

Creating positive environments



WORKING WELL

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Fact Sheet

Mental health and wellbeing definitions

Mental health

Mental health is more than the absence of illness. The World Health Organization (2014) defines mental health as “...a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.” Like physical health, we can all benefit from looking after our mental health.

Mental wellbeing (also known as ‘positive mental health’ and ‘flourishing’)

Mental wellbeing is more than the absence of mental illness and it is more than feeling happy. Someone with positive mental health and high wellbeing is feeling good, functioning well, has satisfaction with life, is developing as a person, and has strong relationships.

Poor mental health

Poor mental health is a state of low mental wellbeing where your ability to cope with the day-to-day pressures of life, work productively or contribute to a community are impaired. A person’s ability to realise their potential is hampered because of impacts on their emotions and thinking, and in turn their behaviours.

Mental health challenges (also known as mental distress or mental illness)

We all have times when we struggle with our mental health, but mental health problems develop when these difficult experiences or feelings go on for a long time and affect our ability to enjoy and live our lives in the way we want to. You might receive a specific diagnosis from your doctor, or just feel more generally that you are experiencing poor mental health.

Resilience

Resilience is the ability to spring back from and successfully adapt to the ongoing demands and challenges of life. An increasing body of research from the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and sociology shows that most people bounce back from risks, stress, crises, and trauma and experience life success. Resilience can be considered an individual character trait, a set of skills and learnings or as part of an emotional response. Resilience can also be considered a characteristic of communities.

Fact sheet

Understanding mental health and wellbeing (Taha hinengaro)

The time has come to think about mental health as a positive resource that can lead to individual and whānau resilience and improved social relationships, allowing us to respond effectively to the challenges before us.

- There are many different understandings of health and mental health. Using more than one definition is possible.
- Mental health is related and connected to our physical, spiritual, family and environmental health.
- The foundations of mental health are to be found as much outside the mind and body as within.

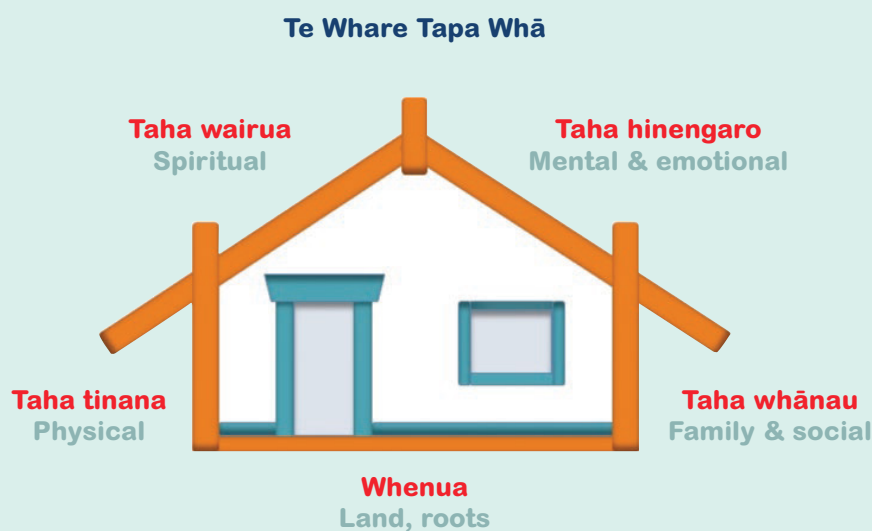
The Mental Health Foundation (2001) defines mental health as the capacity to feel, think and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual wellbeing that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice and personal dignity.

Mental health is ultimately a resource that exists in all people. Just like physical health, it needs to be taken care of in order to reduce risk of injury, illness and suffering, but also to increase potential in individuals and communities.

For Māori, taha hinengaro describes the expression of thoughts and feelings of our mind, heart and conscience. These expressions can be communicated through gestures, eye movements, facial expressions and verbally (Mason Durie 1998).

The Māori health model, Te Whare Tapa Whā

(Durie, 1982, 1994), takes a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. This model recognises the importance of the balance of multiple dimensions of wellbeing. Each of these interconnects and contributes to the balance and strength of the whole.



What works to create mental wellbeing

Life has its ups and downs and we will all experience challenges and struggles. What helps us have the resilience to bounce back is:

- Developing individual skills.
- Building supportive environments.
- Activities and actions that help people and communities to feel good, function well and have strong social relationships.



While there is much evidence regarding ways in which people can develop their personal lives to support positive mental health, there are also external impacts that need to be addressed in order to support mental wellbeing for everybody.

These things affect individuals (micro), groups/communities (meso) and societies/whole populations (macro).

A flourishing society is one where everybody has the right to participate and be free from discrimination. It is a diverse society that values every member for their uniqueness and individual strengths.

