

Workplace Spring Newsletter



Welcome to the Workplace Spring Newsletter 2026

As the lighter days return and signs of spring begin to appear, it's the perfect moment to pause and consider what supports our wellbeing at work. This season brings a natural sense of renewal - an opportunity to refresh our routines, reconnect with colleagues, and build healthier habits that help us feel our best throughout the working day.

This month, you may be interested to read about "The Business of Health" and why it matters - an article by Professor Shantini Paranjothy, Director of Public Health, featured on page 5. The article highlights rising health-related inactivity in Scotland, the challenges people face returning to work, and practical steps employers can take to create healthier workplaces.

On the same topic, Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce and RSM hosted a Business Breakfast with Chris Littlejohn, Deputy Director of Public Health, as the keynote speaker. The session highlighted the vital link between a healthy workforce and a productive, resilient and competitive economy.

Please share this newsletter across your organisation and working group members. If you are moving on, please inform us and give us your new contact information. If you would like to share some of your wellbeing ideas and initiatives, have any questions, or wish to unsubscribe, please let us know by emailing: gram.hwl@nhs.scot

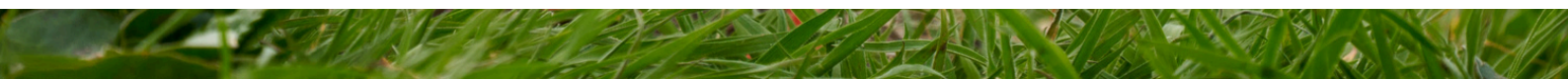
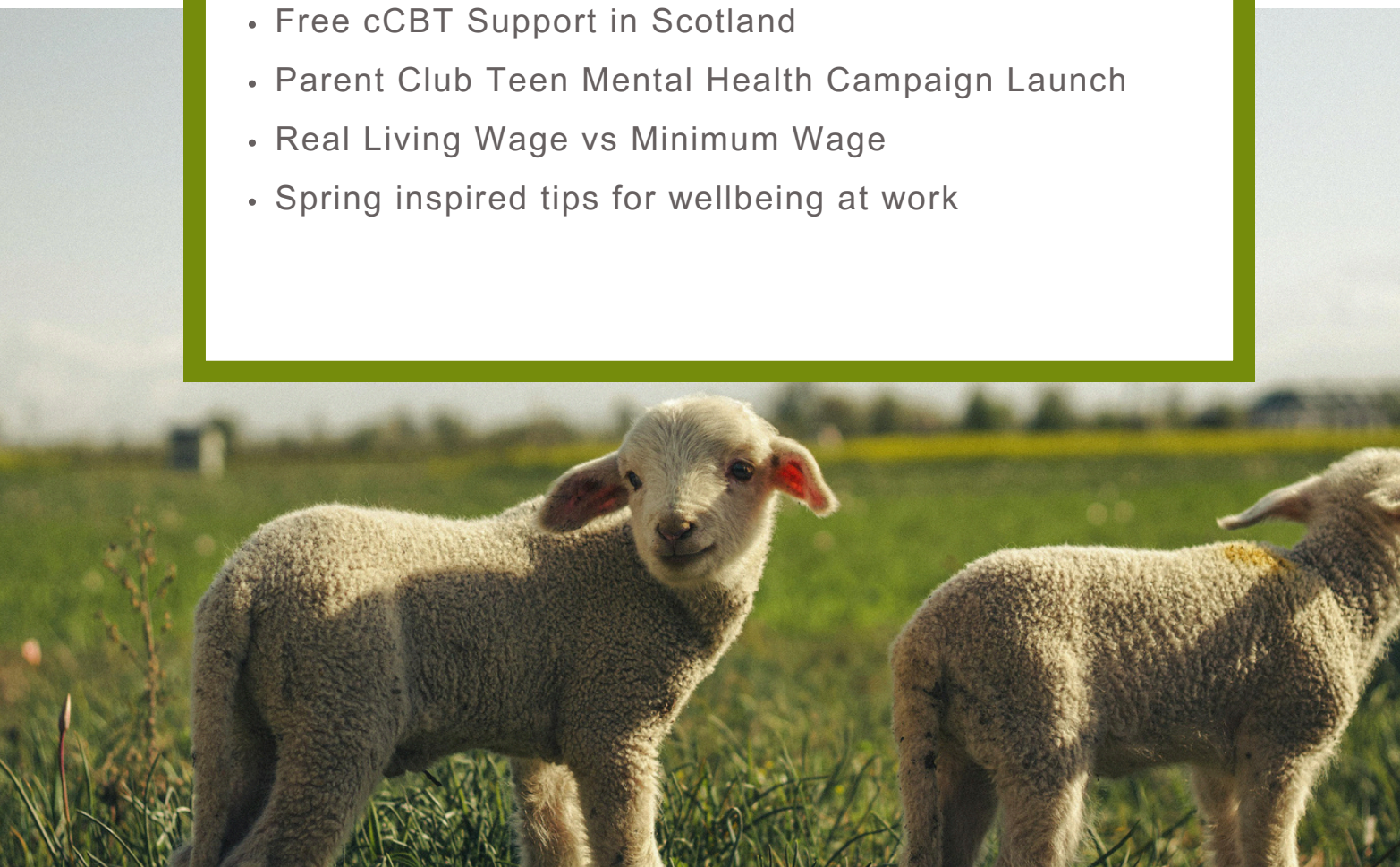


Table of Contents

- April Campaigns
- Bowel Cancer Awareness Month
- The Business of Health: Why It Matters
- Workplace Training for April and May
- Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework
- Healthy Working Lives Toolkit to Support Workplace Health
- “Take Some Breathing Space” Bench Launch
- Creating a Menopause Action Plan - guidance for employers
- Free cCBT Support in Scotland
- Parent Club Teen Mental Health Campaign Launch
- Real Living Wage vs Minimum Wage
- Spring inspired tips for wellbeing at work



April Campaigns

April is Testicular Cancer Awareness Month

Testicular cancer can affect anyone who has testicles, including men, transgender (trans) women and people assigned male at birth. It is most likely to happen between the ages of 25 and 40.

