

Self Care Week

Ideas-Employers



About this resource

Getting the most out of your Self Care Week initiative takes planning and this resource aims to provide ideas on how employers can participate to help boost the self care practise of employees.

Further resources are available from the website www.selfcareforum.org here are useful links:

- Self Care Week [case studies to share best practice](#).
- A [comms doc available on the resources page](#), also logos, social media assets etc
- [Subscribe](#) to our newsletter to stay updated
- Follow us on [twitter](#), [facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#)
- Get in touch via selfcare@selfcareforum.org



1.0 Why Participate in Self Care Week?

Healthier, happier and better motivated employees lead to increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and improved workplace morale and job satisfaction.

And, Self Care Week provides employers with a focus and opportunity to support employees to better take care of their health and wellbeing in the work place.

This is important since workplace stress is on the rise with 79% of people in work experiencing it with workload cited as the biggest cause of stress.

Indeed, according to ONS figs, 32.5m UK working days were lost due to injury and illness in 2019/20.

In 2020, of British adults in employment - a staggering **79%** commonly experience work-related stress.

2.0 Possible Self Care Week activities – Encourage employees to exercise

Exercise is essential for healthy bodies and minds and is proven to reduce stress. There are a number of ways to encourage exercise amongst your employees:

- Offer employees free or discounted gym membership;
- Invite a Tai chi, yoga instructor or physical trainer to do taster sessions with employees.
- Start up a lunchtime or early morning running club

Self Care Fact Sheets are excellent resources for employees – take a look at our new well-being fact sheet.



The POWER of Self Care

You've got the **POWER** to take control of your life

P Personal Wellbeing
O Out & about Exercise
W Weight Awareness
E Eating fit Diet
R Risk Prevention

Personal Wellbeing

- Connect**: With the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues, neighbours. Building connections will support and enrich your every day.
- Be Active**: Go for a walk or run. Find a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your current fitness level. It makes you feel good and prevents many illnesses.
- Give**: Do something nice for a friend, or stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer. Look out, as well as in. Spring support, or part of a wider community is fulfilling.
- Learn**: Learn new skills. Redesign an old interest. Learn an instrument or new cook. Boost your confidence and it's fun.
- Take Notice**: Slow down, be aware of the world around your feelings. Be mindful. It will help you experience what matters to you.

Mental health and well-being

The 5 ways to personal wellbeing will help improve your mental health.

- Take small steps. Pick one or two things that feel achievable at first.
- Give yourself time to figure out what works for you going at your own pace.
- Only try what feels comfortable.
- See <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides/tools-and-activities/the-5-ways-to-mental-wellbeing/>

Sleep: Good sleep is vital to personal and mental wellbeing. Help by establishing a routine at night, avoid using screens, try to wind down, make your sleep environment comfortable. See <https://www.nhs.uk/>

Spirituality: Spirituality is a feeling of connection with something greater than ourselves and search for meaning in life. Explore the positives of your belief on your mental wellbeing. <https://www.rpspsych.ac.uk/mental-health/treatments-and-wellbeing/spirituality-and-mental-health/>

Managing illness: Know how to look after yourself and loved ones during periods of illness. The Self Care Forum's fact sheets tell you how to do this and when to seek help for a range of common illnesses. <https://www.selfcareforum.org/fact-sheets/>

Out and about and Exercise

EXERCISE - some is good, more is better

Exercise improves sleep, helps maintain a healthy weight, reduces the risk of many diseases, helps manage stress and improves your quality of life

Starting out - Exercise: You don't have to be an Olympic athlete to be fit. Start with 10 minutes of brisk walking twice a day and you are nearly there! The NHS Active 10 App can help.

Starting out - Counting steps: To count your daily steps, use the free apps Google Health on Android phones and Apple Health on iPhones or use a cheap pedometer.

- Check your daily step count on a quiet day - it may be between 2500 to 4000 steps already.
- Start by aiming for a couple of thousand steps a day extra - 10 minutes brisk walking twice a day will give you this.
- Then try to achieve 7500 steps a day.

AIM FOR:

- 150** minutes moderate intensity exercise a week. If you can't walk, try swimming, cycling, dancing.
- 75** minutes vigorous intensity exercise a week. If you can't jog or run, try high intensity interval training.
- Build strength** on at least 2 days a week. Use your own body weight or weights.
- Minimise sedentary time** Break up periods of inactivity. No previous swimming experience is necessary.

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Self Care Forum
Helping people take care of themselves

2.1 Possible Self Care Week activities – Mental Wellbeing

Stress in the workplace is on the rise and whilst employers have a duty to do all they can to mitigate stressful conditions at work, here are a few short-term ideas for the Week:

- Create a chill-out zone. Having a dedicated space with natural light, and which is comfortable and free from technology offers employees a short break to re-energise themselves.
- Invite a little relaxation in the office by booking someone to do head or back massage or a bit of reflexology for employees.
- Meditation is known to help people de-stress and another possible activity for the week.



2.2 Possible Self Care Week activities – Doing things differently

Shaking up the usual mundane routine in the office is one way to look at things a little differently for the Week, and perhaps as a format for going forward. Here are a few examples:

- Move more - change the usual sit down meetings to standing or walking meetings. By taking meetings outside you may add a different perspective and invite more lateral thinking amongst employees.
- New office furniture - introduce standing desks or Swiss balls to the office as healthy alternatives to sitting all day;
- Consider swapping coffee for smoothies and having bowls of fruit or healthy snacks in meeting rooms and staffrooms.
- Encourage a culture of leaving work on time, and taking lunch breaks.

2.2 Possible Self Care Week activities – Social Interaction

Often employees spend around 8 hours with their colleagues each day and so it is important to nurture positive relationships. A good way of doing this is through social activity:

- Arrange an away-day that involves something creative such as a cooking or crafting activity which will be enjoyable for everyone in the team.
- Invite employees to suggest a regular social gathering such as a book club or cheese and wine social event.



3.0 Connecting to National Self Care Week Activity via social media

As organisers of Self Care Week, the Self Care Forum will be making as much noise as possible at the national level, particularly via social media.

Watch out for social media assets

that will be available nearer to the time, check the website or subscribe to the newsletter to be notified.

Please use *#selfcareforlife* and *#selfcareweek* when getting involved on social media and include *@SelfCareForum* on twitter, LinkedIn and FB for a share and retweet.

Follow us on [twitter](#),
[facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

3.1 Connecting to National Self Care Week Activity – Don't forget branding

If relevant it is always a good idea to connect to the National Self Care Week activity via official branding material, which is available on the Self Care Forum website.

Your colleagues will identify your Self Care Week activity and connect it to the bigger, national public health initiative.

Invest in a pop up banner, free artwork is available, to ensure your activities are linked to National Self Care Week.



Thank you for getting involved in Self Care Week and do keep an eye on the website for new material or sign up to our newsletter for updates straight in your inbox.

Please let us know if you got involved, it helps us paint a true picture of Self Care Week. Get in touch via selfcare@selfcareforum.org

Consider entering our Self Care Innovation Awards. Details on the website

