



7 Messages for Health Care Workers

The World Health Organization's Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse has gathered these seven messages for health care workers during this pandemic:

- 1. Manage your mental health.** Feeling pressure is a likely experience for you and your colleagues during this pandemic. A lot of stress does not mean you are weak or that you can't do your job. Managing your mental health and well-being is as important as managing your physical health.
- 2. This is not a sprint; it's a marathon.** Consistently utilize helpful coping strategies, such as eating healthy food, engaging in physical activity, staying in contact with friends and family, and ensuring sufficient rest and respite during work and in-between shifts.
- 3. Avoid unhelpful coping strategies.** You want to stay away from tobacco, alcohol and other drugs — in the long term, these can worsen your mental and physical well-being.
- 4. Use your past proven strategies to cope.** The COVID-19 pandemic is unique and unprecedented for many workers, but using strategies that have worked well for you in the past to manage times of stress can be beneficial. You are the person who knows how you de-stress best.
- 5. Keep connected.** Some health care workers unfortunately experience avoidance by their family or community due to stigmas or fear. Staying connected with loved ones, even digitally, is a good way to keep in contact and stay social.
- 6. Ask for support.** It's OK to turn to your colleagues, your manager and other trusted people in these uncertain times for social support. Your colleagues are likely having similar experiences.
- 7. Find positive stories.** Try to amplify positive and hopeful stories of local people who have experienced COVID-19. For example, stories of people who have recovered or who have supported a loved one through the virus. It is helpful to focus on the positive in these uncertain times.