What works to create mental wellbeing in individuals and communities? A range of activities and actions, cultivated over time, that focus on:



Feeling good

Oranga

Increasing positive feelings & ways to manage negative experiences



Functioning well

Mātauranga

Increasing our ability to do the things that give us meaning and purpose



Supportive relationships

Whanaungatanga

Increasing opportunities to connect so we feel valued and have a sense of belonging

Fact sheet

The business case for wellbeing

Mental health problems are common

In 2016, a survey of New Zealanders 15 years and older showed:



80% Either had personal experience of mental illness or knew of others who had.¹



30% Report they personally had an experience of mental illness over a lifetime.¹



33% Reported some degree of depression and/or anxiety.¹



1 in 4 Adults reported medium or high levels of psychological distress.¹

A Ministry of Health Survey² found



1 in 2
(47%) Meet the criteria for a mental illness at some point in their lives.

Across the world³



1 in 6 at work

1 in 6 people suffer from symptoms of mental illness. Another 1 in 6 suffer from symptoms associated with mental ill health such as worry, sleep problems and fatigue.

Cost benefits of wellbeing programmes

Looking after employee mental health and wellbeing saves businesses money.



Average return per \$1 spent on mental wellbeing programmes was \$4.20.⁴



Workplace cultures that value employee wellbeing are linked to having the strongest productivity.⁵

10%

Organisations that prioritise employee engagement and wellbeing outperform the average by approximately 10% on the Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 Index (FTSE 100).⁶



Higher levels of psychological wellbeing and employee engagement are linked to better performance, productivity, customer satisfaction and organisational citizenship.⁹

Costs from not taking action

Cost from low levels of mental wellbeing at work:³

- Absenteeism
- Presenteeism (being at work while feeling unwell)
- Reduced work performance
- Increased turnover rates
- Higher accident and injury rates
- Higher health care costs
- Higher worker compensation premiums
- Poorer organisational citizenship behaviours
- Greater counter productive work behaviours

Estimates showed that New Zealand:

13 million days

Lost approximately 13 million working days to absence in 2024.

\$2.86 billion

The direct costs of absence alone amounted to \$2.86 billion across the economy in 2022.
(Southern Cross Health Insurance Workplace Wellness Report 2023)



6 days

On average, the impact of presenteeism is equivalent to 6 lost productive days monthly - resulting in much higher 'hidden' costs of poor mental health.
(Umbrella Wellness 2025)



The average cost to New Zealand employers of absentee and presentee days is estimated at over \$1,500 per year, per employee.⁷

The Law



Workplaces have a legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to manage risks to mental health and wellbeing just like they do any other health and safety risk.⁸



Both the Human Rights Act and the Employment Relations Act lay out responsibilities and obligations for workplaces to ensure workers experiencing mental health problems are not discriminated against, do not face harassment and have access to reasonable accommodations.

Fact sheet

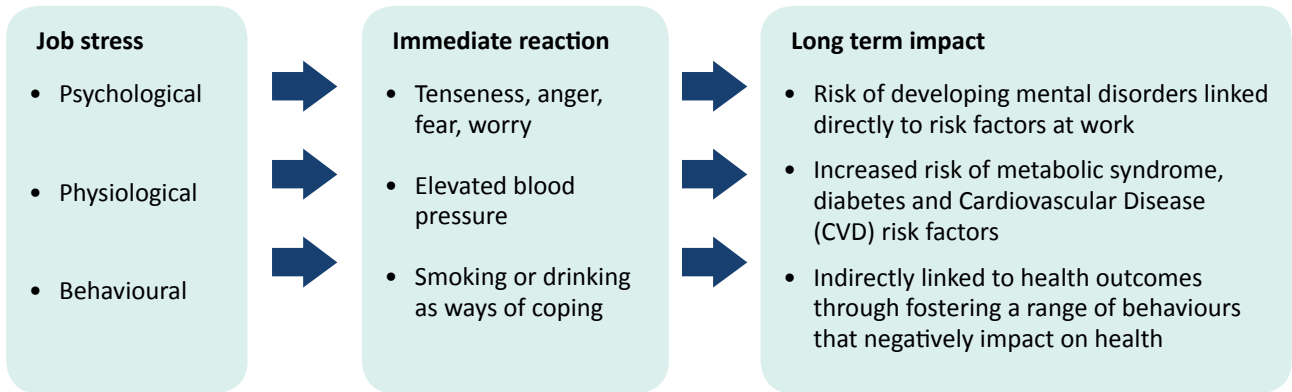
How work impacts mental health

- Workplaces play an active role in people’s health and wellbeing, as well as in recovery from mental health problems.
- Good work is beneficial to our overall wellbeing and can act as a protective factor against mental illness and distress.
- Work can also have negative impacts on mental health and wellbeing when workplaces don’t provide the right protection.
- Workplaces with cultures that value mental wellbeing create a space for people to feel good, function well and have strong social connections.
- There is a combination of interrelated factors that contribute to a mentally healthy workplace.
- For actions to be effective they must address risk factors and promote protective factors across all areas of work.^{1,2}

