newsletters is extremely important so that we can understand what is useful and valuable to help improve your experience and awareness of what is available to help support your emotional, mental and physical wellbeing. Please let us know what you think by emailing HealthandWellbeing@stockport.nhs.uk.

Stockport: All newsletter editions are available via this link and you can access the Health and Wellbeing microsite here**:** Health and Wellbeing Microsite or you can email HealthandWellbeing@stockport.nhs.uk

Tameside & Glossop: All newsletter editions are available via this link and you can access the Health and Wellbeing page on TIS here**:** Health and Wellbeing TIS site or you can email HealthandWellbeing@tgh.nhs.uk