

WELL-BEING CHECK-IN

A guide for monitoring employee burnout and increasing employee well-being

Reach for Resilience

The Reach for Resilience team composed this guide after synthesizing available information and research on supporting employees (including healthcare workers) through the COVID-19 pandemic, and general mental health concerns in the workplace. Sources for this guide are included at the end of this document.

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There are 4 well-known types of work stress injuries for healthcare workers during a pandemic:

Trauma Injuries	Due to experience or exposure to injury, horrific or gruesome experiences, or death
Grief/loss Injuries	Due to loss of people, things, or parts of oneself
Moral Injuries	Moral injury can occur when someone engages in, fails to prevent, or witnesses acts that conflict with their values or beliefs
Fatigue Injuries	The accumulation of stress from all sources over time without sufficient rest and recovery

Step 1: Know how to watch for employee burnout. See our **Behavior Monitoring tool** below to understand signs of burnout and observable changes in work performance.

Step 2: Normalize what healthcare workers may be feeling and provide them with the above education.

How to ask employees if they've suffered from any of these injuries:

If you are comfortable sharing, would you be willing to share any experiences you had during your work that might be an example of one of these injuries?

It's also important to ask about secondary stress effects:

*Can you think of ways that your work stress has impacted your life outside of work?
Would you be comfortable sharing any examples?*

Another tool that would be beneficial to use is the **Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)**. Employees can fill this out to better assess Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue. Find tool here ⇒ https://proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English.pdf + at the end of this guide. If you need ProQOL in another language ⇒ https://www.proqol.org/ProQol_Test.html

Step 3: Start the conversation

Observe:

- What behaviors have you noticed, coupled with the feedback they gave you in this conversation? Look for **patterns**, not just single events.

Organize your thoughts:

- Your goal is to provide **objective feedback**. Identify things that can be seen or heard. Be specific. Your role is not to diagnose or interpret what you think is going on.

Discuss:

- Share your feedback with the employee, reflecting what you have seen or heard from them.
- Use a non-judgmental approach with statements of fact.
- Focus on the behavior, not the person.

Tips on how to start the conversation:

“I’m concerned about you, and because I’m concerned about you as a person and as a part of our team, I want to share these concerns I have noticed... (Describe pattern).”

The “Sometimes” speech – common in coaching

“Sometimes when an employee is having trouble meeting expectations at work, there are things going on at home or in their personal life that are making it difficult to meet those expectations. The EAP can help employees address those personal concerns and can help employees address performance concerns as well. We want you to succeed here and the EAP is a great resource to help you do that.”

Step 4: Offer support if there are signs of burnout.

Provide information on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that may be available to them.

Other behavioral health services throughout the state of North Dakota can be found here:

Mental Health: <https://www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/about-us/mental-health>

Addiction: <https://www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/about-us/addiction>

Prevention: <https://www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/about-us/prevention>

*Employees can ask for more **localized resources** from First Link’s 2-1-1 Helpline: Dial 2-1-1, or 701-235-7335*

Step 5: Continue to monitor, have conversations regularly.

Factors can change rapidly during a pandemic, just like an employee’s well-being. It’s important to have regular check-ins with employees to increase support and their overall health.

For employees with identified burnout or trauma:

- Continue to monitor for signs of burnout and performance changes.
- Complete **full check-in** every 3, 6, 9, and 12 months.
- Complete regular check-ins in between quarterly timeframes.
 - See below for helpful tips if you only have a few minutes.

Only have a few minutes for Employee Check-Ins?

Regular employee check-ins, even if you only have a few minutes, shows appreciation and acknowledgement for work that is being completed and displays concern for employee well-being.

5 Minute Check-In	<i>"I appreciate all the time you've been putting in on [specific task/project]."</i> <i>"What can I do to support you for the upcoming week?"</i> <i>"What are you grateful for at work?"</i>
10 Minute Check-In	<i>"How have you been unwinding after a long day/long week?"</i> <i>"What makes you feel fulfilled in your role here?"</i> <i>"What have been some bright spots in your week?"</i>
15 Minute Check-In	<i>"What can I do to better support you?"</i> <i>"What, specifically, do you need to feel more supported in your job?"</i> <i>"What makes you feel happy at work?"</i> <i>"What could we do to improve your work life balance?"</i>

What to watch for: Burnout + Performance

<p>Signs of employee burnout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of interest or enthusiasm <input type="checkbox"/> Moving slower than normal <input type="checkbox"/> Disinterest in conversation <input type="checkbox"/> Disengagement <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibiting a negative attitude <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent tardiness or absences <input type="checkbox"/> Decline in productivity <input type="checkbox"/> Producing lower quality work 	<p>Fatigued workers may exhibit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lapses in attention and inability to stay focused <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced motivation <input type="checkbox"/> Compromised problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> Confusion <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability <input type="checkbox"/> Memory lapses <input type="checkbox"/> Impaired communication <input type="checkbox"/> Slowed or faulty information processing and judgment <input type="checkbox"/> Diminished reaction time <input type="checkbox"/> Indifference and loss of empathy
<p>Absenteeism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorized leave <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive sick leave <input type="checkbox"/> Monday/Friday absences <input type="checkbox"/> Repeated absences of two to four days <input type="checkbox"/> Absences of one to two weeks (5 to 10 days) <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive tardiness (especially on Monday mornings or returning from lunch) <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving work early <input type="checkbox"/> Peculiar/increasingly improbable excuses for absences <input type="checkbox"/> Higher absence rate than other employees for colds, flu, gastritis, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent unscheduled short term absences (with or without medical explanation) 	<p>“On-the-job” Absenteeism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continued absences from post, more than job requires <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent trips to water fountain or bathroom <input type="checkbox"/> Long coffee trips <input type="checkbox"/> Physical illness on job
<p>High accident rate/claims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Accidents on the job <input type="checkbox"/> Off the job accidents affecting job performance <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in concentration <input type="checkbox"/> Work requires great effort <input type="checkbox"/> Job takes more time 	<p>Confusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in recalling instructions, details, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing difficulty in handling complex assignments. <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in recalling own mistakes
<p>Generally lowered job efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Misses deadlines <input type="checkbox"/> Mistakes due to inattention or poor judgment <input type="checkbox"/> Wastes more material <input type="checkbox"/> Makes bad decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Complaints from consumers of service <input type="checkbox"/> Improbable excuses for poor job performance 	<p>Poor employee relations on job/Conflict</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Over-reacts to real or imagined criticism <input type="checkbox"/> Wide swings in morale <input type="checkbox"/> Borrows money from co-workers <input type="checkbox"/> Complaints from co-workers <input type="checkbox"/> Unreasonable resentments <input type="checkbox"/> Begins to avoid associates

Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)

Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue (ProQOL) Version 5 (2009)

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].
- _____ 11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a [helper].
- _____ 13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].
- _____ 20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.
- _____ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.
- _____ 22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- _____ 23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].
- _____ 25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
- _____ 26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
- _____ 27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].
- _____ 28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
- _____ 29. I am a very caring person.
- _____ 30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

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/www.isu.edu/~bhstamm or www.proqol.org. This test may be freely copied as long as (a) author is credited, (b) no changes are made, and (c) it is not sold.

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