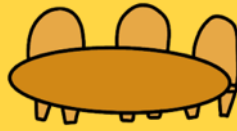# Basic Needs at Work

Looking after and supporting staff to flourish at work

SUMMARY

Our working lives matter

When we go to work, we want to make a positive difference, achieve success and contribute to improving outcomes. Many of us work in healthcare because we are compassionate, caring and want to help others. The NHS is precious, it provides universal healthcare to everyone regardless of who they are. The NHS strives to provide care and services based on needs; there are no hidden motives. Over the past few years, providing NHS care to everyone who needs it has become difficult and complex. Workplace pressures and expectations have increased; this has made it more stressful and challenging for staff to cope (BMA, 2023).

The NHS provides lifesaving care and improves outcomes for millions of people. It provides a vast range of services such as critical care, treating acute and chronic illnesses, focusing on prevention, it offers support services, mental health care and so much more. The NHS contributes significantly to the wellbeing and quality of life for patients and communities. We continuously strive to improve services, care, outcomes and experiences for patients. To maintain this, we must turn to the people who work tirelessly to deliver these services. The NHS is built on the efforts and contributions from the staff who work within it. We must ask ourselves; do we continuously strive to improve staff wellbeing and quality of life like we do for our patients and communities?

Evidence shows there is an increase in burnout, turnover and staff struggling to cope. We need to put the same improvement efforts into the quality of life for staff as we do for patients. Some recent statistics are:

- 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)

The NHS Confederation's "Putting people first" report, Improvement Academy's "Beyond demoralised" report and NHS England's "Looking after your team's health and wellbeing guide" all provide information on improving wellbeing at work. The Basic Needs at Work campaign complements these reports and it also provides a simple improvement framework to support staff to practically apply changes. To improve wellbeing, we must start small, start with the basics and start now. It might not be possible to address everything, but we can take the necessary steps in understanding, highlighting and trying to meet the basic needs for staff. The foundations of wellbeing are critical ins supporting staff carry out their job to the best of their ability. Their basic needs help them to function, keep healthy and thrive in the workplace. Some examples of basic needs are access to food, drinks, IT, having breaks and a good working environment. These are core requirements in the workplace and should not viewed as a luxury.

When basic needs are met, staff can perform better, engagement is increased and retention is improved (Nuffield Trust, 2022).
So why is it so hard to maintain basic needs in the workplace?

- In a highly pressurized work environment, the focus tends to be on productivity, trying to survive and managing anxieties about the future of services. This type of environment can mean the basics of wellbeing are forgotten, ignored or not prioritized
- A culture that does not listen to staff, empower and support them can also have an impact on maintaining and addressing basic needs
- Poor leadership and processes can make it feel tokenistic, complex or time consuming to implement changes

The Basic Needs at Work campaign has one goal in mind: To look after and support staff to flourish at work. The aim is to empower staff to take ownership of creating, testing and implementing improvements to meet their basic needs. This can create a sense of success, ensures staff wellbeing needs are visible and acted upon

THE ROADMAP

The 7 steps in this roadmap form the content for this guide. They provide guidance on how to understand, create and implement changes to address basic needs in the workplace.

Alongside this guide is a Basic Needs at Workshop presentation for teams

The 7 steps in the roadmap are:

