# Basic Needs At Work

Looking after and supporting staff to flourish at work

Basic Needs at Work: The Roadmap

The 7 steps that will be covered are:

- **Why it matters**: Statistics, the impact and importance of basic needs in the workplace
- **Research based:** Share the evidence and research
- **Assess needs:** Use the Basic needs At Work charter and action plan
- **Escalation route**: Ensure there is a visible and supportive escalation route
- **Listen to ideas:** Spend dedicated time as a team to discuss and create change ideas
- **Create a Quality Improvement (QI) Plan**: Use the QI template to create a change plan
- **Empower teams**: Encourage them to lead on implementing and testing out ideas

1. Why it matters

2. Research based

3. Assess needs

4. Escalation routes

5. Listen to ideas

6. Create QI plan

7. Empower teams

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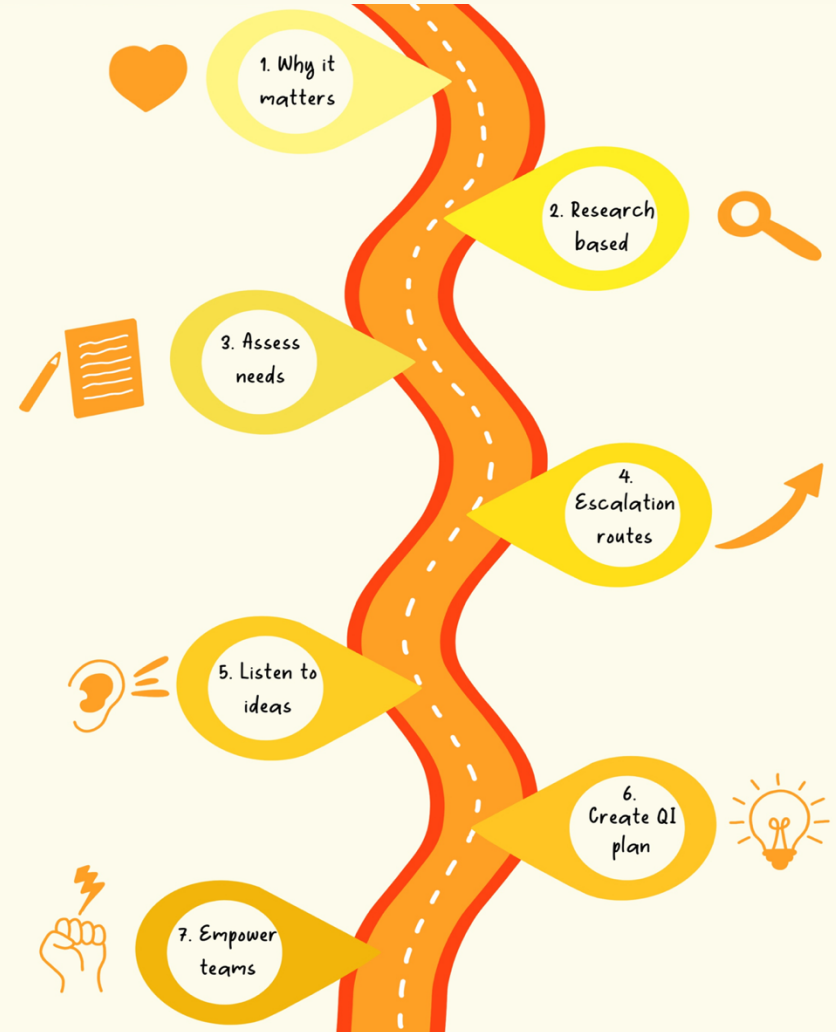
Current challenges in NHS

- NHS staff are 50% more likely to experience high levels of work-related stress compared with the general working population (Kings Fund 2022)
- Burnout significantly impacts the retention of staff and has led to an increase in people leaving the NHS (Deakin, 2022)
- A recent survey by the GMC found 18% of doctors considered leaving due to wellbeing factors (GMC 2021)
- Frontline workers related wellbeing factors to intention to leave the profession or lack of job satisfaction (Daniels et al. 2022, PIPP)
- NHS Trusts in England spent £6.2 billion on agency and bank staff in 2019/202 (NHS Workforce Alliance 2021)

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What is Basic Needs at work?
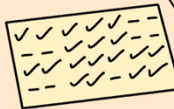
- Basic needs are things that staff need in place to help them carry out their job to their best of their ability

- These are things like access to food, drinks, having breaks and a good working environment.

