

North-east COVID-19 observatory: issue 1.

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North-East COVID-19

Observatory

Issue 1—18 May 2020



Welcome

Welcome to the first of our bulletins regarding COVID-19 pertinent to health and social care staff. The aim is to provide a signposting resource for staff, educators and researchers in the North East of Scotland on items of interest gathered from the many resources available. The bulletin will be available two-weekly and will have two sections; section one will be dedicated to a theme and section two will contain news, articles, professional matters and upcoming events. Each issue will have a guest contributor with a specialist interest in the chosen theme. We have a dedicated email address (a.kydd@rgu.ac.uk) for people who would like to request themes or to send in resources that others might find interesting. We also welcome feedback.

Fortnightly Theme: Mental Health and Well-being

We are starting with one of the most important topics in managing living and working in a global pandemic – that of mental health and well-being. Dan Warrender, lecturer in mental health at the Robert Gordon University, shares his thoughts on impact of COVID-19 on mental health and wellbeing.



'Covid-19', 'lockdown' and 'unprecedented' are words which within months have become a core feature of nearly every sentence read or heard. Our world has changed drastically in a short space of time, and whilst we all experience things differently, no-one has escaped some impact to their day to day lives. Uncertainty hangs heavy in the air, as our mental health and wellbeing is tested in a variety of ways. Between the extremes of a very real threat of death, to the survivors guilt of feeling unexpected benefits to our lives, this pandemic has given us all a mental health experience which is understandable. Taking care of mental health has no easy answers, and no one right way, just the right way for you. Finding that may be aided by letting go of what you can't control, doing no more than you feel you can, and enjoying the little things you do have. Whilst we may feel powerless against coronavirus, we always have power within ourselves.

Mental Health Resources

We have reviewed and captured some digital tools on mental health and wellbeing support. During COVID-19 the first four are available to NHS staff free of charge and the remaining two publicly available.

1. [Daylight](#) — This site starts with a quick quiz to find out how you are feeling and provides tools to guide you through worry and anxiety.

2. [Sleepio](#) — Starts with a quick self-assessment with a six-week online program designed to improve your sleep schedule.
3. [Unmind](#) — A workplace mental health and well-being platform with advice to improve everything from happiness and sleep to focus and performance at work.
4. [Headspace](#) — Site concerning everyday mindfulness taking only a few minutes a day when you are on the go.
5. [Clear Your Head](#) — The Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, the Samaritans and Breathing Space have joined to launch this site. We found it particularly helpful in that it gives five topic areas and each one has useful tips and links to a wide variety of resources. It gives pragmatic advice, acknowledging that there is little you can do to prevent stress, but many things you can do to manage stress more effectively.
6. [Insight Timer](#) — This is a popular app addressing sleep, anxiety and stress.

Professional Practice Updates

[Principles for MH services in Scotland](#) — This document starts with and outlines the principles set in relation to COVID-19.

[Guidance on meeting the psychological needs of healthcare staff](#) — This site from the British Psychological Society (BPS) is a guide for managers of health services and considers all staff – clinical and non-clinical. It is written by an expert group made up of clinical, counselling, health and occupational psychologists with expertise across critical care, international disaster relief, traumatic stress, and NHS staff wellbeing.

[Who Cares Scotland](#) — The Care Commission offers additional support to care experienced people during the COVID-19 emergency giving new information and advice services and helping to create on line spaces for care experienced people to connect.

COVID-19 Library

Weekly Recommended Professional Reading

We have selected two papers that you might find interesting and which are related to the Mental Health theme.

The first calls for multidisciplinary research on the direct and indirect consequences of COVID-19. It also highlights the need to understand human behaviour to understand the initiatives that will help support population-level behaviour change initiatives aimed at reducing the spread of this disease:

- [Holmes, EA, O'Connor, RC, Perry, VH, et al., 2020. Multidisciplinary research priorities for the COVID-19 pandemic: a call for action for mental health science. Lancet Psychiatry, 10.1016/S2215-0366\(20\)30168-1](#)

The second is a short narrative reflective piece by a psychiatrist from the New England Journal of Medicine where he writes about his experience providing online consultations, doctor/patient boundaries and emerging new found authenticity in the doctor/patient relationship:

- [Kahn, M, 2020. Pandemic and persona. New England Journal of Medicine, 6 May](#)

Recommended Reading for Pleasure

Finally, we want to signpost you to a free book download 'The Book of Hopes'. It aims to lift children's spirits in lockdown. It is free to read online — [The Book of Hopes](#)

Be Involved in Local Events

BBC Scotland's Debate Night is looking for residents of the Aberdeenshire area to be part of the virtual audience and invites questions to Scotland's politicians and public figures. The Aberdeenshire episode will take place on **WEDNESDAY 20th MAY 2020**. Visit [BBC Debate Night](#) today and click 'Join the Audience'.

Local Avenues of Help

The Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub is coordinating help and support across Grampian (it is hosted by the Resilience Partnerships in Grampian). People can request help/support they require or can request on someone else's behalf – either online or via their helpline. More details are available at www.gcah.org.uk

The Editorial Team

We are a small team from the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Robert Gordon University (RGU). Angela Kydd, Clinical Professor in Nursing RGU / NHSG (editor); Piotr Teodorowski, Research Assistant (deputy editor); Dr Zoi Papadatrou, lecturer adult nursing; Maria Velo Higuera, lecturer midwifery; Colin MacLean, librarian; Rahul Oza, Online Learning Developer.

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