



OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL PERMANENT SECRETARY  
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER



# Fostering your **wellbeing** at work

Employee Support Programme

# What is wellbeing?

Wellbeing may be defined as a subjective experience of the quality of life of an individual based upon that individual's chosen criteria. On that note, the quality of life is someone's perception of his or her life situation in light of the culture they find themselves in and in the context of their goals, ideals and standards. This concept also takes into account the person's physical

and psychological health, beliefs and social relationships.

Improved wellbeing can enhance your mood as well as your satisfaction with your work. On the other hand, a lack thereof can have several adverse consequences, such as a lack of productivity or poor quality of work, negative social relationships and increased absenteeism.



# Physical wellbeing

**Wellbeing is far more than a psychological concept.  
It also includes your physical health**

A diet which includes fresh fruit and vegetables, protein like meat, fish and lentils, dairy products low in fat, salt and sugar should provide you with the essential nutrients needed. Having to keep a close eye on your diet can be tedious and, sometimes, it is easier to have a readymade meal, but the latter often contains a lot of fat and preservatives. Such meals are not harmful if consumed occasionally, but if eaten frequently, they could defeat the purpose of a healthy diet.

Spending long hours at a desk can be harmful to your physical health, so it is wise to move around once in a while. Joint stiffness can be avoided by tilting the head to rotating the neck. Stiff shoulders can be moved in a circular motion from front to back and vice versa for relief. Moreover, the wrists can be rotated and the hands can be clenched and unclenched to reduce cramping. Getting up and stretching to loosen up and stretch muscles relieves some built up tension while also giving your eyes some time away from the strenuous glare of the computer screen.

Keeping on the topic of physical activity, consider regularly engaging in aerobic exercise as well as strength training. While it may be difficult to juggle regular physical activity with full-time employment and other commitments, it is suggested that you incorporate physical activity in your daily activities such as using your break time to take a walk around a block or taking the stairs instead of the lift. Benefits of regular physical activity include a reduction in cardiovascular problems, obesity, high blood pressure (hypertension), depression and anxiety. It also helps you to sleep better.

Hectic schedules can tire you, and if you have a high workload and end up taking some work home with you, you might not get the rest you need. Bear in mind that the recommended amount of sleep is approximately eight hours a night. However, some people seem to get by with just six. Still, what is truly crucial is that the individual is well rested. Being well-rested improves concentration, helps you feel refreshed and gives you a greater amount of energy.

# Psychological and Emotional Wellbeing



From time to time, work starts to spill over into everyday life. Nowadays, technology allows someone to keep in contact with work on portable devices from wherever they are. Although this increases productivity, it blurs the boundary between work and personal life. The consequences of neglecting your personal life can have detrimental effects on your psychological wellbeing, thus it is wise to employ the appropriate time management techniques to devote the appropriate time and energy for both.

Social relationships are an important part of your professional life. Consequently, focusing on improving relationships with colleagues helps to ameliorate the quality of the

work environment. Ideal working relationships are characterised by clear communication, support, keeping everyone involved up-to-date on work-related matters, reliability, respect, trust, honesty and co-operation. When such relationships exist, employees benefit from higher self-esteem, a more positive self-image, development of new skills, a sense of worth and a clearer personal identity.

Literature has shown that avoiding dealing with conflict is not beneficial for your health as the conflict either hovers over you resulting in a build-up of stress, or leaves damaging effects on self-esteem. Alternatively, if you take a direct problem solving approach, interpersonal relationships and self-worth flourish.

## Final thoughts

Given the amount of time spent at the workplace it makes sense to develop and implement strategies that address your wellbeing while you're there. Get information on what supportive services your workplace provides. Be sure about what you feel that you need in terms of support, being psychological or otherwise, and ensure that you receive the required assistance.

**For more information on this subject and how the Employee Support Programme can help you, please contact us on 2200 1210 or by email on [esp.opm@gov.mt](mailto:esp.opm@gov.mt) or visit our website [www.esp.gov.mt](http://www.esp.gov.mt)**