

# Leading For Mental Wellbeing

Dr Hillary Bennett

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## Working Together

- Videos on - enables us to connect better
- Audio muted - helps to hear each other
- Ask your nagging questions - helps us talk about the issues that really concern you
- If you want to ask a question or make a comment just put your hand up
- If your call drops out, use the original link to rejoin

# Basic Premise

Everyone who goes to work should go home safe and healthy, both physically and mentally.

Ensuring this is more than a legal obligation. *It's the right thing to do.*



# Over To You

In breakout groups take 3 minutes to share your thoughts on what wellbeing is?



# Wellbeing Is A State

Mental health is a *state of wellbeing* in which every individual realises 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.

(World Health Organisation, 2007).

*Wellbeing* is an individual's ongoing *state* which enables the person to thrive or not.

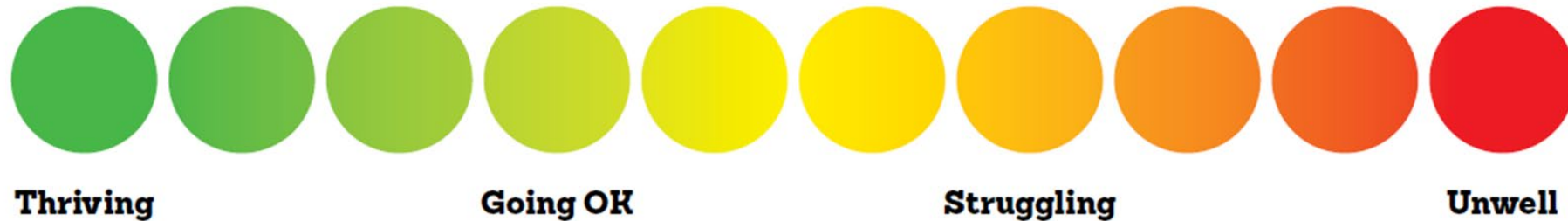
(British Safety Council, 2018).



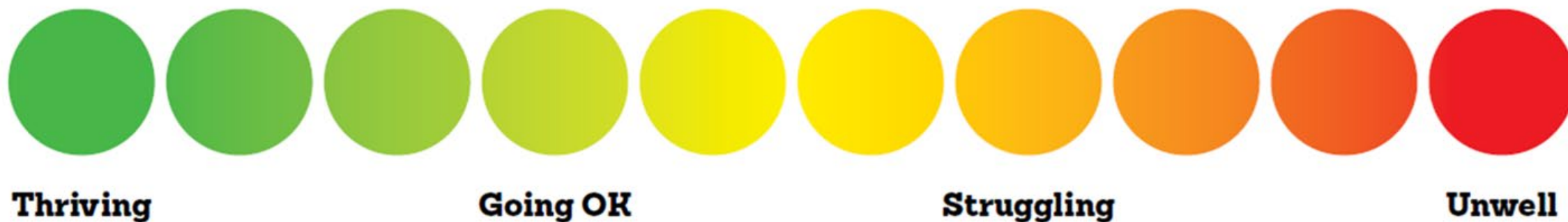
**Not just free fruit:  
wellbeing at work**

# As A State Mental Wellbeing Is Dynamic

- Mental wellbeing is just like physical health; We ***all*** have it and we need to take care of it.
- Mental wellbeing is *more than* the absence of a mental health condition and it is *more than* feeling okay. It is also about thriving.
- It can change from moment to moment, day to day, month to month, year to year, in response to different demands and circumstances.





