Health & Wellbeing Newsletter:

March 2026 Edition

Welcome to the March edition of the Health & Wellbeing Newsletter.

As March arrives, so do the longer days and early signs of spring that bring a welcome sense of energy and renewal. Even with some cold days, there's a feeling that brighter days are on the way, offering us all a gentle reminder of positive change and new beginnings for this year. Spring is finally here!

In the midst of busy workloads and caring for others, it's important to prioritise our own wellbeing too. Small moments of rest, reflection and fresh air can make a big difference to your overall wellbeing, and this month's edition brings together resources to support you in doing just that. Inside, you'll find updates on key national campaigns, key information from the Health and Wellbeing team's upcoming activity and internal and external resources that can support in keeping you safe and well. Whether you're looking for support, inspiration, or simply a reason to pause, we hope you find something helpful.



As we move further into spring, let's continue building a culture of kindness, connection, and wellbeing for ourselves and for each other.

Amanda Bromley
Director of People and Organisational Development

National Campaigns

Brain Tumour & Ovarian Cancer Month

March marks both **Brain Tumour Awareness Month** and **Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month**, two important campaigns that highlight the need for early recognition, research, and support for those affected. Brain Tumour Awareness Month focuses on raising understanding of **common symptoms** such as persistent headaches, seizures, changes in behaviour, and difficulties with thinking or memory, while also emphasising how early diagnosis can improve outcomes for patients and families. Find out more here: Brain Tumour Awareness Month

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month shines a light on one of the most under-recognised cancers affecting women and people with ovaries, **encouraging awareness of key symptoms** including persistent bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, feeling full quickly, and changes in urinary habits, all of which can be easily mistaken for less serious conditions and lead to later diagnosis. Together, these campaigns aim to empower people to recognise potential signs, seek timely medical advice, and engage with trusted resources to help improve early detection and outcomes. Find out more here: Ovarian Cancer Action

International Women's Day

8th March



International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated globally on 8th March and is a day to recognise the achievements of women and highlight the ongoing work needed to advance gender equality. The 2026 campaign theme, **"Give to Gain,"** encourages collective action, reminding us that when we invest in women through support, visibility, and opportunity, communities and workplaces become stronger. In support of this the Health and Wellbeing Team have organised Menopause Awareness sessions for both trusts, see more details further down in the newsletter.

What International Women's Day Encourages Us To Do

- Celebrate women's achievements across our NHS and wider communities.
- Raise awareness of persistent inequalities in areas such as safety, leadership, pay and access to opportunities.
- Take positive action, big or small, to support gender parity and inclusion.
- Champion women's voices, ensuring they are heard, represented and valued.

New Women's Network!
We remain committed to advancing gender equity and are pleased to share continued progress toward the launch of the new joint Women's Network. Further updates and details of launch events will be shared soon.

Webinars

In the meantime, IWD and the Health and Care Women Leaders Network are hosting two upcoming events, open to all colleagues.

Driving change: advancing justice and equity for women in health and care
Friday 6 March, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
This webinar explores how reform, leadership and inclusive practice can advance justice and equity for women working across health and care. For more details and to register, click **HERE**

Say It Like You Mean It: *Give to Gain* Webinar
Monday 9 March, 1:00 pm – 2.00 pm
A practical, interactive session focused on how language shapes confidence, credibility and influence, particularly for women in, or aspiring to, leadership roles. The session offers useful tools to strengthen your impact at work while remaining authentic to who you are. For more details and to register, click **HERE**

National No Smoking Day

Wednesday 11th March

The day aims to encourage and support people to take the important step of quitting smoking, highlighting the health dangers associated with it and the benefits of becoming smoke-free.

Originally founded in 1984 and now supported by the British Heart Foundation, the campaign focuses on raising awareness, reducing harm, and offering practical tools to help people quit for good

There are many benefits to quitting:

- **Improved breathing, energy and overall fitness** – your lungs begin to recover, breathing becomes easier and you feel more energised within days or weeks.
- **Lower risk of serious illness** – quitting significantly reduces your risk of heart disease, stroke, lung disease and many cancers, with risks continuing to fall the longer you stay smoke-free.
- **Better mental wellbeing** – after withdrawal passes, people often experience reduced stress, anxiety and low mood, alongside more stable mental wellbeing.