- Research such as the CoCCo study and the PiPP project have highlighted that these basic needs are important in staff wellbeing but also whether they intend to stay in their jobs

- Having the basics in place can help staff perform better, be engaged and be motivated to carry out their work

- The Basic Needs at Work campaign is aiming to make sure staff have the best possible chance at delivering their role by making sure their basic needs are met

- Through this process, you will understand what basic needs are met and unmet. You will create a plan to help address unmet needs

Why Basic Needs Matter

Basic Needs At Work: The Jigsaw Of Wellbeing

Good lighting & temperature = Less eye strain, fatigue & accidents	Safe commute & parking = Less risk of damage, harm to staff & stress	24/7 access to hot & cold food = Better focus, energy levels & health	Time out space with tables, chairs & WIFI = Recharged staff, energised & rested	Sleep space = Better cognitive function, less risk of errors & better health	Different size uniform/ scrubs = Comfortable, easier to move, dignity & respect
Protected meal breaks = Well nourished & energy to be more productive/focused	Peer support & mentorship = Guidance for experiences, emotions & improvements	Treated with respect & kindness = Psychological safety & empowered to thrive	Secure space for belongings = Valued & protected staff who can focus on work better	Counselling & spiritual care = Less staff off sick, struggling or traumatised	IT, computer & workstation = More productivity, efficient working & less delays
Clear working patterns = Better planning, more flexibility & good will	Hot & cold drinks facilities = Less headaches, tiredness, better concentration	Flexible working & reasonable adjustments = Less staff turnover & better performance	Safe working patterns = Less errors, burn-out, sickness & better health	Paid on time & correctly = Valued and motivated staff with less worries	Office space = More productive staff, better concentration & outcomes
Fully equipped kitchen area = Recharge, energise & improve productivity	Annual leave= Better work/ life balance, less stress, motivated & happier staff	Security for support = Less risk of harm, increased safety for staff	Bathroom facilities= Less risk of urinary health problems & infections	Changing room with privacy = Increased dignity, respect and safe space for staff	Communication systems = Increased productivity, less delays & improved teamwork

Where did the idea come from?

- I have seen posts on social media about how staff felt undervalued, not invested in and struggling to cope with work

- Many of the things they raised were simple factors that could be addressed to transform working conditions

- Basic needs at work was an idea about how we can start to focus on the small things to help retain staff, support them to excel and help them to flourish at work

- I got the opportunity to collaborate with Jo Daniels who has done extensive research on basic wellbeing factors and beyond