Areas of work that can impact wellbeing^{3,4}

	Factors to consider	Risk factors	Protective factors
Work and its content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demands of the job • Access to resources and equipment • The physical environment • Opportunity to develop and use skills • Clear communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work overload, long hours • Lack of control • Changing from low strain to high strain job • Poor or deteriorating work conditions • Lack of variety • Job insecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate balance between demands and resources • Sufficient resources to perform work • Workers actively engaged with work and shaping job so they experience success
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions with co-workers, supervisor and customers • Access to social supports • Work/life balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor social support • Negative or high conflict interactions • Conflict between work role and out of work roles • Bullying and harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful and trusting relationships with supervisors, team leaders and peers • Effective management of interpersonal conflict • Zero tolerance for bullying or harassment • Effort rewarded & success celebrated
Purpose and meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on what is expected • How role is valued (by worker and others) • Work goals are worthwhile • Sense of progress and achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear work role • Effort/reward imbalance • Low status • Lack of progress in role and career 	Work that contributes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunities • Fair work practices • Environmental clarity • Sense of worth and value • Career outlook • Equity
Leadership, management and supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of manager on team • Commitment to wellbeing • Fair processes and policies • Provision of feedback and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No commitment to wellbeing • Lack of fairness • Poor communication • Lack of participation in decision making • Poor supervision and feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worker opinions valued • Appropriate feedback and support provided • Employee growth encouraged • Consideration for individuals • Confidence in discussing mental health

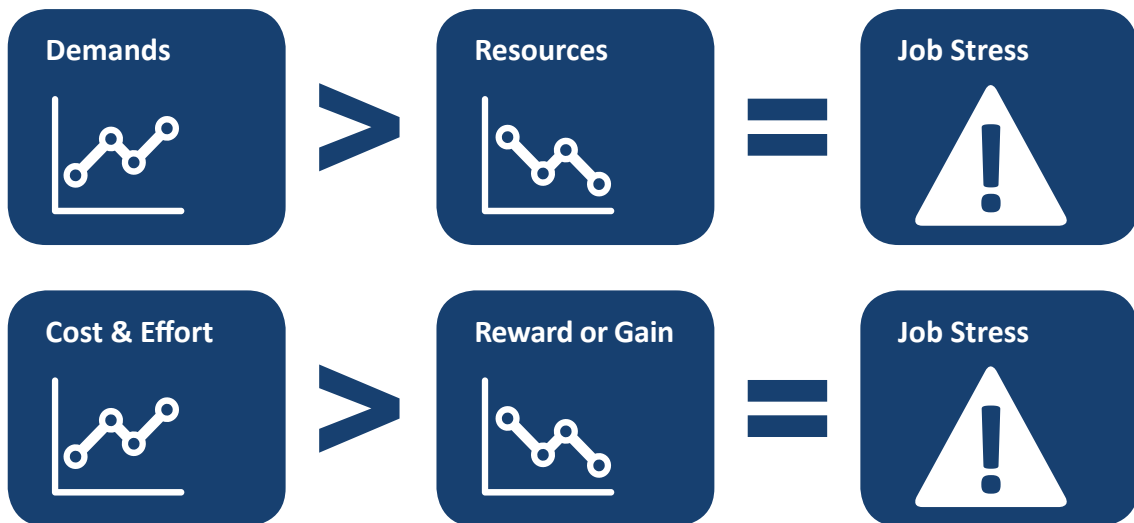
Potential impacts on health⁴



Challenge versus stress^{3,4}

Job stress is the harmful physical and emotional response resulting from a situation where the demands of a job are not matched by the resources provided to get the job done (job-related distress).

Some degree of challenge is an important part of a rewarding job. The achievement and experience that goes along with meeting challenges can be beneficial for mental wellbeing. This type of pressure or stress is not a problem and can support wellbeing. Problems arise when the balance of demands, resources and control exceed the ability for the person to cope or where there is an effort vs reward imbalance. This is when pressure can lead to job stress.



The solution is to find a balance where the job requirements match the capabilities, resources and needs of the people carrying out the work, and effort is rewarded appropriately.

Work areas that can be modified to reduce or prevent job stress



Fact sheet

Positive work environments

- Organisations are only as strong as their people, and the culture of an organisation has a significant impact on the wellbeing of their employees.
- A positive work culture is associated with higher morale and lower stress. It can act as a protective factor for mental wellbeing and improve organisational performance and productivity.
- Creating a mentally healthy workplace is about creating a safe, supportive and strong workplace culture. It takes time and is an ongoing journey.
- There is no one-size-fits-all approach to creating a positive work environment. Every workplace has different needs, resources and priorities.
- Adapt the tools you already have and integrate a mental health and wellbeing focus to the programmes and work already underway (i.e. don't reinvent the wheel).

A positive work environment and culture looks like...

- ✓ **Positive emotional climate**
Cultivating and expressing positive emotions
- ✓ **Education and awareness**
Educating employees on mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ **Effective communication**
Communications based on trust, respect and civility
- ✓ **Not tolerating bullying or harassment**
- ✓ **Collaborative teamwork**
Working well together to share knowledge and achieve goals
- ✓ **Diversity and inclusion**
Engaging the strengths of a diverse workforce

Getting started

Ask these questions:

Where are we starting from and where do we want to go?

Assess what is needed and wanted from staff and management. Set goals and priorities and identify target audiences and resources.

When assessing need and identifying priorities, ask some more questions:

How does this impact mental wellbeing?