Take a look at the Greater Manchester Smoke Free app specifically created to support you in your journey and is available for NHS staff: Greater Manchester | SmokeFree



World Kidney Day

Thursday 12th March

World Kidney Day takes place on 12th March and focuses on raising awareness of how vital our kidneys are and the importance of early detection. More than seven million people in the UK are living with kidney disease, many without knowing it.

This year's theme, **"Kidney Health for All – Caring for People, Protecting the Planet,"** highlights the need for prevention, early diagnosis and sustainable care.

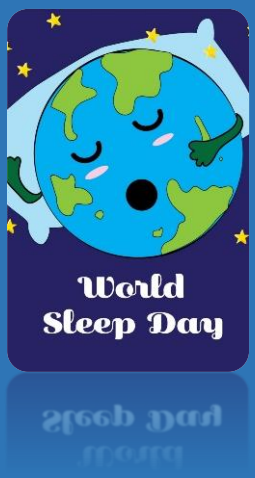
It's a reminder to look after our kidney health and help raise awareness for those at risk. Find out more here: World Kidney Day 2026

World Sleep Day

Friday 13th March

World Sleep Day takes place on Friday 13th March, highlighting the importance of healthy, restorative sleep. This year's theme, **"Sleep Well, Live Better,"** reminds us that good sleep is essential for our overall wellbeing and daily performance. It's a simple opportunity to pause, reflect on our sleep habits, and make small changes that support better health because prioritising sleep helps us all live healthier, happier lives.

Take a look at some resources to support this campaign and to help you improve sleep: World Sleep Day Resources



NUTRITION AND HYDRATION WEEK

Nutrition and Hydration Week

Monday 16th – Sunday 22nd March

Nutrition and Hydration Week takes place from 16th –22nd March, **shining a spotlight on the vital role that good nutrition and adequate hydration play in our overall health and wellbeing.** The week aims to raise awareness of malnutrition and dehydration risks, encourage best practices, and celebrate the positive work happening across health and social care.

It's a simple reminder that small daily choices like balanced meals and staying hydrated can make a meaningful difference to our energy, recovery, and long-term health. You can find out more information here: Nutrition and Hydration Week

Keep an eye out for comms and social media posts from the Patient Experiences Teams as they have some amazing activities planned.

Health and Wellbeing Activity

Last Month: Answer Cancer Webinar

Last month, Answer Cancer hosted an informative webinar for colleagues across our Trusts, focusing on **cancer awareness, early signs and symptoms, and the importance of attending screening appointments**.

The session explored how recognising subtle changes in our health, understanding common cancer symptoms, and staying up to date with screening can make a real difference to early diagnosis and outcomes. It also highlighted the vital role NHS staff can play in promoting awareness - both for us and the people we support.

A big **thank you** to everyone who attended and contributed to the discussion. If you couldn't join us live and would like any more information please reach out to HealthandWellbeing@stockport.nhs.uk

Menopause Awareness Sessions 2026

We're pleased to share that a series of **Menopause Awareness Sessions**, delivered in line with the **Henpicked – Menopause in the Workplace** approach have been confirmed for this year. These are 90-minute, informative sessions which will cover symptoms, support options, and discussions around how we can create a more understanding and inclusive workplace for colleagues experiencing menopause. All sessions will be held **online via Teams this year**, and you can **book your place through ESR by searching 'Menopause Awareness'** where you can also see the upcoming dates. **Our next session will be 13th March at 12pm.**

We'll also be running **Menopause Support Stands** at both trusts, offering information, resources and signposting for anyone wanting advice or guidance, watch this space for dates!

Why is raising awareness important?

Raising awareness around menopause is vital, as it continues to have a significant impact on women's health, wellbeing and working lives and the evidence shows just how important meaningful support really is.

- **Up to 90% of women experience menopause symptoms**, with **25% describing them as severe**, affecting daily life and wellbeing.
- **1 in 10 women leave their jobs** due to menopause symptoms — showing a significant impact on careers, retention and workplace wellbeing.
- **Over half of women (52%) report losing confidence at work**, and **61% say their motivation drops**, highlighting why workplace support is essential.

Join a Staff Network – open to everyone!