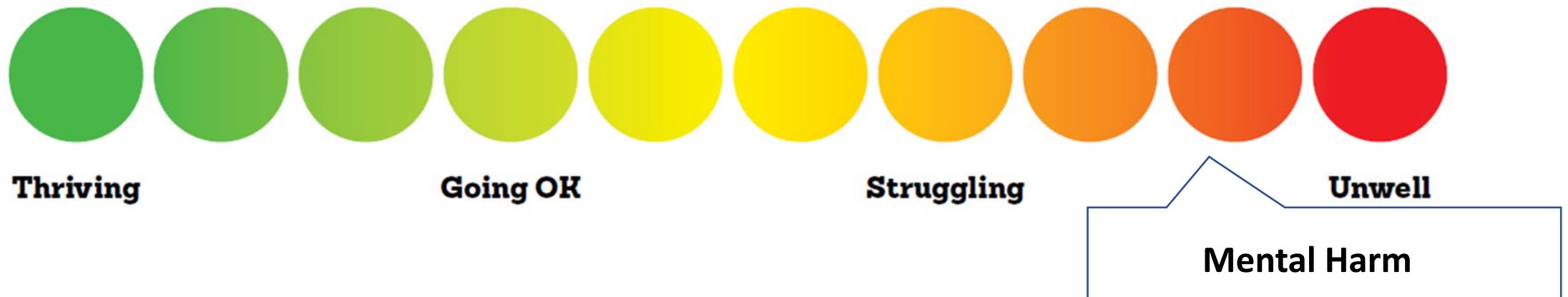


- Sense of purpose and self worth
- Calm and taking things in one's stride
- Socially engaged
- Positive relationships
- Few sleep difficulties
- Good energy levels
- Working productively
- Calm and composed
- Normal mood fluctuations

- Hopelessness and worthlessness
- Overwhelmed and anxious
- Socially withdrawn
- Poor relationships
- Disturbed sleep
- Low energy levels
- Reduced productivity
- Irritability
- Depressed mood

# Mental Harm

- Mental harm at work is significant cognitive, emotional, or behavioural impact arising from one or more work-related risk factors.
- It can arise from an acute event (e.g. a response to an armed robbery) or from a gradual process (e.g. response to an excessive workload over an extended period).
- Gradual process harm is also known as chronic harm. Chronic harm develops slowly and progressively over time e.g. the anxiety developed from dealing with aggression at work or being exposed to bullying over a period of time.

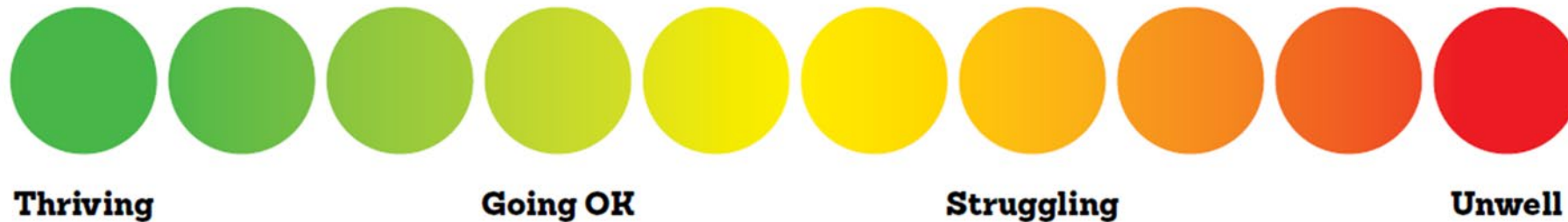




# Over To You

In breakout groups you have 5 minutes to discuss:

