# Improving Staff Wellbeing and Support during COVID-19

## Staff Support Coordinator: Getting the right support to the right people at the appropriate time

We know that Covid-19 is having a significant impact on staff. Sadly we have already lost colleagues and continue to have other colleagues falling ill. Our staff matter, and we will be doing everything we can to provide the right support to all through this time and beyond.

To help with this, a Staff Support Coordinator role has been introduced in all nine of the COVID-19 regions to recognise the importance of staff wellbeing at this difficult time. It will help to co-ordinate the various mechanisms of support available to staff from different areas of HMPPS and MOJ, in order to ensure the right support gets to the right people at the appropriate time.

YOIs in the YCS (Youth Custody Service) will be included and establishments in the contracted estate can also opt in.

The approach is already established across the three prison groups in the South West and is working well with good feedback from staff.

## The Staff Support Coordinator Role

The member of staff undertaking the role of the Staff Support Coordinator will act as the focal point for all guidance and information that is disseminated by our organisation and other various agencies and will share this with the Staff Support Lead in each prison. This role will link to the SPOC for staff deaths, the HR business partner structure and regional psychologists.

Support for the role is provided from the national safety team and there is a weekly call, chaired by the national safety team, bringing together national leads from Psychology, Chaplaincy, TRiM, HR and OH with the Staff Support Coordinators. There is no requirement for this to be a full time role.

## The Staff Support Lead (SSL)

The Staff Support Coordinator will work with their prisons to identify a SSL in each prison to be the link for all support services including Occupational Health, Chaplaincy, Psychology Services and TRiM Practitioners and Wellbeing Champions. Prisons may naturally consider the existing Care Team lead for this role and where appropriate, they should be given first opportunity to take this on. The SSL will need to have direct access to the Governor and/or Deputy Governor and the SSL role will be overseen, guided and supported by the Staff Support Coordinator.

The SSL would not be required full time, but some facility time is essential depending on the needs of the prison. The SSL would be responsible for ensuring all Care Team members are supported. Psychological services will offer supervision to SSLs.

In addition a Care Team member should, where possible, be made available for two hours each day, Monday to Friday, to allow staff to drop in and discuss support services specifically for their needs. This, ideally, should be in a room equipped with tea and coffee, large enough for people to exercise social distancing.

## Support for the roles

In additional to the weekly telephone meeting with the Staff Support Coordinator, on call support and advice will be provided from the national TRiM team. Each SSL will also be given a two hour telephone tutorial to upskill them on all aspects of staff support and wellbeing including the types of trauma that staff may experience; the support services available; and how to access them, as well as an overview of the structure and reporting system in place.

## For more information

If you have any further questions, please contact Jane Bailey from the National Safety Team [jane.bailey1@justice.gov.uk](mailto:jane.bailey1@justice.gov.uk) or 07773 080321.