*Is it **safe**?*

*Is it **supportive**?*

*Will it **strengthen** wellbeing?*



Safe

Manaakitanga

Psychologically healthy environment



Supportive

Āwhinatia

Fair & empathetic approaches



Strong

Kia Tautoko

Boosting mental wellbeing & resilience

Key elements for creating positive environments

Leadership commitment: Workplace mental health is an organisational priority

- Communicate the importance of mental wellbeing regularly.
- Engage in two-way conversations about mental health at work.
- Model psychologically safe and healthy behaviour.
- Involve staff in creating and implementing wellbeing plans.

Encourage communication around mental health and wellbeing

- Ensure all leaders, from top management to team leaders, talk about mental health and wellbeing.
- Encourage two-way supportive conversations at work, including one-on-one discussions, team discussions and when someone might be struggling.
- Provide regular information and resources on mental health and wellbeing for staff, throughout all stages of employment.

Mental health and wellbeing policy and processes

- Focus on how the organisation ensures a mentally safe workplace.
- Show a commitment to strengthening staff wellbeing and resiliency.
- Communicate clearly what supports are available for all staff experiencing mental health problems.
- Ensure all other policies and processes reflect the organisation's commitment to being a mentally healthy workplace.

Check progress against wellbeing objectives

- Include mental health and wellbeing measures in staff surveys.
- Check in regularly on how staff feel and think about work.
- Report back on progress and celebrate successes.

Lived values are essential

At the heart of a positive culture is the need to trust and be trusted, and the need to respect and be respected. Everyone in the organisation needs to understand and be able to demonstrate your agreed values.

Consider:

- How is trust built to support positive relationships with co-workers and supervisors?
- Is respect shown through courtesy, kindness and politeness?
- Do people feel encouraged to express their opinions and ideas?
- Is civility promoted and stigma, discrimination and bullying rejected?
- Is teamwork valued and collaborative ideas and practices rewarded?
- Is diversity, differences and similarities, valued?

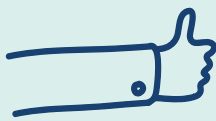
Creating a wellbeing induction

An induction sets the scene for how an organisation's culture works and how new staff members (kaimahi hou) become part of a new environment. Including wellbeing in your induction process helps new employees to understand the support available to them and sets out how your workplace will support their mental health and wellbeing at work.

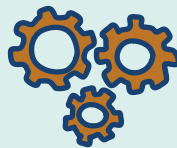
A good induction should highlight how the workplace values employee wellbeing, identity and mental health. This can help reduce stigma and discrimination and promote access and support – so people can do their best work.

Often we forget to highlight the importance of mental health and what support services are available in your workplace – whether those are to strengthen staff wellbeing or to assist when things aren't going so well.

The goal of a wellbeing induction is to help new staff:



Feel good



Function well



Feel connected to their new workplace

And to make sure kaimahi hou know how the workplace:



Ensures their safety, including cultural safety



Supports them with problems



Acknowledges and welcomes all people, and fosters a culture whereby people bring their whole selves to work



Offers opportunities to strengthen and grow

Five phases of building a good working relationship:

1 Welcome

2 Connection

3 Expectations

4 Support

5 Growth

1 WELCOME

Complete a clear welcome that eases nerves and makes kaimahi hou feel comfortable and safe.

A kaimahi hou needs to know the following before they start:

- When and where to go
- Parking, transport, security
- Who will meet them
- What to expect on the first day and week
- Outline of the induction process.

Don't forget that a new person starting affects the current team and workforce. For the new person to feel welcomed make sure the team knows they are arriving and what role they will play in the induction and training process.



2 CONNECTION

Create a sense of connection to environment and team

The quality of workplace relationships can affect the way teams and individuals function on a physical and mental level. Relationships contribute to mental wellbeing as they can provide emotional and practical assistance and support, and a sense of belonging. Poor emotional support, bullying and conflict can contribute to job strain and stress, which in turn leads to poor productivity and increased absence.

How to create a good environment

- Ensure the person's immediate supervisor has time to welcome the new staff member. The aim is to introduce the kaimahi hou to the wider team and to ensure they know who's to be supporting them throughout the orientation process and beyond. Who is the staffer to go to if they have questions, for example?
- Make sure the team knows there's a new staff member coming and there's time reserved for getting to know each other. Giving time for staff to share personal and professional histories helps current and new staff make connections and see what skills, knowledge and experience they all bring into the workplace. It might be a good idea for the team manager to send out a biography of the new starter, outlining the role and their background. Workplaces can be busy, so this could be helpful for speeding up the relationship building process.
- It can be overwhelming to meet everyone and try and remember names and roles all in one go, so why not give a staff list with names and roles.
- Ensure the new staff member has a good workspace that's got everything they need to do good work. Be wary of noise, and ergonomic exposures.
- Introduce the new staffer to the wider company and its structure. A tour of the workplace can be a good start – that way you can simultaneously introduce the amenities and facilities.
- Why not officially welcome the kaimahi hou by doing a pōwhiri or mihi whakatau. Many organisations are doing mihi whakatau, so why not try it too?



