

Self-reflection toolkit:

Understanding how we respond
at work during times of
peak pressure

This self-reflection
tool is welcome and
has common purpose
across social care
and health.

Context

This self-reflection toolkit has been developed by the integrated workforce thinking group, a collaboration with Partners in Care and Health, Skills for Care and NHS Employers, who hosted a series of roundtables and discussions amongst social care and health care workers about integration and partnership working.

To support the workforce, we developed this toolkit for self-reflection on personal actions and tested it with colleagues across social care and health.

The self-reflection toolkit is for everyone working in social care and health, including managers, teams, departments and partners.



“A helpful resource which offers useful insights.”

Using the self-reflection toolkit

This toolkit is designed for personal self-reflection, supervision, and team development. We recommend that leaders and managers first use this tool on themselves before introducing it to their teams and colleagues.

When using the toolkit with your team, establish clear ground rules for the discussion, such as respecting diverse viewpoints and maintaining confidentiality.

This toolkit is not a resource for managing your own or other people's performance. It is a tool that aims to help you, and others think about how we work together at times of peak pressure. Helping each of us to improve our approach to times of peak pressure.

The toolkit will help to explore how you respond to times of peak pressure from four perspectives:

1. **yourself**
2. **your team**
3. **your colleagues**
4. **your partners.**

Under each perspective are four questions that can help you reflect on your response to peak pressure.

1. Understanding how **you** respond during times of peak pressure

Reflect on how you respond during times of peak pressure and find ways to better manage these feelings.

Are you clear on what you can change and what is out of your control?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

For the things you can't change, do you know who can help you?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

For the things you can change, do you have a plan for how you can tackle them?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

Do you know what things help you cope when you're under pressure and are you able to use them?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

2. Understanding how **your team** respond during times of peak pressure

Consider how we collaborate with our teammates when the pressure is on and explore ways to enhance our teamwork during these challenging periods.

Do you and your team support each other?

Comments / feedback:

Do you and your team talk about what you need from each other?

Comments / feedback:

Do you and your team talk to one another about how you are doing?

Comments / feedback:

Do you and your team resolve challenges together?

Comments / feedback:

3. Understanding how **your colleagues** respond during times of peak pressure

Reflect on how we interact with each colleague when the pressure is on. Consider how we can enhance our one-on-one interactions to strengthen teamwork during these challenging periods.

Do you and your colleagues know what each other's strengths are in dealing with peak demand?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

Do you play to each other's strengths?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

Do you and your colleagues know what each other's development needs are in dealing with peak demand?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

Do you know how to support one another with the things you or they are finding difficult?

[Comments / feedback:](#)

4. Understanding how **your partners** respond during times of peak pressure

Reflect on how we interact with our system partners when the pressure is on. Consider how we can enhance our one-on-one interactions with these partners to strengthen our collaboration during challenging periods.

Do you and your partners find solutions together?

Comments / feedback:

Do you and your partners value each other's contribution and do you and your partners tell each other how you value one another?

Comments / feedback:

Are you and your partners clear about who has responsibility for what, and are you clear about how that is held to account?

Comments / feedback:

Do you and your partners communicate about how things are going, including when things aren't going well?

Comments / feedback:

Use this space **to reflect** on what it was like to do this exercise and what you feel you have learned from it.

Comments / feedback:

Use this space **to reflect** on how the information and insights from the other sections might impact the care you provide to people within the system who draw on care and support. Identify any actions you can take forward or any support you need.

Comments / feedback:

What next

This toolkit is designed to be versatile and can be used in various settings, including 1:1s, team meetings and partner discussions. It's particularly valuable for reflection during busy periods, whether before, during, or after. We recommend using the toolkit during times of peak pressure, such as winter, high sickness absence rates, annual leave periods, or outbreaks of viruses and other challenges.

If you've come across additional resources that you've found helpful, we'd love to hear about them and share them with others. Additionally, we'd be delighted to know how you've used our toolkit and the impact it has had.

Please share your stories with us by reaching out at:
system.working@nhsemployers.org.