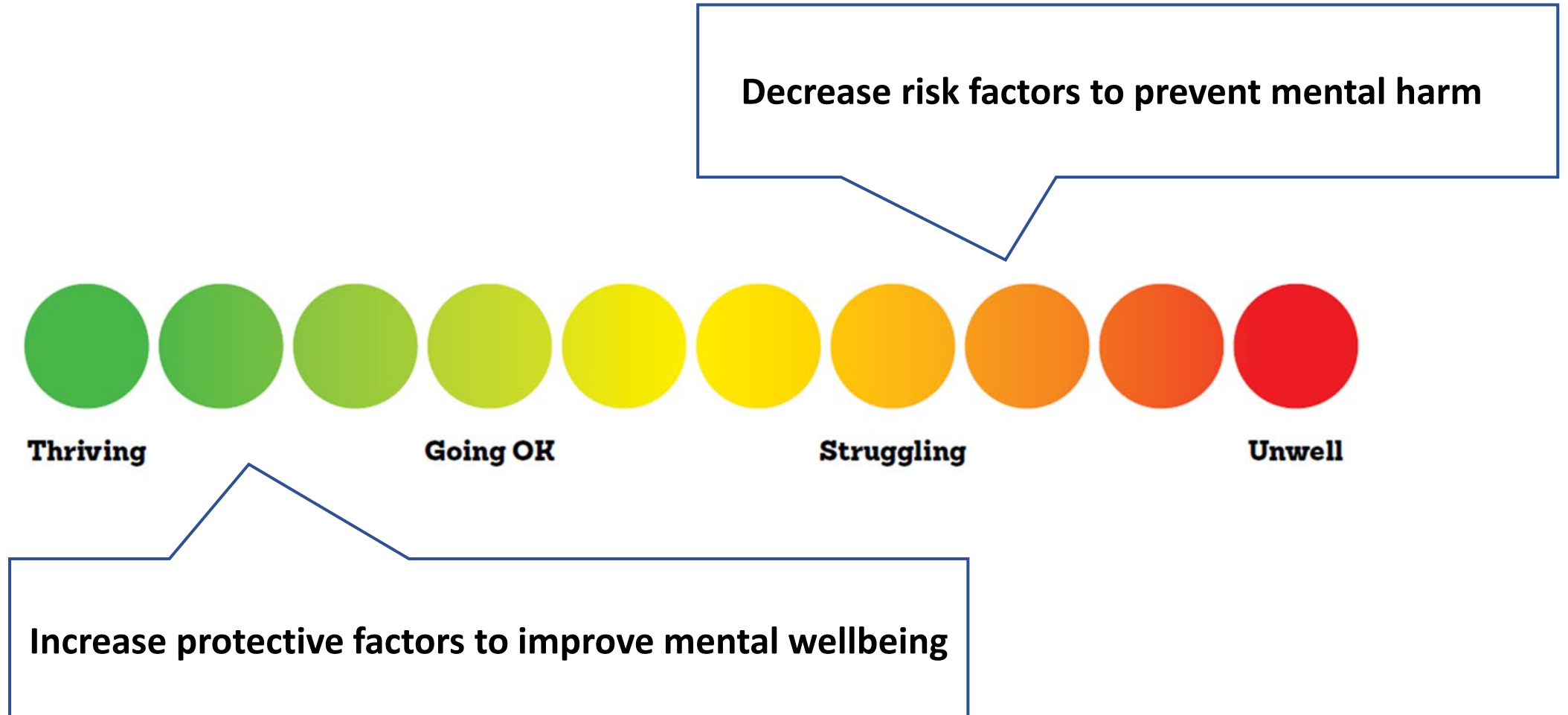
- The current mental wellbeing of your people using the Mental Health Continuum.
- Are people positioned across the continuum or clustered?
- What does this current state mean for your leadership?



# Moving Along The Continuum



- Protective and risk factors nudge people back and forth along the continuum. These factors can be personal, work-related, community or global.
- A mentally healthy workplace is one in which the **risk factors** to mental health are identified and appropriate action taken to minimise their potential negative impact on wellbeing. Risk factors (sometimes referred to as psychosocial risks) are related to *aspects of the design or management of work that has the potential for causing psychological or physical harm* e.g. workload, role conflict, low levels of control, poor support, poor relationships, bullying, aggression.
- At the same time **protective factors** are promoted and maximised. Protective factors include, amongst others worker engagement, a culture of fairness and psychological safety.



# Leading For Wellbeing Across the MH Continuum



(CEO Guide to Mental Health and Wellbeing at work, 2018)

# Strategies For Moving To Thriving

## Protect

- Clarify commitment of senior leaders to mental wellbeing
- Agree mental wellbeing principles and standards
- Set mental wellbeing strategic goals, develop and communicate a health and wellbeing strategy and plan
- Use *participative* risk assessment processes to identify risks and high-risk groups, then eliminate or minimise these risks
- Engage workers in the co-design of 'good work design' principles e.g. autonomy, engagement, recognition, to increase protective factors at an organisational level
- Develop wellbeing policies and guidance, including bullying and harassment
- Implement confidential reporting and response procedures for risk factors e.g. stress bullying
- Develop KPIs to monitor progress

## Support

- Provide information on, and access to, internal and external mental health support
- Provide same level of support as one would for physical illness
- Support people living with mental health conditions
- Provide return to work or stay at work support
- Workplace adjustments e.g. flexible hours and place of work