4 SUPPORT

Outline and implement support mechanisms, processes and communication channels

High quality feedback, supportive relationships with supervisors, effective management of interpersonal conflict, and communication aimed at making people feel valued are all protective factors for wellbeing and can buffer against other stressors. Regular and clear communication can minimise the negative impact on health and wellbeing caused by rapid change or uncertainty. Knowing that it is safe to ask questions and where to go for support is especially important for new staff tackling an unknown environment and relationships.

Higher levels of perceived organisational support is linked to improved job satisfaction and positive moods. Letting new staff know the ways an organisation supports and involves staff during induction shows the intention of building a work relationship founded on mutual respect and trust.

Here's how you can highlight the workplace values and support systems available workers:

- Don't forget the basics, make sure the kaimahi hou knows about pay, leave, flexible work arrangements, and what policies and processes there are to ensure a safe and secure work environment.
- Show how the workplace acknowledges and rewards effort and achievement. Include formal processes but don't forget to highlight how this appreciation can be demonstrated daily.
- Explain and show how staff can be involved in making decisions. Give examples throughout induction of not just how work is done but how the process was developed with staff or the reasons behind processes such as health and safety considerations or how this process impacts other aspects of work.
- Highlight that it is important to think about mental health and what is available to support staff. Let them know who is available including if you have any specific staff trained or with appropriate skills around mental health issues.
- Talk about the importance the workplace places in reducing stigma and discrimination around mental illness, and encourage help seeking and support for staff.
- Have clear processes in place so that employees know support is available, it's easily accessible, and there are specific people and communities they can turn to.
- Dedicate support avenues relating to employees' personal life. What's their personal circumstance? What are the bereavement entitlements – and do these include cultural considerations, for example?
- Outline and meaningfully employ wider organisation's values around work/life balance, diversity and inclusion. People who engage in regular leisure time, physical activity, and have good sleep hygiene and diet have a decreased risk of mental illness, for example. What wellbeing initiatives are in place?
- Monitor and limit workplace stress insofar as the demands of the job should be matched by the resources needed to get the job done through regular check-ins. High levels of stress are directly linked to enduring health problems, and indirectly linked to self-destructive decision-making. Reducing workplace stress can decrease staff turnover rates, absenteeism, presenteeism and counterproductive work behaviours.



5 GROWTH

Create opportunity for growth and development – professionally and personally

Highlighting how the workplace supports staff to be at their best and achieve personal and work goals enables a sense of achievement, growth and self determination. These boost wellbeing and increase engagement, loyalty and confidence. Let staff know right from the start the workplace is committed to building a mutually beneficial relationship where the efforts of staff support both work outcomes and personal needs.

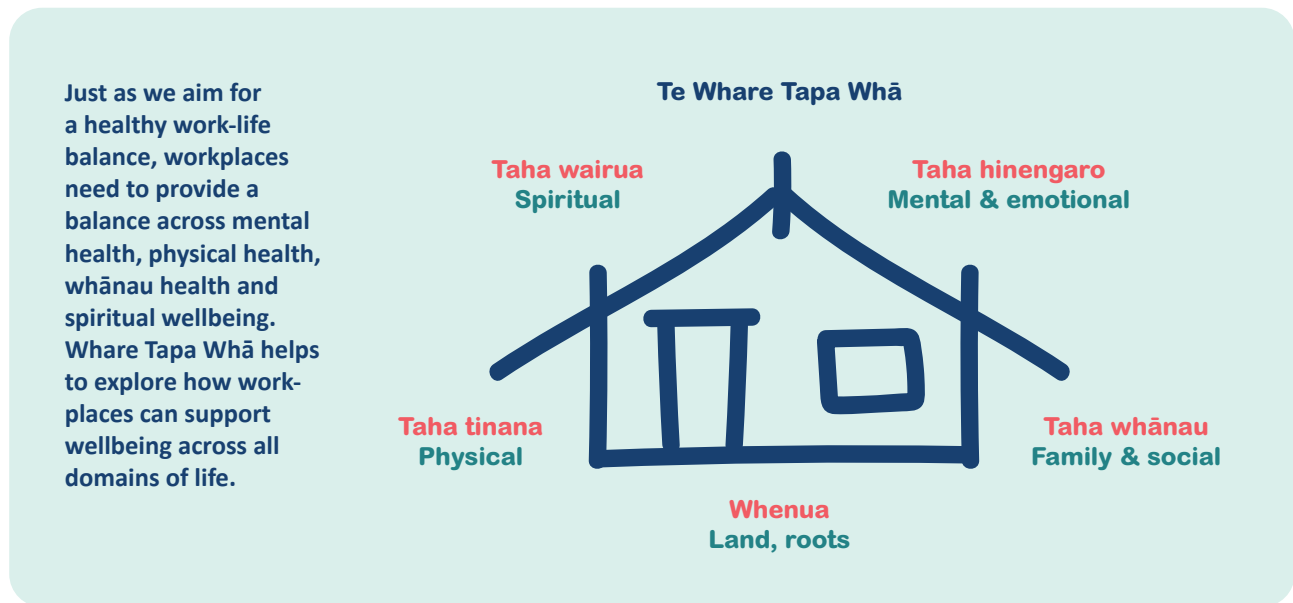
- Give regular and helpful feedback on an employee's work performance.
- Encourage autonomy, self determination and involvement in the decision-making process. Having greater control over your work improves overall job satisfaction.
- Monitor an employee's sense of purpose, meaning and engagement at work – with the role itself, and with the organisation and workplace community.
- Assess further opportunities for growth and development. This might include further training, and opportunities for promotion, for example.



