

## Challenge Yourself to feel at your best

**In her latest blog Dr Clare Wright, Strategic Lead for Employee Wellbeing & Experience focuses on physical wellbeing and invites us all to join her fun May challenge ....**

We all know that we are meant to be exercising regularly and eating at least 5 portions of fruit and veg a day to stay healthy, but how many of us actually do that? I don't know about you, but the minute someone starts telling me this is what I should be doing, I want to reach for a piece of cake or bag of chips and the TV remote control. I just don't like being told what to do.

But, the truth of the matter is (and I hate it when other people are proved right), eating healthily and exercising regularly does make you feel better. The evidence is clear. Exercising regularly, even in short bursts, will improve your mood, increase your physical wellbeing, and, if you set yourself a goal that you can successfully work towards, improve self-esteem, self-mastery and just give you a generally great feeling about yourself. But don't take my word for it. I would like to challenge you to find out for yourself.

### **CTM focus on physical wellbeing at work**

In the coming months, the Wellbeing Service will be launching some new services to promote physical wellbeing amongst our staff by encouraging us all to adopt healthier lifestyles. The aim is primarily to help staff feel better about themselves, have more energy and improve their general sense of wellbeing by eating more healthily and taking more exercise.

Specifically we are planning weight management groups for those with a BMI over the healthy range, who would like to engage in a psychologically informed programme to explore their relationship with food and how to develop and maintain healthier eating habits.

Covid permitting, we would also like to help staff get more active by supporting sports or activity groups across our sites. We would love to hear from staff with their ideas about what this could look like. These could be walking, running or cycling groups, team sports competitions, or whatever it is that you enjoy doing. If you would like our support to set something up or would be interested in taking part in something that we could organise, then get in touch with your ideas at

[CTM.WellbeingService@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:CTM.WellbeingService@wales.nhs.uk)

## Join our CTM physical wellbeing challenge

I'd like to invite you to join me in challenging yourself to an activity goal of your choosing, to be completed any day over the second bank holiday weekend in May.

What you challenge yourself to do is completely up to you. This could be a walk, a bike ride, a run, a swim, yoga or, if none of that interests you, how about some crazy Dad dancing round the house, a Joe-Wicks-athon, skipping, bouncing on your kids' trampoline? – anything that gets your heart rate up.

You could do it sponsored for your favourite charity, or not. You don't have to be fit to do this. If you can't make it to the post box and back without feeling exhausted then maybe there's your challenge! This could be done indoors or outside. You could do it as an individual, or get a few work colleagues or family members to join you virtually or socially distanced, if that's allowed. And it absolutely does not have to involve lycra! But it does have to be something that you will enjoy. The aim here is to get active, feel better and have some fun.

## Building a community of support

Having set yourself your challenge for the end of May, let's start training for it together. We can all share our goals and experiences – the highs and the lows – support each other as we get a bit more active, send in photos or videos of yourself doing your thing (but only if you want to) and tell us what difference it is making to your physical and emotional wellbeing.

## Set your training goals

- Bank holiday 3<sup>rd</sup> May : Start your training journey
- 3<sup>rd</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> May: Training week 1
- 9<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> May: Training week 2
- 16<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> May : Training week 3
- 23<sup>rd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> May: Training week 4
- 29<sup>th</sup> -31<sup>st</sup> May (bank holiday weekend): **Challenge Yourself!!**

## How do I get involved?

We would love to follow your training journeys during the five week training period. Here are some ideas for sharing your personal journeys with us:

### 1. Send in comments and picture/s of yourself

- Tell us what has inspired you to take the challenge?
- What's been your motivation to get involved?

- How do you feel at the start of the challenge?
- How is your training going (weeks 1-4)?
- How do you feel at the end of the challenge
  - o How has the challenge made a difference to your wellbeing?

(You can send in comments at intervals over the 5 weeks, or before and after – it's completely your choice).

**For e.g.**

### **Week 1**

Hi I'm Natasha, this challenge has inspired me to try something totally new. I have always wanted to try yoga - just never got around to it. I'm finally giving it a go to strengthen my core – even treated myself to a funky yoga mat. It's week one – excited to get going, wish me luck! (pic of me on yoga mat, poor attempt at a yoga pose)

### **Week 5**

WOW - I never thought I would enjoy yoga this much! My balance still needs some work but my core feels so much stronger and it's also been great for clearing my mind. The added bonus has been getting my girls involved, creating some welcome family time. 😊

### **2. Keep a video diary**

Some of you may feel confident enough to keep a video diary over the five week period, sharing how you feel throughout the challenge. If you are lucky enough to have a Go Pro, then you could even record as you go along!

Please send all pictures /comments and / video messages to:  
[CTM.CommsAndEngTeam@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:CTM.CommsAndEngTeam@wales.nhs.uk)

Your challenge posts will be shared on the staff Facebook page, SharePoint and also on the staff wellbeing portal.

Please subject your email – **My physical challenge.**

If you have any queries about this fun challenge, email Natasha weeks in our communications and engagement team –  
[Natasha.weeks2@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Natasha.weeks2@wales.nhs.uk)

Looking forward to seeing your posts.

**#CTMAtOurBest**

**#MyPhysicalChallenge**

