



Awareness of Emotional Well-Being During COVID-19

Providing care to those in our community affected by COVID-19 can be stressful to say the least. Feelings of sadness, frustration, fear and/or confusion are common, and are to be expected during times of uncertainty. While experiencing uneasiness is normal, **excessive** emotional distress can be overwhelming and unhealthy.

It is important to be mindful of emotional and mental well-being to avoid exhaustion. Stress can sometimes build without our awareness. Here are some ways to tell **when stress is too high**:

Emotional and Mental Signs:

- Feeling sad or irritable most of the time, nearly everyday
- Cannot take pleasure in most activities or hobbies
- Constant worry or racing thoughts that cannot be controlled
- Feeling on-edge or tense most of the time
- Difficulty with concentration, memory and/or decision-making
- Feeling guilty and/or worthless most of the time

Physical Signs:

- Increased pain or tension in your head, chest, stomach or muscles
- Constant fatigue or low energy despite having enough time to rest
- Frequent nausea, vomiting, constipation and/or diarrhea
- High blood pressure and/or heart rate
- Loss of sex drive

Behavioural Signs:

- Sleeping too much or too little
- Socially withdrawn from co-workers, friends and/or family
- Consuming more alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana than usual
- Trouble getting through daily responsibilities
- Engaging in more impulsive and/or dangerous behaviours (i.e., reckless driving, self-harm, excessive spending)

If several of the above signs or symptoms apply to you or to someone you know, it may signal the need to prioritize stress and emotion management.

HOW TO MANAGE STRESS:

People manage stress and difficult emotions in a number of different ways. **The HHS Resilience Tool Kit** was developed to help staff expand their coping strategies by offering evidence-based skills that can enhance emotional well-being.

Sometimes, coping on our own is not enough. **It is important to reach out if you or someone you know is struggling with overwhelming stress or anxiety.** Feeling this way is not a sign of weakness and it does not mean you are alone.

Your overall well-being matters greatly to our HHS community and to the patients who you serve. Remember that **PAUSE. REFLECT. NOURISH** are ways to check in with yourself and ensure calmness.