1. **Why it matters**: Share statistics, the impact and importance of basic needs in the workplace
2. **Research based:** Share evidence and research findings on what happens if basic needs are unmet/met
3. **Assess needs:** Use the Basic needs At Work charter and action plan to understand individual and team basic needs
4. **Escalation route**: Ensure there is a visible and supportive escalation route to help address blockers
5. **Listen to ideas:** Spend dedicated time as a team to discuss and create change ideas. A continuous process for discussions with staff is needed e.g., in 1-1s, team meetings or huddles. Let staff lead sessions and listen to their ideas without judgement - remember we all have different priorities and needs at different times.
6. **Create a Quality Improvement (QI) Plan**: Use the QI template to create a plan for the changes you want to test/implement to improve wellbeing
7. **Empower teams**: Support teams and individuals to address problems on basic needs and wellbeing. Encourage them to lead on implementing and testing out ideas
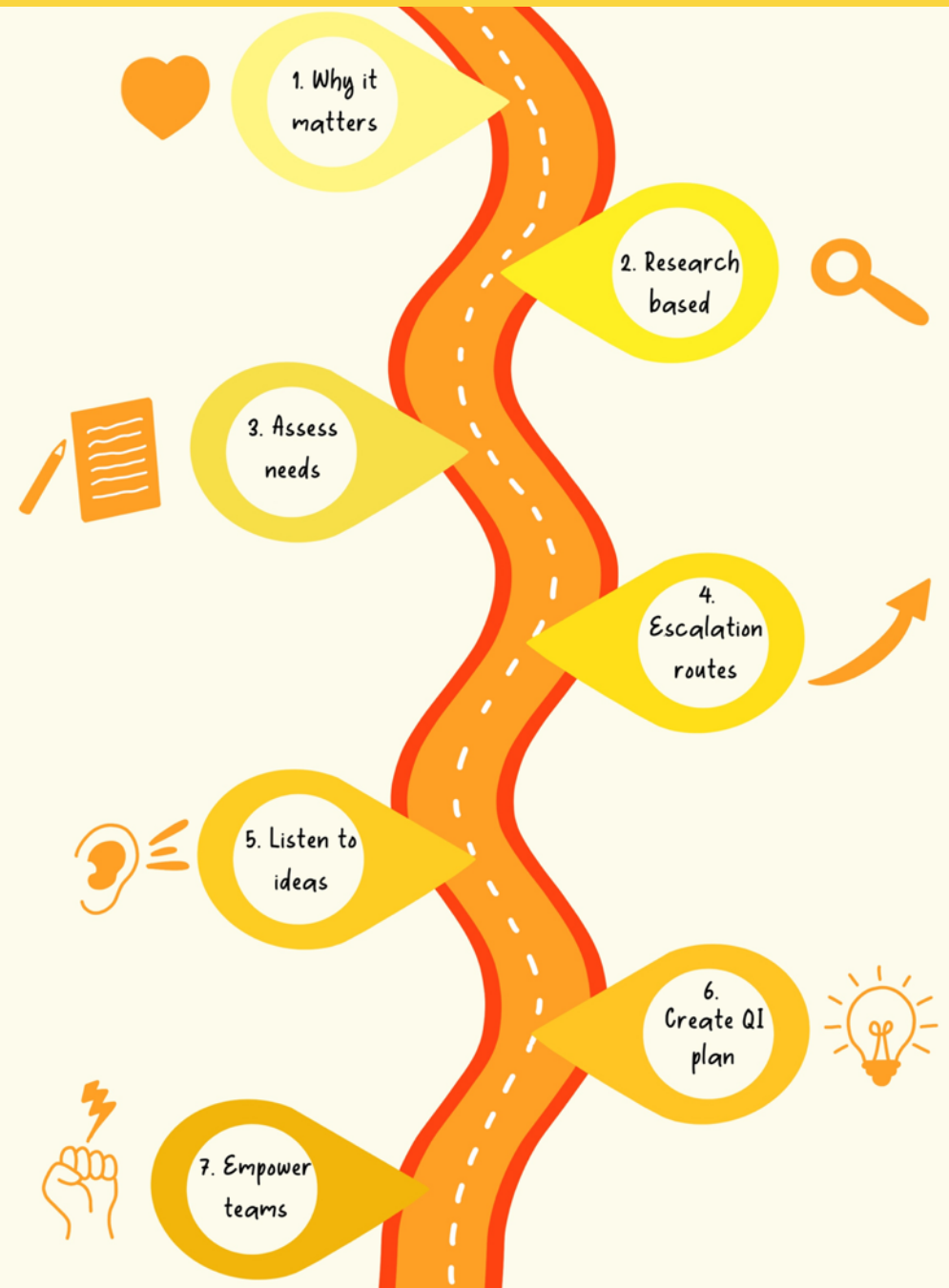
PREPARATION: BASIC NEEDS AT WORK & WHY IT MATTERS

Before implementing Basic Needs at Work, there are some factors that can help create the right environment:

- **Senior sponsorship**: Engage and connect with a senior leader who can help support the cause, who recognises this is important and necessary work. This provide visibility and encourage other leaders to invest time & effort into it
- **Collaboration**: Some basic needs will overlap with different work areas. Having several departments working on basic needs at the same time allows collaboration on improvement ideas across the organisation
- **Join up and prioritise:** Make it a priority to discuss progress and updates at all levels. Agree the route for discussions at department, divisional and organisational levels. This will create a collective effort to drive change
- **Communicate:** Share the intentions for the Basic Needs at Work campaign in huddles, bulletins & team meetings. This creates inclusion, involvement and engagement with everyone
- **Be fluid:** The Basic Needs at Work campaign is not rigid. There will be different ideas or processes generated along the way and plans should be flexible to include new ideas and unexpected changes
- **Be kind**: Ensure discussions with individuals and teams are in a safe space, with protected time to listen with leadership that is compassionate and inclusive. Staff are not robots. They cannot be switched on and off or expected to do something if they are not physically and mentally supported to do this.