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MENTAL HEALTH STARTS WITH MEETING BASIC NEEDS
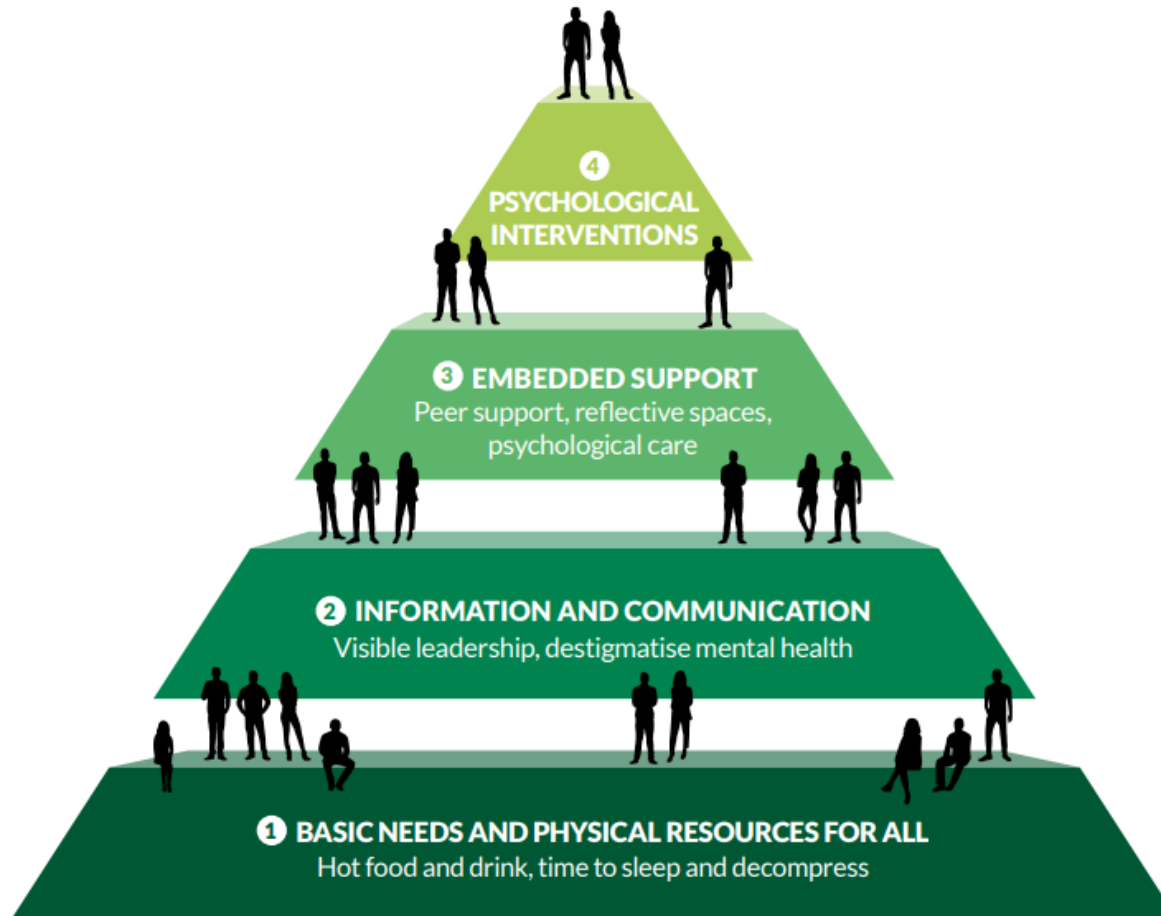
Basic Needs at work: The Research

Why do basic needs matter?

- You can't aim for "joy in work" if basic needs are not met

- You can't expect staff to focus on improving work if they are not looked after

- You can't rely on wellbeing ideas and appreciation factors if basic needs are not met

- We believe basic needs are the roots of wellbeing

- Basic needs are the foundation to build upon and without them people will not flourish

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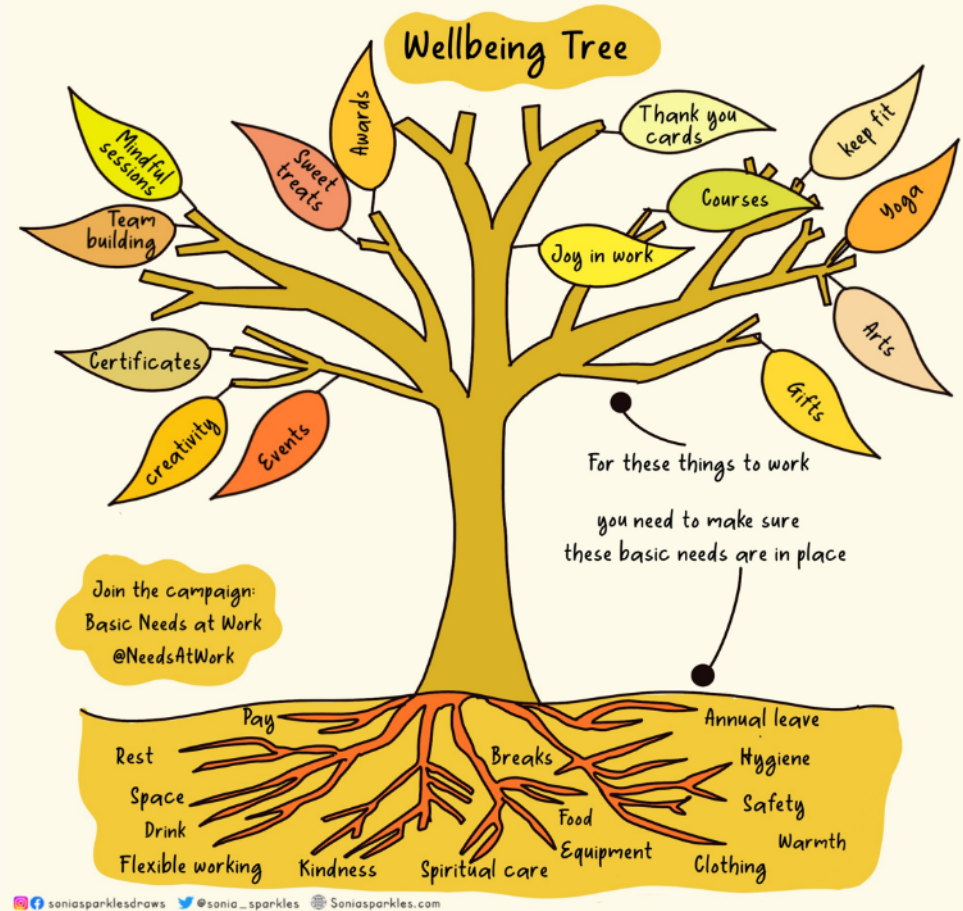
How can Basic Needs help ?

