

## Providing Emotional Support to Our Teams: A Leadership Response

These are simple ways to emotionally support your teams:

- 1) Round regularly (1-2 times daily), and connect with as many team members as possible. Follow the “Listen, Validate, Refer, and Care” model (page 2).
- 2) Incorporate wellbeing moments into huddles and team meetings (page 3).
- 3) Encourage team members to use available resources for support. The Coping Card has some ideas and lists resources (below).

### The Coping Card

At times, we all feel stress, grief, conflict, or disappointment. When you are having a tough time, try some of the coping strategies below, or contact a resource on the other side of this card.

**Take care of your body**

- Drink water & eat healthy meals
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule
- Meditate or take deep breaths
- Exercise in a way you enjoy: walk, bike, swim, hike, or dance

**Influence your thoughts**

- Think of 1 good thing happening this week
- Plan an activity that you’ll enjoy
- Take time to laugh & celebrate small wins
- Practice self-compassion—you are doing the best you can

**Connect with others**

- Talk/text with a friend or loved one
- Thank someone for helping you
- Help someone accomplish a task
- Perform a random act of kindness

**Engage in the moment**

- Listen or dance to music
- Feel your hands or feet in water
- Watch the sunset or spend time in nature
- Pet or snuggle with your dog or cat

**You are important. Caring for our patients, their loved ones and each other starts with caring for yourself.**

**For additional resources, please scan the QR code or visit [bit.ly/dukewellsupport](https://bit.ly/dukewellsupport)**



Personal Assistance Service (PAS) . . . . .	919-416-1727
Employee Assistance in Raleigh/Wake County . . . . .	1-800-327-2251
Employee Occupational Health and Wellness (EOHW) . . . . .	919-684-3136
Peer Support Program . . . . .	<a href="mailto:hsq@duke.edu">hsq@duke.edu</a>
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline . . . . .	1-800-273-TALK
Crisis Text Line . . . . .	Text HOME to 741741

## **Listen. Validate. Refer. Care.**

### **Listen**

Round regularly (1-2 times daily), and connect with as many team members as you can. When you round, actively listen to your team members:

- Ask open-ended questions, like “How are you doing?” and “How can I best support you?”
- Listen actively: nod, maintain eye contact, lean in, etc.
- Listen to truly understand, not to respond.
- Avoid interrupting or offering advice (try to create a different space for problem-solving).
- Before responding, allow a few seconds of silence. Your team member may have something else to say.
- Reflect what your team member has shared with you.
- Express empathy, and acknowledge the emotions being shared.
- Focus on your team members, not your own thoughts (you can focus on your needs later!).

### **Validate**

Consider having separate conversations for problem-solving so that you can simply validate and support your team during rounds—and normalize their reactions.

- “This is incredibly stressful, and your reaction is normal.”
- “I’m really sorry; it’s such a difficult time.”
- “It sounds like this is taking a toll on you.”
- And then... “I’m here to support you through this” or “I’m here for you.”

Each person may react differently. Common stress reactions:

- Decreased work quality, attention to detail, and ability to focus
- Repeated absences and extended breaks
- Physical symptoms: stomach aches, headaches, changes in appetite
- Increased anger, irritability, and conflicts with colleagues
- Fatigue or sleep disturbances

### **Refer**

Be aware of and acknowledge the need to access help, including professional counseling, peer support, and other resources.

- Encourage team members to access wellbeing resources.
- Model your own use of wellbeing resources.
- Distribute coping cards (page 3) electronically or as a physical card (we have printed copies).

### **Care**

It is important to care for your team members—and also to care for yourself. These tips are for everyone:

- Lean on your support network (peers, PAS, family)—and encourage your team to do so as well.
- Identify one way you can engage in self-care each day—and ask your team members to do the same.
- After listening to your team members, take time to process—or to just breathe.
- Provide as much specific information as possible to your team members (e.g., policy/practice updates).
- Embed moments of wellbeing in your daily huddles (see next page).
- Thank your team members for all their work. Be specific about why you are grateful.
- Model and encourage wellbeing behaviors: eat lunch, take breaks, and email only while at work.

## Moments of Wellbeing in Huddles or Team Meetings

Consider integrating wellbeing exercises into daily huddles and team meetings; they take just a few minutes. With consistent usage, these tools can help reduce burnout and enhance resilience. General tips:

- Acknowledge: “We are going through a difficult time, and it’s normal to experience a range of emotions. Let’s start this huddle with a moment of self-care.”
- Give team members a minute to think about their responses to your prompt (see below).
- Model each “moment” by sharing your own example.

### Gratitude

I am so thankful for you all and for the work you do to protect our patients, our families, and one another. Today, let’s be specific. Think of someone you would like to thank—maybe a family member who watches your kids while you’re at work, or a team member who helped you when you felt overwhelmed. If you are willing, please share your gratitude. (For more info on the science of gratitude, watch this [3-minute video](#)).

### One Good Thing

Staying positive is a powerful wellbeing tool. One way to stay positive is to recall something good. In thinking about the past few days, what is one good thing that has happened? If you are willing, please share.

### Looking Forward (use the day after One Good Thing)

Staying positive is a powerful wellbeing tool. One way to stay positive is to think about something good coming up. What are you looking forward to in the next few days? If you are willing, please share.

### Awe

Today, we’ll focus on the emotions of awe and wonder. Can you think of something amazing or inspiring you experienced recently? Your moment of awe can be anything, from seeing a coworker go above and beyond to a great movie you recently watched. Please share your moment of awe.

### Work-Life Balance (save for the end of the week)

It is the end of the week. How are you going to spend your time away from work? Think of ways you plan to unplug, decompress, and relax, and please share. Some additional thoughts about going home:

- Think of 3 things that went well today.
- Identify one thing that was difficult, and let it go.
- Be proud of the care you delivered today.
- Choose 1 thing you will do for self-care before you return to work.
- Switch your attention away from DUHS so you can be fully present at home.