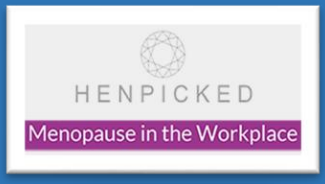
A reminder that our Staff Networks offer a supportive space for colleagues to connect, share ideas, and drive positive change. With five networks to choose from the joint **Carers**, **DAWN (Disability & Wellness)**, **LGBTQ+**, **RISE (Race Inclusion, Support & Equity)**, and our separate **Neurodiversity** network there's a place for everyone, whether you identify with a group or want to be an ally – everyone is welcome!

Meetings run **bi-monthly on MS Teams for around 1-1.5 hours**, and the Executive Team has approved 1.5 hours of protected time each month so you can attend without needing to make up the time.

To get involved, email:

Stockport staff: equality@stockport.nhs.uk

Tameside and Glossop staff: colleagueexperience@tgh.nhs.uk





GM WorkWell



Greater Manchester is one of 15 areas taking part in the WorkWell Pilot, running for one final month until 31st March 2026, offering personalised support for **people whose health is affecting their ability to work.** Participants are matched with a dedicated Work & Health Coach who can help with:

- **Access to physiotherapy, talking therapies, MSK support, and mental health services**
- **Building confidence and skills**
- **Finding flexible roles that suit health needs**

The pilot is funded with £7 million, aiming to support around 8,000 GM residents. It is delivered in partnership with NHS Greater Manchester, GMCA, councils, and community organisations.

This is a great resource for anyone (staff and patients) who are experiencing health related barriers to work, or who has recently left work due to health issues. Promoted around the Trust via OH and other departments, this programme is accessible to all.

To learn more about how WorkWell can support our colleagues and patients in the last month you can visit: Greater Manchester WorkWell Service

If you'd like a poster to display in your department, please email HealthandWellbeing@stockport.nhs.uk and we'll be happy to send one over.

Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership

HSBC



HSBC: Financial Checks

HSBC will continue to be onsite to offer colleagues the chance to drop by their stand and chat about all things financial wellbeing. Whether you're looking for general guidance or have specific questions, their team will be on hand to help.

They're also introducing **free, confidential 1:1 financial health checks** that you can book in advance. These 30-minute sessions are open to all staff no matter who you bank with and can cover a wide range of topics including savings, budgeting, debt, credit reports, investments, home buying, pensions, retirement and inheritance planning.

These sessions can be in person, on Microsoft Teams or on the phone.

You're encouraged to bring along any key financial goals or questions to make the most of your session. HSBC can also provide follow-up resources, including webinar recommendations tailored to your interests.

More information, including booking links and confirmed dates, will be shared shortly.

Stress Awareness Month – April

Next month is **Stress Awareness Month**, a national campaign that encourages us to recognise the signs of stress, understand its impact and take practical steps to protect our wellbeing.

Throughout the month, we'll be sharing tips, resources and simple techniques to help you manage pressure both at work and at home.

Stress affects everyone differently, and even small changes can make a big difference. Whether it's learning grounding techniques, taking mindful breaks, improving sleep habits or reaching out for support, we want to help you find what works for you.

We will be highlighting the range of support available across the trusts, including wellbeing resources and places you can go for advice.

More information and activities for Stress Awareness Month including the full calendar of activities will be shared in the coming weeks.

Stepping into Brighter Days

As we move toward lighter, brighter days, **it's the perfect time to gently reconnect with the outdoors**. Even a short walk in the fresh air can lift your mood, boost energy levels, and create a welcome pause in a busy shift or workday. Whether it's a lunchtime stroll, a moment in the garden, or choosing an active commute, every small step helps support your physical and mental wellbeing.

If you're looking for inspiration for local walks or hikes, we've included some great local walking options below to help you get started.

Stockport Walkers: Stockport Walkers

Walks and hikes vary from 4 to 10 miles in length and walks take place every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Find out more by visiting their website.

Walking in Tameside – March Trail: Walking in Tameside

Roaches Trail, **Sunday 29 March 2026,** 12noon - 3pm

From industrial heyday to wildlife reclamation, an easy two mile walk with Paul Nethercott

Where: Lay-by opposite Royal George Hotel, Manchester Road, Greenfield. OL3 7HX

Join a Ramblers group: The Ramblers: Britain's Walking Charity

Ramblers Wellbeing Walks groups are found all over England and there should be some within easy reach of where you live.

All of the short group walks are led by an experienced Ramblers Wellbeing Walks leader along tried-and-tested, easy to reach routes. Because you'll be walking with others, you'll feel safe, be supported, and have fun along the way. And everyone stays together, so you don't need to worry about being left behind. Pop in your location here!