- Basic Needs are small actions that can be taken to improve the daily working lives of staff

- It is about providing the basic infrastructure for staff to be able to carry out their job to the best of their ability

- Meeting the basic needs of staff can help with staff retention, reduce burn out and improve their wellbeing

- Simple changes that are easy to do – it might cost a small amount in the short term but has potential to save a lot in the long term

Why invest in staff?

Investments attracts more people

A new starter can take months before they are competent

You have to pay "extra" for agency due to gaps

Investment leads to better productivity

You have to pay "extra" for overtime due to gaps

All that learning and knowledge will be lost

You have to go through long interview processes

When someone leaves, they take all their experience with them
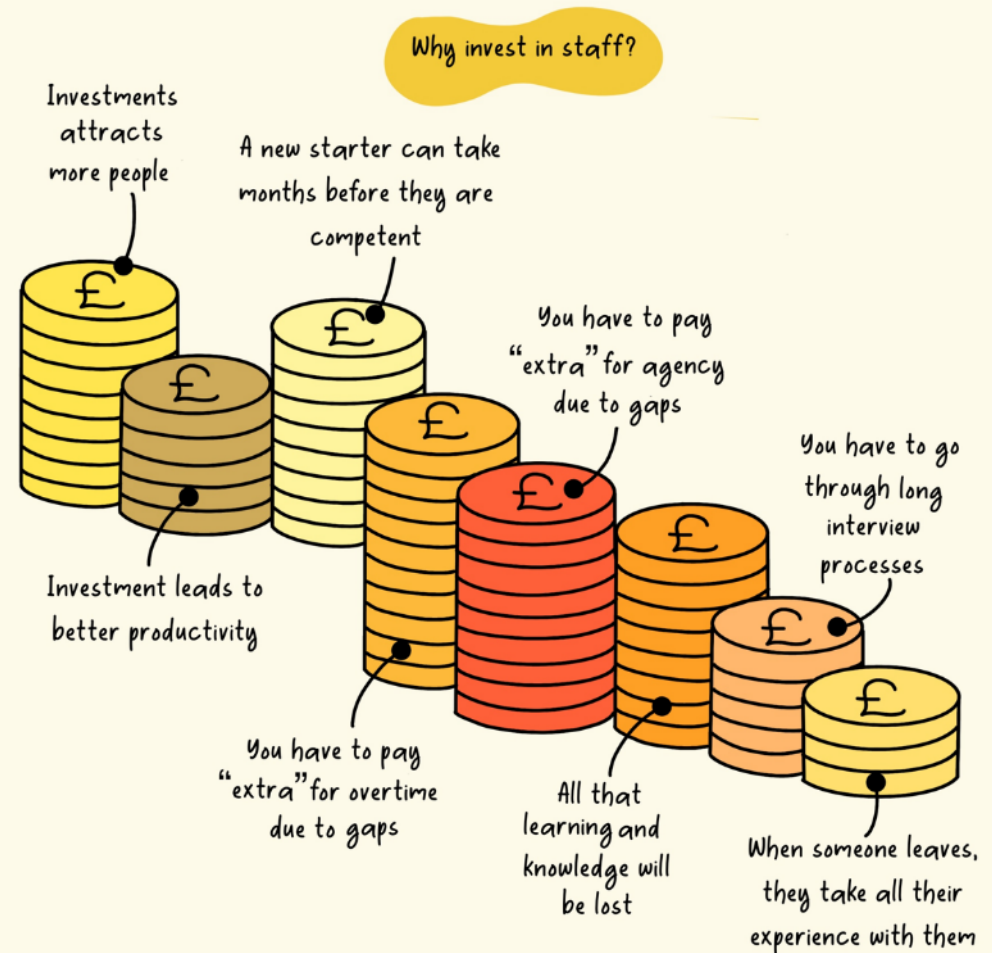
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Basic Needs at Work: Let's get started!