If basic needs are not met, staff cannot perform to the best of their ability and over time, it can lead to problems such as burnout, sickness and poor performance. On the next page are some basic needs and why they matter

We are not robots, processes or machines
We have good days and bad days
We are weak and strong
We feel, care and think
We need nurturing, growing and looking after
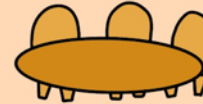We are humans
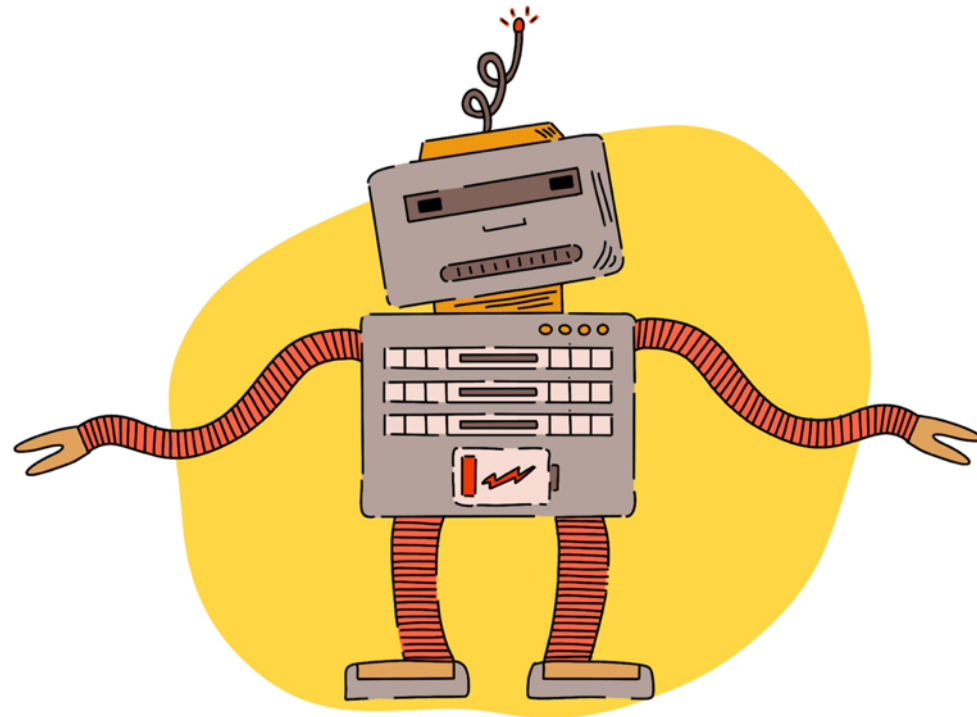
Basic Needs At Work: The Jigsaw of Wellbeing

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

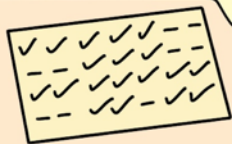Treated with respect & kindness = Psychological safety & empowered to thrive

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

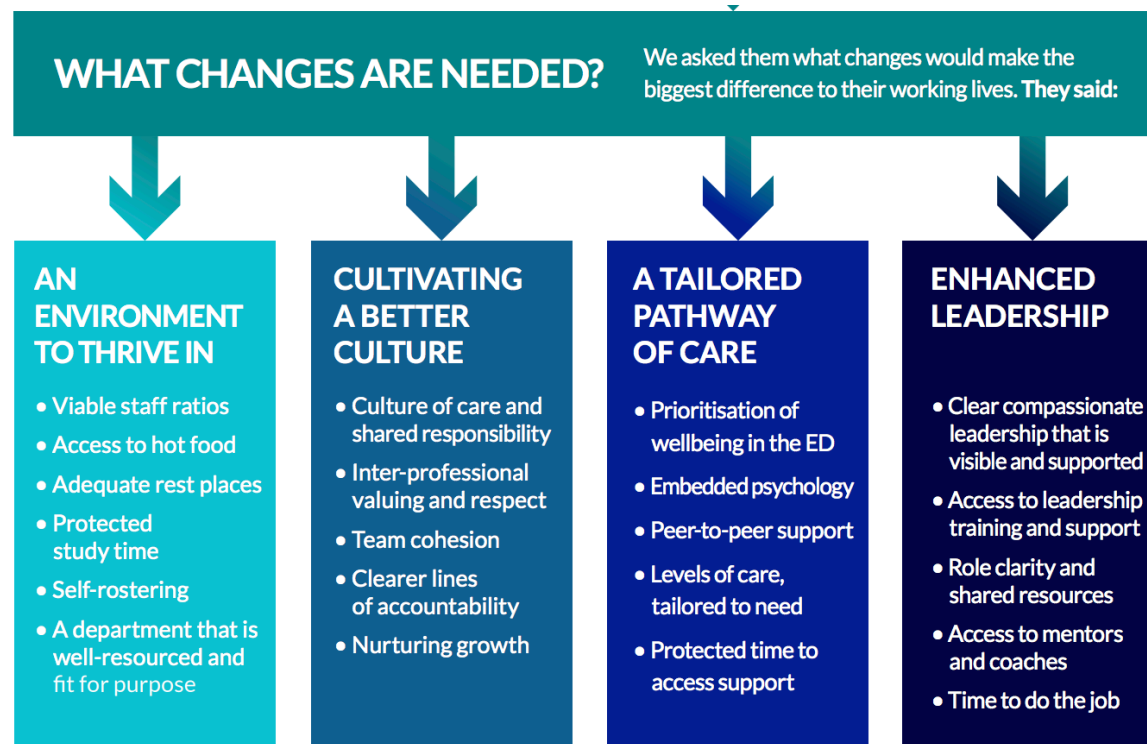Changing room with privacy = Increased dignity, respect and safe space for staff