WORKPLACE INDUCTION ACTIVITY FOR KAIMAHI HOU: Te Whare Tapa Whā

Organisations are only as strong as their people, and the culture of an organisation has a significant impact on the wellbeing of employees. This worksheet is designed to help you think about how your workplace impacts all four aspects of wellbeing, and what is in place to support a sense of balance.

Remember, it takes time – this is an ongoing journey.



Things to think about:

Taha whānau – social wellbeing

- Social support, social cohesion
- Family connection, whakapapa
- Communication networks
- Safety
- Health of family
- Changes in family members
- Communication styles
- Relationship values
- Expectations of reciprocity/mutuality
- Participation

Taha tinana – physical wellbeing

- Housing conditions and location
- Working conditions
- Quality of air, water and soil (including pollution)
- Noise, temperature, weather, seasons
- Health, injuries
- Public safety
- Sense of capabilities
- Ability to improve health
- Access to resources

Taha wairua – spiritual wellbeing

- Expression of cultural values and practices
- Racism and discrimination
- Access to marae and cultural resources
- Perception of safety
- Attitudes to disability
- Sense of peace or contentment
- Definition of dignity and respect
- Connection to a bigger meaning or purpose

Taha hinengaro – mental wellbeing

- Employment
- Education and opportunities
- Income and finances
- Affordable, quality, housing
- Public transport/traffic
- Change in roles
- Motivations
- Behaviours
- How emotions are expressed
- Thinking and understanding processes

QUESTIONS:

Taha tinana (physical health): How can we help you with your physical health?

Taha hinengaro (mental wellbeing): How can we help you with your mental wellbeing?

Taha whānau (social relationships): What would good social relationships look like?

Taha wairua (spirituality*): What are some of your beliefs, traditions, and practices that support your sense of self-awareness and identity?

Whenua (connection with the land or environment): What's your ideal workplace environment?

* Spirituality is expressed through beliefs, values, traditions, and practices, that support self-awareness & identity. Provides a sense of meaning and purpose as well as experiencing a sense of connectedness to self, whānau, community, nature and the significant or sacred. It doesn't necessarily mean practising formal religion.

Handout

Resources list

There are a range of organisations, resources and information that can support you to build a vibrant and flourishing organisation that supports staff mental wellbeing.

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.nz

Working Well: a workplace guide to mental health

www.mentalhealth.org.nz/assets/Our-Work/Open-Minds/Working-Well-guide.pdf

A guide for managers who want to proactively understand and increase mental wellbeing in their workplaces:

Open Minds

www.mentalhealth.org.nz/open-minds

A collection of online training materials and information to equip managers with the tools and confidence to talk about mental health.

Five Ways to Wellbeing at work Toolkit

www.mentalhealth.org.nz/fivewaysworktoolkit

A guide to improving mental wellbeing in your workplace, developed by the MHF and HPA. It includes fact sheets tools, templates and team activities.

Mental Health Awareness Week

www.mhaw.nz

An annual campaign that draws attention to positive mental health, and provides activities and resources for workplace wellbeing.

Pink Shirt Day

www.pinkshirtday.org.nz

A national anti-bullying campaign, led by the MHF, to celebrate diversity and prevent bullying, with a workplace focus.

Ignite

www.ignite.org.nz

Developed by the Health Promotion Agency, Ignite brings together practical ideas, tools and resources for people who are leading wellbeing activity in New Zealand workplaces.

WorkWell

www.workwell.health.nz

A free, workplace wellbeing initiative that supports workplaces to 'work better through wellbeing'. Developed by Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service, can be adapted to any workplace and is available in various regions across New Zealand.

WorkSafe New Zealand

www.worksafe.govt.nz/worksafe

New Zealand's work health and safety regulator. Provides a wide range of information and guidance about health and safety in the workplace.

Handout

Getting help and advice

Talk to someone

Need to talk? Free call or text 1737 to talk to a trained counsellor, anytime

Lifeline – 0800 543 354 for counselling and support

Depression Helpline – 0800 111 757 for support from trained counsellors

Youthline – 0800 37 66 33, free text 234 or email talk@youthline.co.nz for young people, and their parents, whānau and friends

Samaritans – 0800 726 666 for confidential support to anyone who is lonely or in emotional distress 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

Suicide Crisis Helpline – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO) for people in distress, and people who are worried about someone else

Get support online

depression.org.nz includes The Journal, a free online self-help tool, and includes specific advice on helping someone at **work**

Netsafe – www.netsafe.org.nz for advice on how to stay safe online

To find helplines and local mental health services visit the [helplines](http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/helplines) page at the Mental Health Foundation website: www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help

Get advice about workplace issues

Employer Advice Line - 0800 805 405 for free advice for employers and managers on how to support team members with a disability or health condition, including mental health. Call for support within normal business hours (8am – 6pm working days)