What we will cover:

- **Understanding your current barriers:** What is stopping you from meeting basic needs?

- **Current emotion**: Understand how staff are feeling now. How are basic needs impacting their wellbeing, morale and mental health?

- **Starting point:** Understand the basic needs for each staff member and the team as a whole

- **Discussion points:** Agree as a team what unmet basic needs need to be focused on to help improve team working conditions

- Agree with individual staff members what other basic needs should be focused on to help improve their working conditions

- Create your improvement mission: Make sure discussions become actions and not just tick boxes

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IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO MAINTAINING BASIC NEEDS AT WORK

Workload
Increased demands and limited resources can lead to heavy workloads. Working long hours can make it challenging to have a healthy work-life balance. **Are the demands and expectations manageable?**

Burnout and stress
High levels of stress and emotional exhaustion occurs due to demanding work. Prolonged exposure can lead to burnout, which affects physical and mental well-being. **What level of stress and pressure are staff dealing with?**

Pay and compensation
Whilst this is a difficult topic it should still be discussed. Some staff can feel that their wages do not adequately reflect their skills and responsibilities. **How do staff feel about pay in comparison to their job role?**

Workforce shortages
Staff shortages across various specialties can put additional pressure on existing employees. **What is the current level of vacancies?**

Work environment
Providing a comfortable and safe work environment is essential. Outdated facilities can have a negative impact. **What is the work environment like for staff?**

Professional development
Training & career progression are vital. However, limited access or support can hinder professional growth and limit job satisfaction. **What are the levels of opportunities for staff development?**

Emotional support:
Staff often face emotionally challenging situations at work, which can impact their wellbeing. Access to adequate emotional support and wellbeing services is essential. **What level of support can staff access?**

Organizational culture:
Lack of support, limited autonomy and being performance driven can contribute to burn-out and basic needs not being met. **What is the organisational culture like?**

What else?
There are other barriers that might make it difficult to maintain basic needs at work. **What other barriers might be present and how do they prevent basic needs from being maintained?**

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Current Emotions

- Using the ladder of emotions, how do you currently feel about your wellbeing at work and why?

- Can you describe a time when you felt motivated and energized at work?

- What matters to you at work?

- What do you enjoy most about your job role?

Discuss your answers as a team

Ladder to Joy in Work: Emotions

Joy in work - happy, motivated, thriving & energised. Feel a sense of identity, positivity & inclusion at work. You have the right resources & the environment is enabling

Excited - Feel nurtured and trusted. You are excited by the prospects of possibilities & opportunities for how excellence could be achieved

Empowered - Given a sense of freedom & tools to do what's needed. Your autonomy and motivation are high. You feel like you can explore things

Valued - Work has opportunities & development. You are encouraged to reflect on progress & challenges. You have space to grow & are listened to

Hopeful - Things are difficult but you're hopeful things can change. Feel optimistic but are hesitant. There are barriers you want to try to overcome

Cynical - You don't trust anything and it won't get better. Feel disengaged, uninspired and angry. There's a disconnect. Things feel superficial & repetitive

Stressed - You push to keep going during times of difficulty despite feeling sad, stressed & demotivated. You are just about surviving- things are unmanageable

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Complete your charter

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Basic needs at work

Where applicable, every member of staff should have the following for their wellbeing, safety and care.

If you don't, please follow the escalation route. Please SPEAK UP. Use attached sheet to give feedback

Good lighting & temperature	Safe commute & parking (Bike/car)	24/7 access to hot & cold food	Time out space with tables, chairs & WIFI	Dedicated well furnished Sleeping space	Clean & different sizes work uniform/scrubs
Protected meal breaks	Access to peer support & mentorship	Treated with respect, kindness & fairness	Secure lockers or place for belongings	Access to counselling & spiritual care	Access to IT computer, & workstations
Clear working patterns Rotas in advance	Hot and cold drinks facilities	Flexible working & reasonable adjustments	Safe number of working hours	Paid on time and correctly	Office space for admin work
Fully equipped kitchen area	Annual leave with sufficient notice	Access to security for support	Bathroom facilities (toilets/ showers)	Changing room with privacy	Communication systems e.g. bleep/phone