Communication systems = Increased productivity, less delays & improved teamwork

RESEARCH: PSYCHOLOGICALLY INFORMED POLICY & PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT (PIPP) PROJECT

The PIPP Project investigated issues associated with work satisfaction and retention across emergency departments. It investigated current workplace concerns, barriers to change and opportunities for development and growth. Led by Dr Jo Daniels and her team, the findings and evidence outlined 4 key recommendations:

1. **Create an environment to thrive in:** Provision of access to hot food, rest spaces and protected time for study & professional development. A workplace that is fit for purpose.
2. **Cultivate a better culture**: The culture in the ED and broader NHS was labelled as negative and blaming. The recommendation includes promoting a culture of care for wellbeing, improving interprofessional valuing and respect nurturing growth while clarifying lines of accountability.
3. **A tailored pathway of care to support:** The report recommends that EDs adopt a pathway of care that is tailored to the staff, providing sufficient and appropriate support
4. **The Enhanced leadership:** Leaders and senior management should be supported and clear in their roles so that they can be effective agents of change and provide support to their staff.

WHAT CHANGES ARE NEEDED?

We asked them what changes would make the biggest difference to their working lives. They said:

AN ENVIRONMENT TO THRIVE IN

- Viable staff ratios
- Access to hot food
- Adequate rest places
- Protected study time
- Self-rostering
- A department that is well-resourced and fit for purpose

CULTIVATING A BETTER CULTURE

- Culture of care and shared responsibility
- Inter-professional valuing and respect
- Team cohesion
- Clearer lines of accountability
- Nurturing growth

A TAILORED PATHWAY OF CARE

- Prioritisation of wellbeing in the ED
- Embedded psychology
- Peer-to-peer support
- Levels of care, tailored to need
- Protected time to access support

ENHANCED LEADERSHIP

- Clear compassionate leadership that is visible and supported
- Access to leadership training and support
- Role clarity and shared resources
- Access to mentors and coaches
- Time to do the job

Full summary of recommendations and research findings are available here: https://rcem.ac.uk/workforce/

Most of the basic needs covered in the image on the previous page are not complex to implement. So why are these basic factors often missing in the workplace?

1. **Pressures:** If the workplace is full of pressures, demands and challenges; it can be easy to forget about the basic needs of staff and not view them as a priority.
2. **Culture:** If staff are viewed as "robots" who are there to "do as they are told" they will struggle to cope and might eventually leave. If the culture is preoccupied with outcomes and results but fails to address the conditions needed to achieve this, basic needs start to slip. A culture where staff are blamed rather than encouraged also negatively impacts wellbeing.
3. **Money**: A short term vision of cost saving can cloud the long-term vision of retaining staff by meeting their needs better. Investing in tables, chairs, computers or lockers is a fraction of the cost compared to spending on bank and agency staff to fill vacancy gaps.
4. **Method:** Identifying basic needs, creating ideas with teams and making sure they are sustained is not always done in a logical way. Managers need to keep revisiting discussions of basic needs with staff and understand what can contribute to improve wellbeing.
5. **Communication:** Staff need to be leading conversations and sharing what they need. There has been an increase of wellbeing initiatives that have not had a positive impact or have been short term fixes (Marsh & Procter, 2022). For example, yoga classes or mindful sessions can seem meaningless if staff can't event take a break to eat

Wellbeing Tree

Mindful sessions · Awards · Thank you cards · keep fit · Sweet treats · Courses · Yoga · Team building · Joy in work · Arts · Certificates · Gifts · creativity · Events

For these things to work you need to make sure these basic needs are in place

Join the campaign: Basic Needs at Work @NeedsAtWork

Pay · Annual leave · Rest · Breaks · Hygiene · Space · Safety · Drink · Food · Warmth · Flexible working · Kindness · Spiritual care · Equipment · Clothing

soniasparklesdraws · @sonia_sparkles · Soniasparkles.com

IDENTIFYING BARRIERS TO MAINTAINING BASIC NEEDS AT WORK

Have a conversation with individuals and teams on what barriers might be preventing basic needs from being met in the workplace:

Workload	**Burnout and stress**	**Pay and compensation**
Increased demands and limited resources can lead to heavy workloads. Working long hours can make it challenging to have a healthy work-life balance. Basic needs such as taking breaks can become difficult. **Are the demands and expectations manageable?**	High levels of stress and emotional exhaustion occurs due to the demanding nature of work. Prolonged exposure can lead to burnout, which affects physical and mental well-being. **What level of stress and pressure are staff dealing with?**	Whilst this is a difficult topic and might not be something that can be directly influenced; 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	**Work environment**	**Professional development**
There are challenges in recruiting and retaining healthcare professionals. Staff shortages across various specialties can put additional pressure on existing employees. **What is the current level of vacancies?**	Providing a comfortable and safe work environment is essential. Outdated facilities, such as overcrowded wards or insufficient equipment, can have a negative impact. **What is the work environment like for staff?**	Offering opportunities for training and 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:	**Organizational culture:**	**What else?**
Staff often face emotionally challenging situations at work, which can impact their wellbeing. Access to adequate emotional support and wellbeing services is essential in helping them to cope. **What level of support can staff access?**	Lack of support, limited autonomy and being performance driven can contribute to burn-out and basic needs not being met. A culture that does not prioritize wellbeing can lead to basic needs not being viewed as important. **What is the organisational culture like?**	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?**

