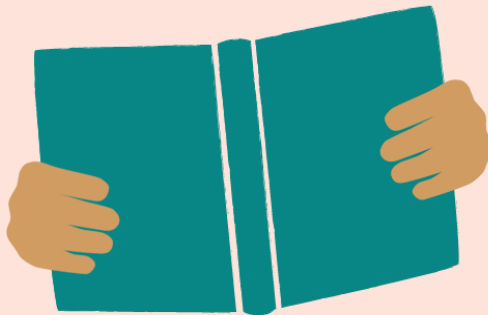


# Comms Plan



## What is National Self-Care Week?

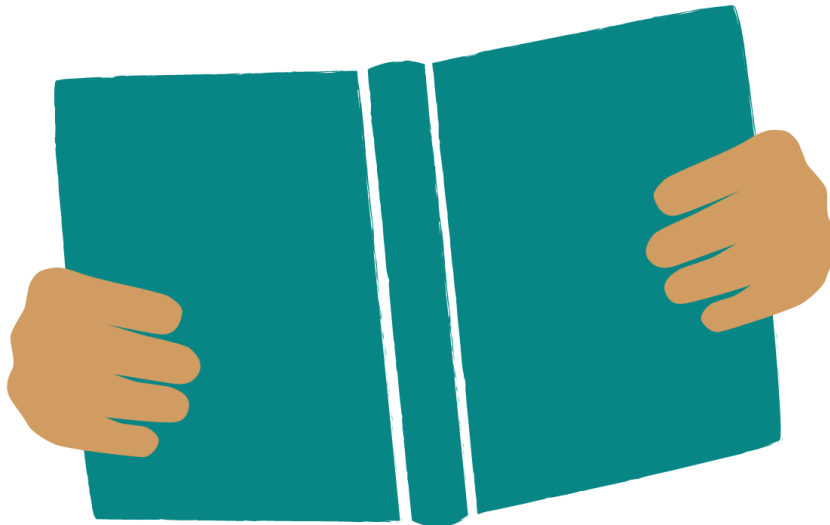
National Self-Care Week (18 – 24 November) is a UK-wide annual national awareness week that focuses on establishing support for self-care across communities, families and generations.

More needs to be done to support people to better look after their own, and their family's health and wellbeing. Empowering individuals to self-care has many benefits for their short term and long-term health and this is important since people are living longer, but not always in good health.

Supporting people to take better care of their health also helps to manage demand on health services.

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## 1.0 The aim

National Self-Care Week provides organisations with a focus to hold a targeted self-care initiative to support people's ability to take care of their own physical health and mental wellbeing.

The strength of National Self-Care Week is in the numbers. The greater the number of voices communicating and repeating self-care messages at the same time, makes for a more successful Week with a greater impact.

## 2.0 Help with Self-Care Week

The Self Care Forum has resources to help you plan.

The theme is “Mind & Body”. This is a broad self-care theme allowing you to choose your particular focus, whether it is daily choices like brushing our teeth, managing long term and common conditions, the benefits of exercise, looking after our mental wellbeing, work-life balance etc.



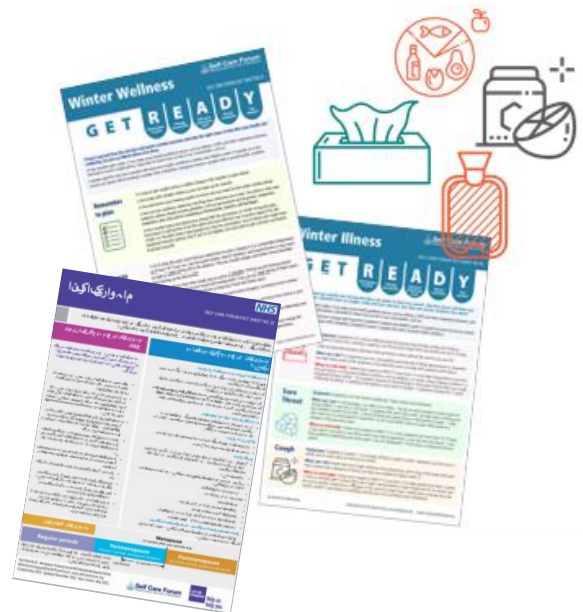
## 3.0 Material

The Self Care Forum website contains free resources that can be helpful for your campaign, below are examples of what is available:

Material: fact sheets, leaflets, posters, logos, sample tweets (available nearer the time) as well as tips and ideas of how to get involved.

More resources can be found on the website.

Get in touch if you want to commission a fact sheet  
[selfcare@selfcareforum.org](mailto:selfcare@selfcareforum.org)



## 4.0 Ideas

There are lots of activities that can be organised as part of your National Self-Care Week initiative, some ideas are below:

Put up a poster and add the Self-Care Week icon to your website and email footer

Include the Self-Care Week icon in presentations, speeches and newsletters

Run a self-care seminar to empower young carers, new parents or students.