## Foster

- Increase awareness and understanding of mental wellbeing through information, guidance and training
- Clarify roles and responsibilities regarding mental wellbeing
- Develop leadership practices and skills to support wellbeing
- Develop and enhance personal resilience e.g. resilience programmes
- Provide targeted programmes e.g. anti-bullying workshops
- Track wellbeing on the MH continuum fortnightly
- Encourage open conversations about mental health
- Provide wellbeing programmes e.g. 5 Ways to Wellbeing and access to physical activity programmes
- Establish 'Wellbeing Champions'
- Promote wellbeing activities e.g. Mental Health Week. Mindfulness, alcohol and substance control
- Provide healthy food options

## Reclaim

- Provide wellbeing checks and health screening
- Promote and facilitate early help-seeking
- 'Buddy' support programmes
- Adjustment of work arrangements

# Over To You

In breakout groups take 5 minutes to discuss:

- The key risk factors to wellbeing in your workplace? How COVID-19 has impacted on these risk factors?
- The key protective factors present to increase wellbeing? Have these factors changed with COVID-19?





# Mental health at work during COVID-19

Government  
Health & Safety Lead

COVID-19 has changed how many workers have to work. These changes may increase the risk of harm to the mental health of workers. When this is paired with feelings of anxiety, fear, or uncertainty about the COVID-19 pandemic, workers may be more at risk of experiencing mental distress while at work. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 2015, agencies and workers both have a role in ensuring work is mentally healthy, and that mental health (psychosocial) risks are managed effectively throughout this time. This guide outlines how government agencies, managers and workers can work together to do this.

## Common mental health risks

### Social isolation

Social isolation may cause workers to feel a loss of social connection with colleagues and other support networks. Workers may perceive less support for work and non-work concerns, may feel increasingly lonely, and may experience a loss of closeness and shared purpose with the team. Over time, this may harm a worker's mental health.



### Change to routine or structure

Routine and structure are beneficial for mental wellbeing. A drastic or sudden change to these may impact mental health, and may cause a worker to experience uncertainty, stress or anxiety. This may affect a worker's motivation, productivity, feelings of success, contribution to the team/work, or sense of purpose at work.



### Workload and work hours

An increase or decrease in workload and/or work hours can cause increased stress and fatigue for workers. This can negatively impact a worker's mental health. This risk may particularly affect those working in essential services, frontline roles, or those who working from home who may find it difficult to 'switch off' or separate work from home. Additionally, many workers may have to manage additional responsibilities in the home during this time, such as caring for children or elderly.



### Potential exposure to COVID-19

Workers may become fearful about themselves or a loved one being exposed to COVID-19, both within and outside of work. Workers may also worry about how others may treat them if they are known to have contracted COVID-19. Excessive worry of exposure may harm a worker's mental health.



### Job change or job loss

Workers may be required to change the work they do or how they work during this time. Some workers may be concerned about being restructured or made redundant as a result of COVID-19. The uncertainty or change from this may cause a worker to feel mental distress.



# Strategies For Thriving In COVID-19

## Protect

- Engage with workers to assess the risks of Covid-19 and the ongoing controls required. Don't ignore other critical risks.
- Regularly monitor and check that the controls in place are working effectively
- Provide appropriate PPE
- Engage workers to review, or to establish, mental wellbeing policies, procedures and guidance
- Establish a system, for leaders and workers, to raise concerns and report mental health risks and controls
- Report on current and emerging mental health risks
- Assess work and organisational factors in relation to principles of 'good work design' to increase protective factors such as psychological safety
- Reflect on, and share, organisational learnings across your business and integrate into in the 'new normal' way of work

## Support

- Provide medical and counseling support and encourage and make access easy and safe
- Provide outplacement counselling to workers whose roles have been disestablished