Escalation route:

Line manager

Department lead

Divisional lead

Director

Executive Director

Chief Executive

Informal support:

Freedom to speak up

Union representative

Human Resources

Equality and Diversity Lead

Occupational Health

Organisational Development Lead

Networks or Health & Wellbeing Lead

Escalation route explained

Escalation route:

- Line manager
- Department lead
- Divisional lead
- Director
- Executive Director
- Chief Executive

Informal support:

- Freedom to speak up
- Union representative
- Human Resources
- Equality and Diversity Lead
- Occupational Health
- Organisational Development Lead
- Networks or Health & Wellbeing Lead

- Basic needs at work is about supporting Managers and staff to access needs required
- Escalation is a process to get support and help
- As part of embedding Needs At Work, Managers at all levels should champion and encourage people to escalate for help
- Research has shown that unclear lines of accountability, not knowing where or who to speak to affects staff wellbeing, relationship with their leaders and job satisfaction
- Sometimes, you might just want to talk through things with someone and that's ok
- Sometimes, things can't be solved or might be more complex – these difficult conversations need to happen
- Escalation is encouraged through one line route to help make sure the right level of support is given
- Your needs matter and there are people that care

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Basic needs at work

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Use this sheet to provide feedback on your required basic needs explored on the "basic needs at work" charter

Please tick this box if you are happy for your form to be shared with others to understand the wider impact of unmet needs ☐

| Date: | Department: | Contact details: | Next review date: |
| Name: | | | Form discussed with: |

On the Basic needs at work charter -

How many of your needs are met:

Which needs are met:

What impact does it have on you:

How many of your needs are unmet:

Which needs are unmet:

What impact does it have on you:

Are there any needs that were missing?:

What are the actions (including target dates):

Escalation route:

Line manager

Department lead

Divisional lead

Director

Executive Director

Chief Executive

Informal support:

Freedom to speak up

Union representative

Human Resources

Equality and Diversity Lead

Occupational Health

Organisational Development Lead

Networks or Health & Wellbeing Lead

Discuss your charter

Discuss your findings with the person next to you:

- What are the top 3 basic unmet needs that would help your wellbeing at work and why?

- What are the top 3 basic met needs that are currently in place and how do they help you at work?

- For the unmet needs, do you have any ideas on what could be done to help ensure they are in place?

What are your basic needs at work that are met and unmet?

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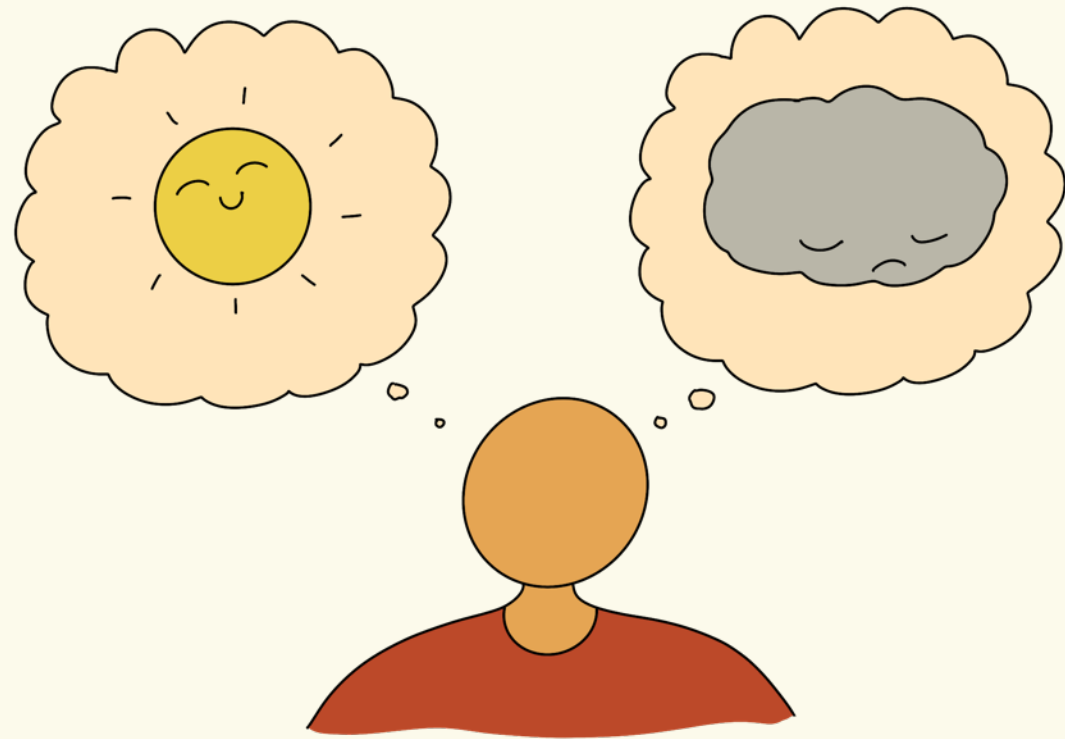
Understanding collective needs