Collaborate with pharmacists to support newly diagnosed patients.

Produce self-care articles for the local media

Put forward a local health expert for a phone-in session for local broadcast

Hold a week of activities and events

Run social media comms using #selfcareweek #mindandbody

## 5.0 Key messages – mind and body

Practise self-care for you  
and your family

Self-care from the cradle to  
the grave

Understand how to self-care  
for the important people in  
your life

Make self-care a life-long  
habit

Self-care from head to toe  
today and everyday





## 6.0 Key messages – mental wellbeing


Be mindful of yourself,  
health and happiness always

Take control of your health –  
be in control of your life

Feel good about yourself –  
take care of your health

Stay healthy in body and  
mind by eating well and  
being active

**Self care**  
**Boosting your mood**

  
SELF CARE FORUM FACT SHEET NO.16

This fact sheet helps you to know what you can do to maintain and improve your mood.

**Useful facts**

Everyone copes and responds differently when times are tough. So be gentle with yourself and those around you. Just because others seem to cope, there is no right or wrong way to manage or be in any situation.  
Many things can impact on our lives: local or family situations, national and international events, the coronavirus crisis, financial pressures and wider political unrest. Don't expect to feel okay all the time or to be perfect at everything. You are doing the best you can.

**What can I do to self care and help myself?**

**Get financial and employment help:** Financial and employment concerns can have a major impact on your mood and mental health. If you experience problems, don't ignore them. Instead, talk to people and get all the help you can, for example talk to those responsible for your mortgage or rent, utility companies and any other loan companies that you owe money.  
The Citizens Advice agency has lots of advice and resources to help, including advice on the cost of living crisis. See the link at the end of the fact sheet.  
If you have not already done so, you might want to talk with your employer and, to understand your sick pay and benefits rights, see Government backed MoneyHelper: <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en>

**Plan practical things:** Structure and plan your day. Get into a routine, even doing small things like keeping on top of household chores 1 – 2 jobs a day can help you feel better and more in control.  
Having a 'to do list' can help in identifying the sort of things you want to do but also help in planning how to achieve them.  
Have a plan and set boundaries with yourself.

**Stay connected with others:** Stay in touch with family, friends and work colleagues.  
**Talk about your worries:** Speak with others about how you are feeling. If you find this hard, check out the sources for additional information at the end of this fact sheet. You will find useful pointers to assist you.

**Look after your body:** Look after your physical health by eating healthily, drinking enough water, and moving your body. Move your body regularly and choose activities that you enjoy and that suit your level of fitness and mobility: join others for sports, or try yoga, pilates, cycling, running or go for a brisk walk.

**Stay on top of difficult feelings:** Many people will feel anxious and worried as a result of different things. There are a number of steps that you can take to help reduce feelings of worry, stress and anxiety.  
**Do not stay glued to the news:** Limit the time you spend watching or reading the news (perhaps for once a day) so you're not constantly exposed to upsetting stories. Don't have the radio on all the time, constant news on things outside your control can be challenging and upsetting.


**Limit the time you spend on the internet or tracking social media:** Spending a significant amount of time on social media can increase anxiety and decrease self-esteem. Set boundaries and limit the time you spend on social media, this can help you focus on other things.

**Try to find things to do that you enjoy:** Have something to look forward to, meet a friend, go for a walk, try to avoid staying in all the time.

**Take time to relax:** This can help with difficult emotions and worries; it can help improve wellbeing.

**Get a good sleep:** New routines and situations can cause sleep problems, and sleep is important for wellbeing. Avoid looking at screens as well as coffee, tea, energy drinks and alcohol before bedtime. Create an environment that promotes sleep. Keep your bedroom dark, quiet and tidy at night. Temperatures between 18C and 24C tend to promote good sleep. Remove electronic gadgets and use an alarm clock instead of your smartphone.

Fact Sheet No. 16: Covid-19 Crisis: Boosting your mood. Produced by the Self Care Forum ([www.selfcareforum.org.uk](http://www.selfcareforum.org.uk)) and Self Care Forum ([www.selfcareforum.org.uk](http://www.selfcareforum.org.uk)).  
Next review due: October 2024