Walkaday Walking Groups & others: Walkaday Events

Some examples of events listed above are Nordic Walking, 'This Girl Can', a Men's Wellbeing football session, 5 organised walking groups and a social stroll and that's all in the first week of March, take a look for the rest of the month.

Greater Manchester Moving – Walking Route: Walking Routes

This shows a mixture of walks around your area and beyond. Apply the filters and have a look what is available to you.

Tameside & Glossop NHS Staff Parkrun

Take a look at the poster on the right of this page for more details on the Stamford Park parkrun which is happening on 21st March at 9am (8:45 arrival)



Greater Manchester Moving



The Spotlight is on…

Navigating Social Media in a Healthy and Mindful Way



In this month's Spotlight section, we're taking a closer look at different topics that can affect our wellbeing.

A colleague recently shared how overwhelming social media can feel at times and they're not alone. Many of us use social platforms every day, whether for staying connected, following interests, or simply passing time. But alongside its benefits, social media can also influence how we feel about ourselves, our lives, and even our achievements.

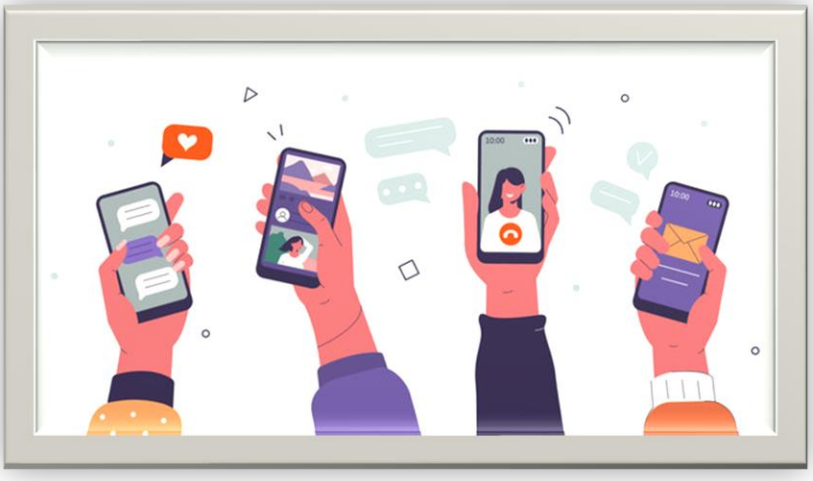
In today's digital world, we're constantly exposed to idealised snapshots of people's lives. These "highlight reels" can make it seem as though others are doing more, achieving more, or looking better when we're only seeing carefully selected moments. With the rise of AI-generated content and advanced editing tools, it's becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish what's real from what has been enhanced or created entirely by technology. This can unintentionally fuel comparison, self-criticism, and pressure to keep up with fast-moving trends.

It's completely normal to feel overwhelmed by this at times. If you've ever found yourself closing an app and feeling a bit deflated, anxious, or overstimulated, you're not alone. These feelings are more common than many people realise and there are simple steps that can help.

Below are some gentle reminders for healthier digital habits:

Healthy Digital Habits to Support Your Wellbeing

- **Remember it's a highlight reel** – you're only seeing the best bits, not real life.
- **Curate your feed** – keep accounts that uplift you and remove those that don't.
- **Be mindful of edited/AI content** – not everything you see is real.
- **Take short breaks** – even a few minutes away from scrolling can help.
- **Check your sources** – pause before reacting to dramatic or worrying posts.
- **Notice your mood** – reflect on how certain apps or accounts make you feel.
- **Set gentle boundaries** – small limits can reduce digital overwhelm.



Meet the Team!



Olivia Cobb & Liz Poole

Workforce Health and Wellbeing Leads

Olivia.cobb@stockport.nhs.uk
Elizabeth.poole@stockport.nhs.uk



Stuart McKenna

Assistant Director of HR (Inclusion and Colleague Experience)

Stuart.Mckenna@tgh.nhs.uk



Nadia Baynham

EDI Manager

Nadia.baynham@stockport.nhs.uk



Kelly Reeves, Colleague Experience Manager

Kelly.reeves@tgh.nhs.uk



Lucy Rowe, EDI Officer

Lucy.rowe@stockport.nhs.uk



James Pearson, Disability Advisor

James.pearson1@tgh.nhs.uk

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