Employment Relations Authority – 0800 20 90 20 for general queries on employment relations

Citizen's Advice Bureau – 0800 367 222 (0800 FOR CAB) for information and advice

Human Rights Commission – 0800 496 877 for advice or to make a complaint about discrimination

Your Employee Assistance Programme for counselling and support

Your **workplace union** for workplace support

Find support around sexuality or gender identity

OUTLine NZ – 0800 688 5463 (0800 OUTLINE), www.outline.org.nz for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. Free phone counselling is available Monday to Friday, 9am – 9pm, and weekends/holidays 6pm – 9pm

Find support around alcohol and drugs

Alcohol Drug Helpline – 0800 787 797 or text 8681 for a free and confidential chat with a trained counsellor, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

For support around domestic violence

Family Violence Information Line – 0800 456 450 for information as well as services in your own region. The phonenumber operates 9am – 11pm every day of the year

Handout

Evaluating success

It's important to measure the impact of your wellbeing activities. Knowing the reach and impact you achieved will help you learn what worked and what didn't and help build a case for future mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

Not all your wellbeing activities need to focus on making broad change – remember to decide what area you are trying to improve and focus on measuring that area.

Often when we talk about evaluation and reviewing it can seem complicated.

The reality is that this should be simple, otherwise we tend not to do it.

ASSESS

Working out where to start

Where are we starting from and where do we want to go?

- Assess what is needed and wanted from staff and management. Set goals & priorities, and identify audience and resources.
- Decide what outcomes you want to achieve and describe how you will know when you have reached your goal.

PLAN

What's the best way to get there?

Plan how you can reach you goals, which steps to take first and who to start with.

- Think about who needs to be involved, what resources you will need and how to ensure ongoing engagement.

DO

Take the first step

Take action, start small and build on success.

- Make sure you have clear messages and that everyone knows what is happening.
- Involve key leaders and staff to champion activities.

EVALUATE

Check you progress

Evaluate progress towards your goals, what worked, what could be improved and what is next.

- Revisit the plan regularly – measure what has or hasn't happened – how people feel things are going, have there been any changes?
- Check-in through discussions during one-on-ones and in team meetings.
- You can use the 'Positive work environments matrix' and 'Team discussion worksheet' to review how plans are progressing.

Celebrate your successes

Remember to share your results and your successes with others (colleagues and leaders)

Share your learnings

Don't shy away from sharing the things that didn't go as well or challenges. These are important lessons for next time and for others

Staff surveys

Include and review questions in your staff surveys around wellbeing. You can use various online questionnaires, and you can also create questions based on what staff have identified as important to their mental wellbeing.

Remember to link your questions to the key elements needed to create a mentally healthy environment and mental wellbeing for staff.



Possible survey questions:



I feel comfortable bringing my whole self to work, including my full range of healthy emotions. *(Rate your level of agreement)*



I feel safe to take calculated risks, make mistakes and be vulnerable in front of my teammates and manager. *(Rate your level of agreement)*



All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job?



Do you feel stressed in organising your work time to meet demands?



Overall, I am satisfied with the amount of control and involvement I have at work. *(Rate your level of agreement)*



Do you feel capable and effective in your work on a day-to-day basis?



To what extent do you receive help and support from other people when you need it?



I receive regular and constructive feedback on my performance. *(Rate your level of agreement)*



How satisfied are you with the balance between the time you spend on your work and the time you spend on other aspects of your life?



What stops you from improving your mental wellbeing?



What initiatives would you like to see implemented or continued in your workplace to support you and others to improve mental wellbeing?

Other resources:






www.workwell.health.nz
Evaluation plans and questions focusing on mental wellbeing at work



www.good4work.nz
A free online workplace wellbeing tool

Worksheet

Positive work environments matrix

	What do we need?	What are the barriers?
 <p>Safe Manaakitanga Psychologically healthy environment</p> <p>Safe from things that impact negatively on mental health and wellbeing</p>		
 <p>Supportive Awhinatia Fair & empathetic approaches</p> <p>Supportive when people are struggling with life challenges</p>		
 <p>Strong Kia Tautoko Boosting mental wellbeing & resilience</p> <p>Strengthen peoples' skills and knowledge to attain optimal mental wellbeing</p>		

Think about how your workplace affects how you feel, function and connect with others.

Discussion instructions:

In pairs (or small groups) discuss what you think we need to have a positive work environment that is safe, supportive and strengthens our mental wellbeing, and identify any barriers that may exist.

This will help us identify what we may already be doing well and where we can make improvements to support mental wellbeing at work.

In pairs or small groups:




1. Think about our work (how it is done, when and where and with who).
2. Think about what is needed (in your experience) for you to feel good, get the job done well and have supportive and positive relationships with your team.
3. You have 5 mins to have a look at the 'Positive work environments matrix' and discuss then write down some of the things our organisation needs (or is doing) to create positive work environments.
4. Then take 5 mins to talk about some of the challenges or barriers faced to achieving a mentally healthy workplace. Write down these on the worksheet too.
5. Agree on one idea that might make the biggest difference to our workplace.
6. Allocate one person to speak about this idea.
7. Each group will then share back to the main group.