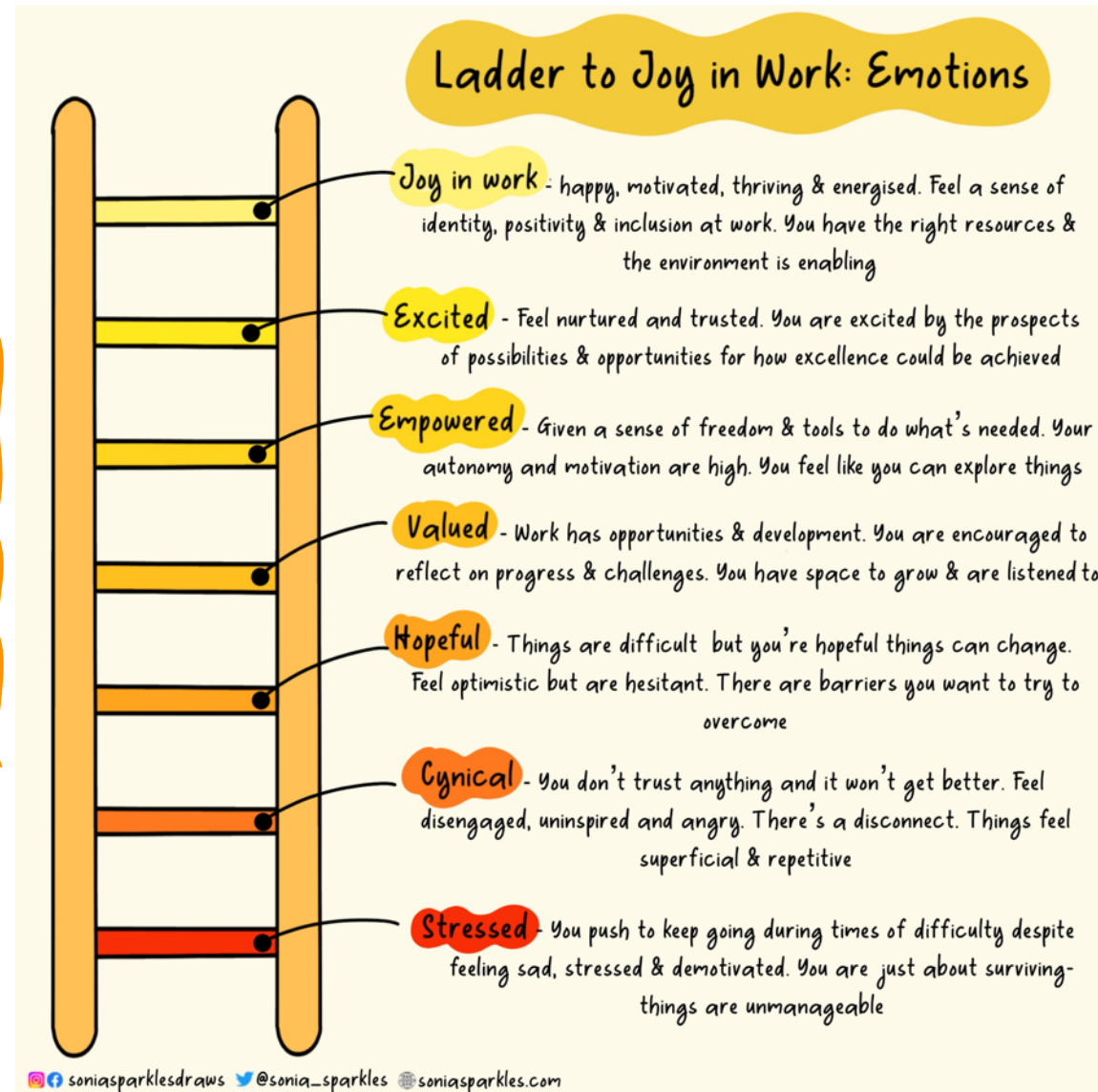# ASSESSING NEEDS: UNDERSTANDING CURRENT EMOTIONS

Understanding how staff are currently feeling about their work environment and roles can lead to a better understanding of wellbeing requirements.

Asking staff to complete the following 4 questions and discussing them as a team can help acknowledge the current situation and highlight what staff value the most.

The 4 questions are:

- How do you currently feel about your wellbeing at work & why?

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

- What matters to you at work?