- As a team, now discuss and <u>agree</u> what top 3 unmet needs can collectively improve working conditions for the team

- Why are these 3 important?

- How will they transform working conditions?

- What can be done to meet these needs?

What basic needs matter to you as a team?

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Quality Improvement plan: Overview

Basic needs at work
Quality improvement plan

Aim: What are you trying to achieve, for whom and by when?	Changes: What will you test out/change to try and achieve your aim?

Plan: How and where will you carry out your test of change?	Impact (data): How will you know if your test of change has made an improvement and achieved your aim?

| Keep it simple, start small and be realistic - this makes it easier for you to test it
Be committed to trying out different ideas - exploration = you find the right thing | Collect just enough data to show the change is having a positive impact
Be kind - improvement is about learning, being open minded and working together |

Quality Improvement mission: Aim

Aim: What do you want to achieve, for whom and by when?

- Create a SMART aim (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Timebound)

- What do you hope to gain by meeting unmet needs? Do you want to improve morale, performance, retention or reduce burn-out, stress and sickness? Decide on what factor you want to focus your efforts on achieving.

- Who do you want this improvement to be targeted towards? All staff? Certain staff groups? Agree who to start with – it's better to start small and get it right

- When do you want to see the results in place? A week, month or year? Decide how long it will take

Fill in your "aim section" on your quality improvement plan

Quality Improvement mission: Changes

Changes: What will you test out/change to try to achieve your aim?

- What are all the ideas you can test/try out to help meet the unmet needs?

- Which ideas do you want to take forward and try out?

- Why have you chosen these ideas?

Fill in your "changes section" on your quality improvement plan

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Quality Improvement mission: Plan

Plan: How and where will you carry out your test of change?

- Where will you test/try out your idea to make sure it works? Start in a small area to make sure it works in practice and is the best possible set up

- Who will you test/try it out with? Start with a certain group of staff before spreading wider to make sure it is right before spreading to others

- How long will you test/try it out for? Consider short sharp test cycles to keep the momentum going

**Fill in your "plan section"
on your quality
improvement plan**

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Quality Improvement mission: Impact

Impact: How will you know if your changes have made an improvement?

- What data or information will you collect to understand if the test of change has made an improvement? Keep it simple, it doesn't need to be lots of data

- Collect before, during and after: Make sure you have some data collected before you make changes, so you have something to compare with

- How will you collect the information/data? Will it be automated (through informatics) or manually collected?

- Who will collect it and for how long?

**Fill in your "impact section"
on your quality
improvement plan**

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Quality Improvement mission: Data ideas

Sickness levels and reasons for it:
Understanding why people are off sick and if work might be contributing to it can indicate current wellbeing levels

Staff-turn over:
How many people are leaving and how long they worked can be an indicator of the culture and environment

Patient experience/feedback:
If staff are happy, they are more likely to deliver better care. Reviewing patients' feedback can help with assessing wellbeing

Stories and reflections:
Talking and listening to staff experiences, their thoughts and understanding their feelings can indicate the current picture for wellbeing. Listening regularly provides data to track improvements

Daily emotion tracker:
Some staff might not want to talk about their feelings. On the next page is a daily emotion tracker that staff can use to help communicate their wellbeing without having to discuss it

Quiet Observations:
Observe how staff conduct their roles, do they have breaks? Can they sit somewhere? Are they able to access food? Document this and use it as evidence for changes

Repeat charter assessment:
Staff can repeat the Basic Needs at Work charter a month later to track if their unmet needs have reduced. This indicates if changes are helping

Red and blue coins:
Asking staff to put a red/blue coin in a jar to share if they had a good or bad day can be used as a measure to track wellbeing