This worksheet can be used to help set priorities for planning and to check on progress.

Think about how your workplace affects how you feel, function and connect with others.

Worksheet

Policy and processes matrix

	What do we do well?	What could be better or is missing?
<div data-bbox="70 344 528 521">  <p>Safe Manaakitanga Psychologically healthy environment</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue and taking breaks • Bullying • Discrimination and harassment • Stress • Conflict resolution • Expectations around workplace behaviour • Culture of trust and openness • Diversity and inclusion 		
<div data-bbox="70 920 528 1097">  <p>Supportive Āwhinatia Fair & empathetic approaches</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-life balance • Flexible working arrangements • Supporting people when they are distressed • Employee assistance programmes • Return to work plans include mental health problems 		
<div data-bbox="70 1496 528 1673">  <p>Strong Kia Tautoko Boosting mental wellbeing & resilience</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing programmes • Professional development • Training for leadership and managers • Opportunities for your people to identify ways to support their own wellbeing • Support mental health and wellbeing initiatives e.g. Mental Health Awareness Week 		

Think about how your workplace affects how you feel, function and connect with others.

Discussion Instructions:

In groups of three or four identify what policies or processes are in place that reinforces or supports mental wellbeing.

How:

1. Take a look at the 'Policy and processes to support mental wellbeing matrix'. There are some core areas to consider on the matrix.
2. Discuss if you know of any policy or ways of work that support the elements needed to create a positive environment.
3. Add anything that you think is important that isn't already mentioned.
4. As a group, identify:
 - a. What do we do well?
 - b. What could be improved?
 - c. What is missing or what don't we know about?

Worksheet

Team discussions

Planning for strengthening mental wellbeing in the team

What are the things that we need to have a really good day at work?

What gets in the way of this?

What can we do to make this better as a team?

What other support might we need?

ACTION PLAN

What is one thing that we will commit to doing as a team this month?

What resources will we need?

Who will take the lead to ensure that it happens?

Discussion instructions:

In small groups we are going to brainstorm a series of questions, remembering that the purpose of brainstorming is to generate as many ideas as possible before evaluating which ones will work for us. You will see these questions on the team discussion worksheet.

- What are the things that we need to have a really good day at work?
- What gets in the way of this?
- What can we do to make this better as a team?
- What other support might we need?

How:

1. Spend 5 minutes just discussing the worksheet questions.
2. From the discussion, as a group spend 5 mins deciding what actions need to be taken and what behaviours have been agreed. Please note these down on a worksheet.

To help decide which actions to prioritise or act on first you could:

- *Have each group member rate their top idea and pick the one with highest rating, or*
- *Decide based on what the group feel could be achieved in the next week/ month*

This worksheet can be used at regular team meetings to check on progress.



What's one thing you loved doing as a kid?



Conversation cards



What is one thing in your life you are most proud of?



Conversation cards



What is a family tradition you still continue?



Conversation cards



What is the silliest fear you have ever had?



Conversation cards



Where is the most beautiful place you have ever been?



Conversation cards



Who had the biggest impact on the person you are?



Conversation cards



What languages are spoken in your family?



Conversation cards



What is your secret talent?



Conversation cards



What's something you do that you really enjoy?



Conversation cards



If you had an opportunity to do anything, what's one thing you'd like to try?



Conversation cards

Worker 1

“You have noticed that your colleague who was usually the conversation driver in the lunchroom has stopped eating their lunch there and is not really engaging with their workmates as they usually do.”

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“You have noticed that your colleague who was usually the conversation driver in the lunchroom has stopped eating their lunch there and is not really engaging with their workmates as they usually do.”

Worker 2

“You have had a tough couple of months at work and home. Your energy levels are very low and you are having trouble sleeping. You are finding yourself getting frustrated with other people so have kept to yourself more often to avoid others.”

Worker 2

“You have had a tough couple of months at work and home. Your energy levels are very low and you are having trouble sleeping. You are finding yourself getting frustrated with other people so have kept to yourself more often to avoid others.”

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Workshop evaluation

Creating positive environments for mental wellbeing – the what, why and how

Please rate your opinion on the following aspects of the workshop:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Delivery of the presentation / the facilitator				
The PowerPoint slides				
Activities and discussion				
Resources and handouts				

Please rate if the workshops helped to:

	Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a large extent
Understand mental health and wellbeing				
Understand the importance of wellbeing at work				
Learn what is needed to create a positive work environment				
Learn practical things to do in your workplace to create a positive environment				
Feel confident to lead activities demonstrated				

Please rate the following:

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very
How likely would you be to run any of the activities with your own staff?				
How confident would you feel running these activities?				
How likely are you to use any of the information from the workshop?				
How likely would you be to download the resources to support these workshops?				

Please turn over the page

What did you find most useful from today?

What did you find least useful from today?

What would you change?

Please add any other comments you would like to make:

Thank you

Fact sheet

Reference list for Working Well fact sheets

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NB: We have added the dimension taha whenua to Mason Durie’s Te Whare Tapa Whā model, to explicitly acknowledge the inter-relationship of whenua as the foundation for a whare, and the importance of that inter-relationship in Te Ao Māori.