- What do you enjoy most about your job role?

There is a movement to create "joy in work" which can be difficult for staff to relate to if the basics in wellbeing are missing. Using "The ladder to joy in work" illustration can help staff to describe their current emotions and share how far or near they are to joy in work.

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

ASSESSING NEEDS: UNDERSTANDING MET/UNMET NEEDS

Individual assessments

The following page contains the Basic Needs at Work charter and action plan. Asking staff to self-assess their needs on this charter and creating an action plan with them can generate commitments to improving their wellbeing needs. Taking time to listen to their needs and understand why it is important to them gives them a sense of recognition, value and support. To help embed basic needs as part of daily work, the recommendation is to have dedicated time every 3 months to discuss needs. For various reasons, it might not be possible to address all individual needs, but efforts should be made to escalate for support and honest conversations need to take place. Some unmet needs might be private, and staff might not want to discuss them in a team setting which is why both individual and team assessments should take place

Team assessments

Discussing basic needs as a team, having open conversations and working together to address gaps can create a collaborative approach to improving wellbeing. Teams can discuss their unmet needs, why they are important and generate ideas to meet them. Empowering teams to take ownership of collective needs and supporting them to address the gaps, increases the likelihood of the right changes being implemented. Using team meetings to go through The Basic Needs at Work presentation can generate enthusiasm and engagement to address unmet needs. Some unmet needs will be common across most of the team so collaborating on improvement that benefits all of them is more suitable than individually addressing it.
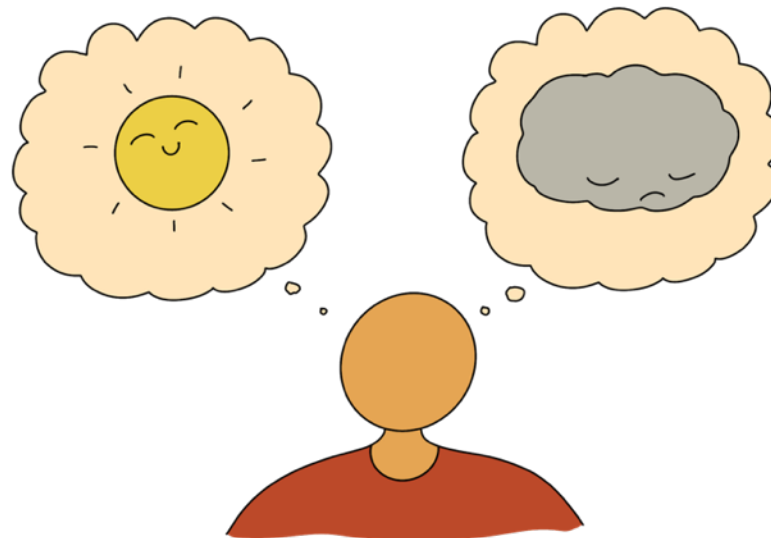
basic needs at work

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
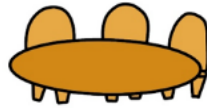
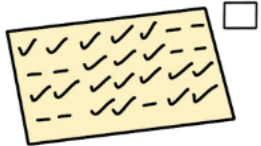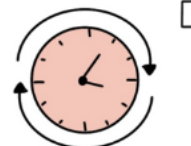|					
Good lighting & temperature	Safe commute & parking (Bike/car)	24/7 access to hot & cold food	Time out space with tables, chairs & WIFI	Dedicated well furnished Sleeping space	Clean & different sizes work uniform/scrubs
Protected meal breaks	Access to peer support & mentorship	Treated with respect, 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
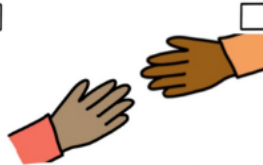
Escalation route:

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

Basic needs at work

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:

Name:

Department:

Contact details:

Next review date:

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
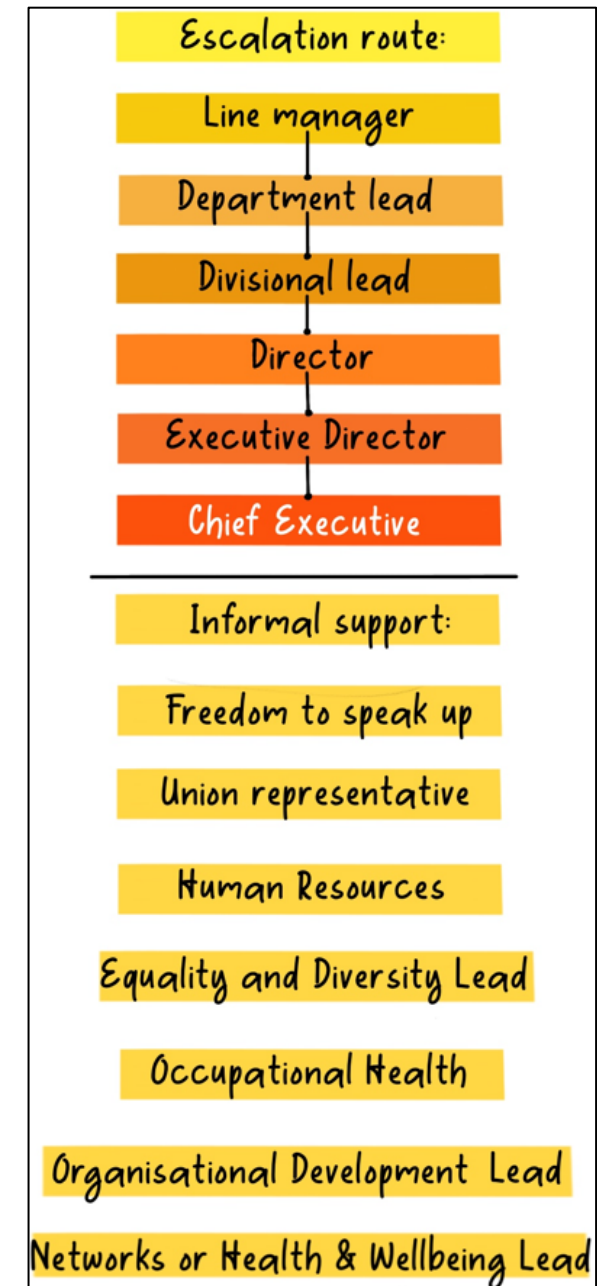
Networks or Health & Wellbeing Lead

ASSESSING NEEDS: THE ESCALATION ROUTE

If basic needs are not met, staff can feel stressed and lonely. They might feel like giving up or not know who to turn to about their experiences. If a Manager is not able to address basic needs for staff, it can feel frustrating and make them feel powerless.

The escalation route in the Basic Needs at Work charter, is designed to highlight who can potentially offer further support or guidance on overcoming barriers to basic needs. Escalation is encouraged through a set route to ensure the right level of support is sought before escalating higher. There are a number of designated wellbeing roles in each organisation that can also be accessed for further support. Basic needs are not a luxury, they are a necessity. Continuing to speak up and seek help to address unmet needs is vital to improving wellbeing.

Research has shown that unclear lines of accountability, not knowing where or who to speak to affects staff wellbeing, relationship with leaders and job satisfaction. This escalation route provides an outline of who to contact for further help. It serves as a reminder that there are people who care and can help influence positive change.

Some basic needs might be complex to address but these difficult conversations need to happen with staff to create a sense of understanding. It could be that some basic needs require an organizational approach such as 24/7 access to hot and cold food. If staff have identified this as a need and it has been escalated, eventually, the volume of escalation will help it become more visible and increase the chances of it being addressed. Some basic needs might require national support for change and whilst managers might not be in a position to directly influence this, they still need to listen and understand the impact it is having on staff. Having a structured escalation process can help ensure staff are heard and issues are visible.

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
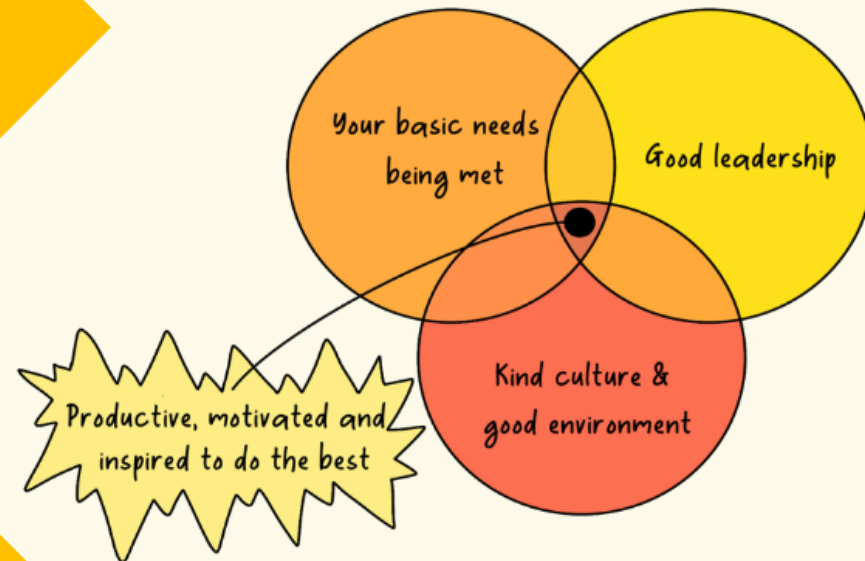Networks or Health & Wellbeing Lead

ASSESSING NEEDS: APPROACH

Addressing unmet needs requires compassionate leadership, empathy and active listening. Being paid to "do a job" might be an incentive but it is not an enabler to thriving in the workplace. Managers need a holistic view of what helps staff to be the best they can.