What else?
Keep it simple and think of different ways to track wellbeing to evidence improvement. It does not need to be time consuming or scientific

Daily Emotion Tracker
Tick how you feel today

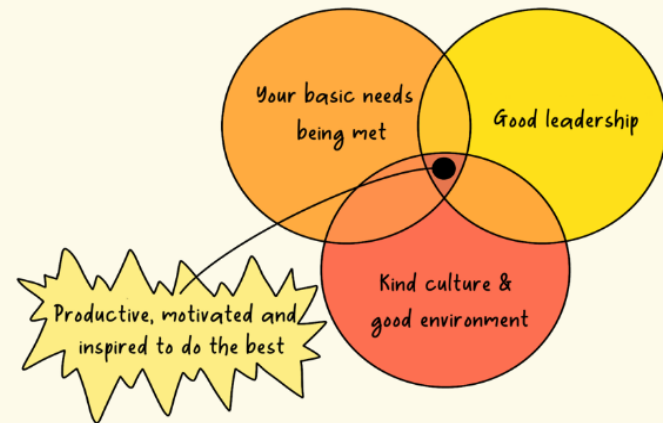| Date: Name:	Joyful/ Happy	Excited	Empowered	Valued	Hopeful	Cynical	Stressed	Unhappy
Mon								
Tue								
Wed								
Thurs.								
Fri								
Sat								
Sun								

Discussion point:
Understanding individual needs

- Individual assessments and discussions should also take place to fully assess and meet all staff needs

- Agree timescale to meet staff individually to go through their basic need assessments with them

- Set dedicated time aside for them

- Take the time to listen to what matters to them

- Be open to ideas on how unmet needs can be addressed

- Work together to make ideas a reality

- Be realistic in what can be achieved and by when

- Be kind and appreciate diverse experiences/perspectives

What improves wellbeing, retention and performance at work?

Your basic needs being met

Good leadership

Kind culture & good environment

Productive, motivated and inspired to do the best

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Basic needs at work

Basic Needs at Work: Managers

Step 1: Go through the 'basic needs at work' presentation with your team

Step 2: Ask team to complete their self-assessment of 'basic needs'

Step 3: Agree collectively what areas of priority & create QI project

Step 4: Discuss individual needs at 1-1s and agree areas of priority

Step 5: Where needs cannot be met, escalate for further support

Basic Needs at Work: Staff

Focus on highlighting needs that matter the most to you

Understand that change takes time

Be empowered to escalate to seek further support

This is your opportunity to share how your wellbeing can improve

Work together as a team & individually to improve working lives

My Needs

Basic Needs at Work: Senior Managers - Escalation

Communicate to all staff that they can escalate basic needs challenges to you

Ensure Managers & staff understand escalation is for support purposes

Be approachable to staff & empower them to speak up when needed

Work with Managers to resolve & embed basic needs at work

Be clear about the escalation route and encourage people to use it

ESCALATE

Basic Needs at Work: Organisational responses

Managers to gather key findings from self assessments with staff

Highlight them to relevant forums/leads in the Organisation

Share needs that require an organisational response for change

Continue to highlight on agenda every month until action taken

If no progress, escalate through escalation route

Remember to feedback to team what's happening
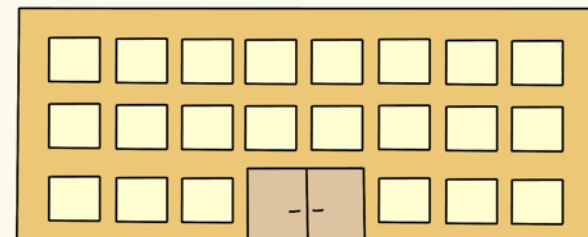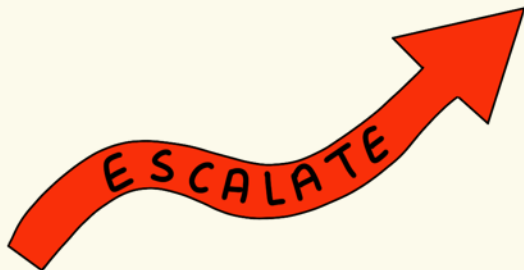
Follow us on Twitter!

- Share your change ideas

- Share your Quality Improvement missions

- Inspire others to think about basic needs

- Shout out about your improvements

- Change starts with you!

Twitter: @NeedsAtWork

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