

## **ANNEX A**

### **GUIDE TO A DECOMPRESSION / WELLBEING ROOM**

#### **NAMASTE AT WORK – WHY?**

It is vitally important during this current COVID pandemic that our staff have access to a room within the facility to take time to retreat to and decompress at ANY time during their shift as required.

#### **WHERE?**

Consideration should be given to where this room is, somewhere that staff can easily get to, but not near any unnecessary distraction be that noise or smells. The staff need to ground themselves once in the room and not be disturbed with people accessing the room by mistake. It should be clearly signed with no patient or visitor access. Staff only!!

The ability to have natural light and ventilation would also be of benefit.

#### **WHEN?**

If not already providing this space, this should be created now in the Response phase, and available through the Resilience and Restoration phases, possibly becoming a permanent facility..

#### **WHAT?**

The concept is that this room / space should be somewhere for any member of staff to take time out and decompress. Many of us choose to do this in different ways and therefore the room should be multifunctional without being overly cluttered, and well publicised so staff know what is on offer should they wish to engage.

Consider offering:

- Printed aide memoires for setting goals, breathing and grounding techniques.
- Notice boards clearly defining areas.
- Area to make calming teas, rather than caffeine.
- A table with pens and notebooks for staff who may wish to use their time to write lists, set goals or simply doodle.
- Somewhere to lock their phone if they have it on them. It is important to disconnect with the news and outside world when staff are trying to decompress.
- Have a neutral colour theme and then print off Inspirational and Motivational prints. Creating Zen is a philosophy that recognises the power of words.
- Bringing the outdoors in. Greenspace can offer wonders for the mindset and whilst a living wall might be too much, having some living plants and greenery in the room would help. Bringing in plants can boost productivity, help cleanse your air naturally, give your eyes a rest from staring at a computer screen and greatly improve your surroundings. Spider plants, philodendron, lemon balm and the peace lily are all great for purifying the air and boosting productivity and well-being.
- The aroma of essential oils or scented products can also help calm and allow our senses to focus on a different smell from their usual environments.

- Massage / de-stress equipment - be this chairs or items that can assist. E.g. balls for the feet or items which can be used to get right in to the muscles in the shoulders; do consult the physiotherapy professionals – they will know just the things!
- A 'Quiet Area' either simply to sit, without any stimulation, to let the busy-ness subside or to take a quick nap. It may be an unintentional or intentional – no judgement here – nap, but either way, a comfortable space to support moments of rest. Perhaps have a few timers available so they can set them for 20 mins and have a power relax/nap chill time.
- Discussing with mental health colleagues for access to talk through meditation as some people struggle to do it themselves or other advice that psychological therapies can assist with.

Attention to this area of support for staff may cause additional work in terms of maintaining Infection Prevention Control (IPC) within the room, keeping it secure, the set up etc but this can be addressed, and the benefits of this room far outweigh the risks.

You may also wish to seek support from your organisational charity or from local suppliers / philanthropists, however this facility should not be seen as 'someone else's' responsibility or a 'nice to have'. As we continue through from the Response phase to the Resilience phase this facility becomes ever more important to support and sustain the intensity of the work going on.

For more information, consider speaking to your Mental Health services or speaking a local Wellbeing specialist who will know all about creating a relaxing and 'Zen' atmosphere.

#### **Other aspects to consider:**

- **On shift:** giving staff adequate time in a 12hr shifts away from clinical area.
- **Off shift:** giving staff adequate days away from the front line
- Rota rotation to allow for a minimum of 3 days away from front line,
- Planning – and importantly taking - annual leave,
- Plan adequate breaks in shifts, if possible, a 1.5hrs of break on 12hr shifts to decompress in the wellbeing room / getting away from the area of work.