Providing dedicated time, space and listening without judgement creates a safe space for staff to be honest & feel cared for

Empowerment, autonomy and trusting staff to lead on the changes needed inspires them to do better

Creating a culture that fosters kindness, healing and comfort can support staff to engage better in improvements. This includes leaders having their own needs met too

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

CREATING A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (QI) PLAN

A QI plan provides structure to ideas that will be tested in practice. It also provides evidence that changes actually lead to wellbeing improvements. Some ideas might be straight forward changes, but it is still important to evidence the impact and make sure they benefit everyone. A QI plan can also help with sustainability and be used as evidence for long term investment. There might be some personal individual improvement needs that should be addressed through separate meetings with individuals to create personal QI plans.

The 4 steps in the Quality Improvement template on the next page are:

Aim: What are you trying to achieve, for whom and by when?	Changes: What will you test out/change to try to achieve your aim?
• Create a SMART aim (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound) • What do you want to improve - morale, performance, retention, reduce burn-out, or sickness? Decide on the outcome you want to improve • Who do you want this improvement to be targeted towards? All staff? Certain staff groups? Agree who to start with • When do you want to see the results in place? A week, month or year?	• What are all the ideas you can test/try out to address unmet needs? • Which ideas do you want to take forward and try out? • Why have you chosen these ideas? • Can you learn from someone who might already be doing what you want to test out?
Plan: How and where will you carry out your test of change?	Impact (data): How will you know you have made an actual improvement?
• Where will you test/try out your idea to make sure it works? Small scale testing is easier to manage and adapt • Who will you test/try it out with? Start small before spreading wider to ensure it is the best possible version • How long will you test/try it out for? Consider short sharp test cycles to keep the momentum going	• What data or information will you collect to understand if the change has made an improvement? Keep it simple you don't need lots of data • Collect before, during and after: This lets you compare before and after the change to evidence the impact it has made • How will you collect the information/data? • Who will collect it and for how long?

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

EXAMPLES OF DATA TO MEASURE WELLBEING

Here are some examples of data sources for measuring wellbeing. Annual data/information is not specific enough and one snapshot is not sufficient to evidence improvement

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 each day

Date: Name:	Joyful/ Happy	Excited	Empowered	Valued	Hopeful	Cynical	Stressed	Unhappy/sad
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								
Sunday								

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

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
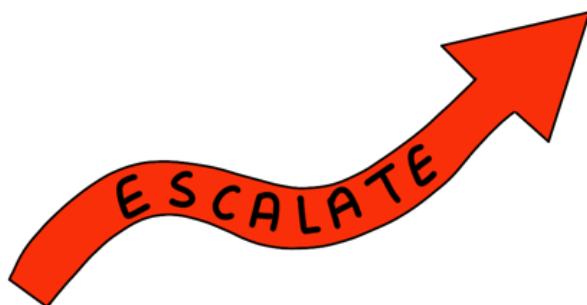
Basic Needs at Work: Organisational responses

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
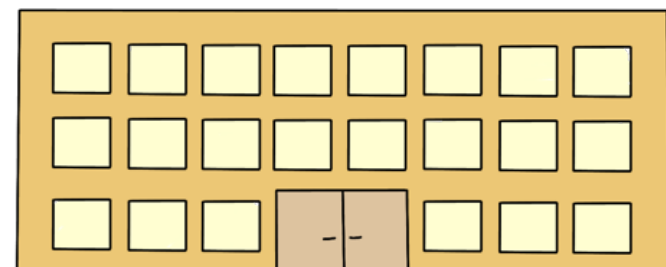
CLOSING

Many of us spend more time in work than we do with our families. Work is not a passive process; it shapes us and is a space we enter to live in. We all have different needs and our ability to do the best we can is directly linked to how well these needs are supported. Outdated phrases such as "work comes first" or "you are paid to do a job" do not improve wellbeing or productivity – no matter how much you say it. Instead, it should be "how can I look after staff so they can look after patients" and "how can I help you do deliver your job?"

The Basic Needs at Work campaign was born out of frustration. Seeing my fellow colleagues demotivated, exhausted and lashing out due to stressful work environments led to its creation. There are also lots of great wellbeing initiatives, but they fail to address what staff actually want or they do not address the core roots of wellbeing – the basics to survive.

I hope this guide has sparked you with some interest in assessing and addressing basic needs in your workplace. I am aware we cannot address everything, some things like pay rates are complex but we should still be having these difficult conversations with staff. As leaders, listening, explaining and supporting are important in the workplace.

The next phase in Basic Needs at Work is campaigning for a mandatory requirement to have basic needs assessed as part of the induction process. When coming into a new work environment, staff can be nervous to raise concerns and not know who to discuss them with. Equally, staff who rotate struggle with their sense of belonging which can be easily neglected by others due to their short stay.

All my Basic Needs at Work resources are free to use and modifications can be made to make it fit local needs. If you require support with this or have any general queries whilst implementing it, please get in touch with me at sonia-sparkles@hotmail.com

I would also like to thank Dr Jo Daniels for sharing her research and supporting the development of this campaign

Take care,
Sonia Nosheen, (also known as Sonia Sparkles)

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