## Foster

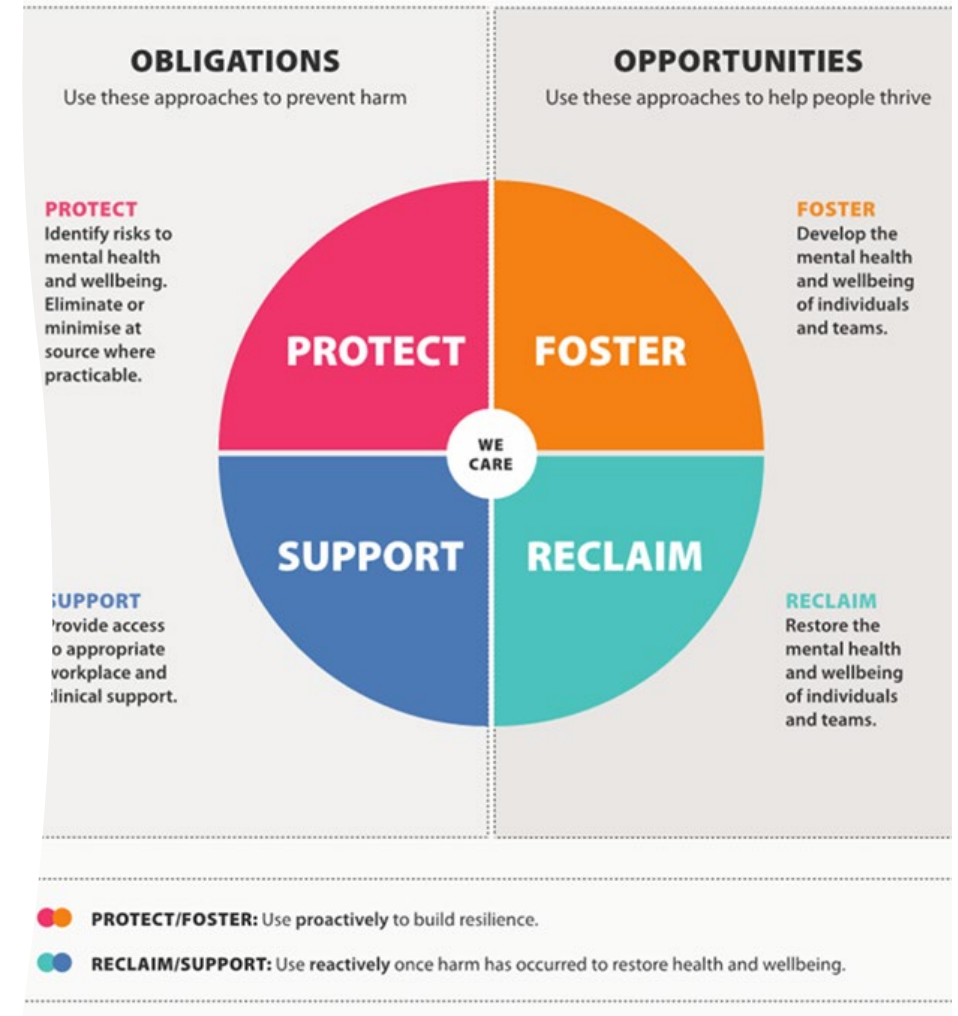
- Provide information on key risks related to Covid-19
- Train leaders and workers on mental health risks, including those related to COVID-19, their consequences and ways to manage them
- Have regular check-ins with workers – keep them in sight and in mind
- Offer virtual wellbeing sessions to all staff
- Address concerns about returning to work, possible restructuring and working from home
- Encourage work/home balance
- Provide ways for people to connect and support each other
- Introduce or refresh the 5 Ways to Wellbeing programme
- Provide opportunities for people to reflect on their personal learnings and make plans for the 'new normal'

## Reclaim

- Offer flexible working arrangements
- Support people to focus on self care and to build up their resources to meet their demands
- Encourage the 5 Ways to Wellbeing practices
- Signpost where and how to seek support

# Are You Covering Your Own Bases?

- Are you self aware and regularly monitoring your emotional, mental and physical state i.e. are you identifying the risks to your wellbeing and enhancing your protective factors?
- Are you fostering and reclaiming your wellbeing?
- Do you know your early warning signs of poor mental wellbeing?
- Do you get help when you notice changes – sooner rather than later
- Do you have a trusted friend, colleague or peer with whom you can safely talk too and receive objective feedback



# Reflection

To foster and reclaim your wellbeing:

- Are you practicing the 5 Ways to Wellbeing?
- How can you connect and give to each other?

## WINNING WAYS TO WELLBEING





# Thriving Requires Balance

Wellbeing is a ***balancing act*** between ***our protective factors*** (social, emotional, psychological and physical resources) and ***our unique risk factors*** (social, emotional, psychological and physical challenges we face in life and work at any onetime).

When our challenges exceed our resources our wellbeing is impacted.