  
Helping people take care of themselves

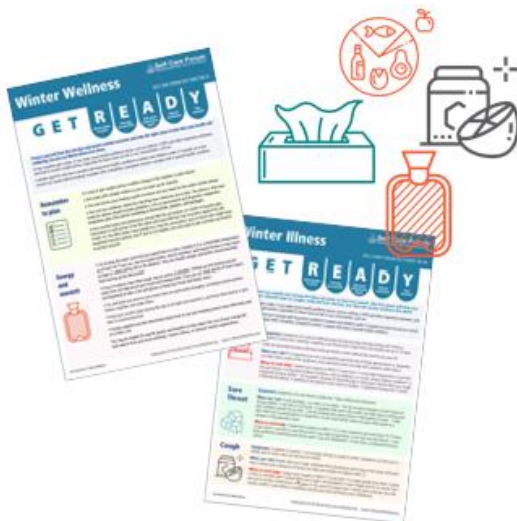
## 7.0 Key messages – pharmacy and NHS

Your local pharmacy is the health hub on the High Street

Check your health conditions and know what to do next:  
<http://bit.ly/1X0CVwh>

For advice on managing your medicines, speak to your pharmacist

For tips to live well the NHS website can help:  
<http://bit.ly/1pKzd7e>



The NHS website has advice on long term conditions :  
<http://bit.ly/1oiB7eo>

Ask your pharmacist for advice to help you self-care for life

# 8.0 Key messages – activity and nutrition

Activity is key to long term physical health and mental wellbeing

To help cut down on portion size use smaller plates

30 minutes of activity a day, keeps the hospital bed at bay

It's recommended people take vitamin D in the winter to prevent deficiency

Binge drinking causes acid-related digestive disorders

Move more – live well!



**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 Management  
**E** Eating & Drink  
**R** Risk & Prevention

**Personal Wellbeing**

- Connect**: Building positive relationships with family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, organisations, national and local health services.
- Be Active**: Get a walk in the park, do physical activity you enjoy and that will give you energy. Look for places you feel good and encourage your friends.
- Learn**: Take time to learn new skills, attend courses, read books, listen to podcasts, watch videos, take courses, learn to cook, learn your confidence and it'll be fun.
- Give**: Volunteering your time for a cause you care about. Think of a cause that interests you. Look out for ways to help. Be a part of a community or hobby.
- Take Notice**: Notice the moment. Be aware of your mood, your thoughts, feelings. Be mindful. It will help you connect with the moment 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 do what feels comfortable.

See: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/quality-standards-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.sleepingwell.co.uk/>

**Spirituality**

Spirituality is a feeling of connection with something greater than ourselves and search for meaning in life. Explore the practices of your faith or your mental wellbeing. <https://www.spirituality.co.uk/mental-health/business-and-wellbeing/spirituality-and-mental-health>

**Managing Illness**

How to live better after you've had and lived with long 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 app Google Health on Android phones and Apple Health on iPhones or wear a cheap pedometer.

- Check your daily step count on a quiet day - it may be between 2500 to 4000 steps at first.
- 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 7000 steps a day.

**AIM FOR:**

- 150** minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a week
- 75** minutes of vigorous intensity physical activity a week

**Build strength** on at least 2 days a week

**Stretch** on at least 2 days a week

**Minimum secondary time** Break up periods of inactivity

**Learn to live with the NHS Couch to 5K App?** If you're new to running, the Couch to 5K app is a great way to get started. No previous running experience is necessary.

**Self Care Forum**  
Helping people take care of themselves

## 9.0 Using key messages

Now you have a series of key Self-Care Week messages, you can begin to communicate these to your audience. Whether on your website, on posters or other campaign material.

**Key messages can also be used in internal and external communications such as in your newsletters, emails or notices. If you have a notice boards, deliver 7 different self-care messages by introducing a “thought of the day” for Self-Care Week.**

Social Media – it goes without saying that highlighting your messages or promoting your planned activities via your social media channels is a good way to reach your audience. (For a share and like include @SelfCareForum in X, FB and LinkedIn using #selfcareweek #mindandbody).

## 10.0 Evaluate your initiative

Evaluating your Self-Care Week initiative is an excellent way to measure its effectiveness and demonstrates whether you reach your comms objective(s).

Here are review ideas:

- Use SurveyMonkey or Microsoft forms to invite feedback from service users;
- Search the internet for local press coverage.
- Keep track of the number of posters, leaflets, etc that have been distributed.
- Monitor take up of any new services or initiatives launched.
- For online content, find out the number of page views and click throughs.

[This link might also be helpful](#) for tips on how to evaluate your Self-Care Week activity.

## 11.0 Connecting to National Self-Care Week

As organisers of Self-Care Week, the Self Care Forum will be promoting the Week and all things self-care at the national level, particularly via social media. So do look out for us.

We hope you will use #selfcareweek and #mindandbody when getting involved on social media. For a retweet and like, include @SelfCareForum in your posts on X, FB and LinkedIn.

Do get in touch to find out more about the Self Care Forum's social media programme.

[selfcare@selfcareforum.org](mailto:selfcare@selfcareforum.org).



Follow us on [X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [FB](#)

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 to your inbox.

Get in touch via [selfcare@selfcareforum.org](mailto:selfcare@selfcareforum.org)

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