[Learn more](#)

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Find out your legal rights at work if you are affected by cancer, or are a carer affected by cancer.

[Learn more](#)



Encourage your workplace and co-workers to take part in **On Your Feet Britain®** – the national activity awareness day when 2 MILLION desk-based workers across Britain participate in a variety of fun and simple activities to **#SitLess** and **#MoveMore** at work.

Taking place on Thursday 30th April 2026, On Your Feet Britain is a FREE and FUN way to reboot and energize your workplace habits.

[Get inspired](#)

YO-YODESK®

April is Stress Awareness Month

The aim of this campaign is to:

- Educate the public about the causes and effects of stress.
- Promote effective stress management techniques to enhance mental health and wellbeing.
- Encourage open conversations to reduce the stigma surrounding stress and mental health issues.
- Provide resources and support to help individuals and organisations manage stress effectively.

[Learn more about this year's theme](#)

#BeTheChange



Bitesize Session

To sign up for our next **Working Health Services Scotland (WHSS) Stress at Work session** on 21st April
email:
gram.hwl@nhs.scot

April is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

Bowel cancer screening is a crucial part of early detection and prevention of bowel cancer. Bowel screening can help find changes early, often before symptoms develop. In Scotland, eligible adults are invited to take part in bowel screening using a home test kit.

This April, we are encouraging you and your staff to help raise awareness of the programme and the importance of completing and returning the test kit when invited. Even a short conversation with a colleague, friend or family member can help encourage participation.

Public Health Scotland has developed short bowel screening videos, including a step-by-step guide showing how to complete the home test kit, as well as information for people invited for a colonoscopy after screening:

[Bowel screening - how to complete your home test](#)

[Bowel screening - what you need to know about your colonoscopy appointment](#)

These resources may be useful if anyone is unsure about what to expect.

Alongside these videos, local bowel screening information postcards are also available across Grampian and can be ordered here: [HPAC](#)

Bowel screening could save your life...



Completing and returning the test kit can pick up bowel cancer early. It can also help by detecting other changes which may develop into cancer.

- Every year, **half a million** people in Scotland do their bowel screening test.
- Bowel cancer is **Grampian's 3rd** most common cancer.
- Bowel cancer is more common in people over 50 – especially men.

Everyone aged 50-74 are sent a test kit to their home every 2 years.

If you've lost your kit, unsure when you last took part, or are 75+, you can request a free kit by contacting the Bowel Screening Centre Helpline on [0800 0121 833](tel:0800 0121 833) or TAY.scottishbowelscreening@nhs.scot



Do you know the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer?

Being aware of bowel cancer is about getting to know your own body so you can spot any changes early on.

- Bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo
- A change in your bowel habit (going to the toilet) lasting longer than 4 weeks
- Watery poo on its own or with constipation (constipation on its own is less likely to be serious)
- You have lost weight without trying
- People say you look pale and you feel tired a lot
- Severe pain in your stomach that won't go away, especially after eating

These symptoms can be caused by a number of conditions. However, if you've noticed any of these yourself, it's important to tell your GP even if you regularly take part in bowel screening.

For more information, visit: www.nhsinform.scot/screening or call Healthpoint on [08085 202030](tel:08085 202030)



Bowel Cancer UK is the leading bowel cancer charity in the UK. If you would like more information on bowel cancer, click [Here](#), or you are living with bowel cancer and would like to know what support there is available, click [Here](#).

Bowel Cancer UK are asking you to **GET ACTIVE** this April to help raise awareness of bowel cancer and make a difference.

[Find out more about Active April 2026 here.](#)



For campaigns coming in May

[click here](#)

The Business of Health: Why It Matters

By Professor Shantini Paranjothy
Director of Public Health, NHS Grampian



Across Scotland, an estimated 812,200 people aged 16-64 are economically inactive - not in work and not seeking work. Increasingly, this inactivity is linked to health conditions or disability, with one in three inactive individuals out of work for these reasons.

The challenge is stark: few people return to work after health-related inactivity. Only 18.4% re-enter employment within a year, and just 2.3% return after two years away. Barriers include a lack of suitable and fair work, discrimination, limited inclusivity in recruitment, and complexities within the benefits system.

Our workforce is ageing, and health-related inactivity is rising among younger people too - rates for 16-24 year olds have almost trebled since 2005. Meanwhile, around 800,000 people currently in work live with a long-term health condition or disability, increasing the risk of leaving employment altogether.

Fair work matters. Jobs that offer security, supportive relationships, flexibility, and control can help protect health and keep people in work. Yet, fair work is not universal:

- 16.7% of employees are in low-quality work
- 26% report work negatively impacts mental health; 24% say it affects physical health
- Many lack influence over hours, tasks, or pay, and experience conflict or poor consultation on change.

There are practical things businesses can do and we can offer support with these:

- Become a Real Living Wage employer including living hours - providing secure contracts and a guaranteed minimum set of hours so staff have certainty on their income floor to help with budgeting and support better mental health
- Support financial wellbeing for staff - signposting to local organisations for financial, housing and welfare support; offer suitable workplace pensions; individual wellbeing budgets; employee assistance programmes; counselling; and mental health days
- Mentally Healthy Workplace Training for managers, and Mental Health First Aid Training, which can reduce stigma in seeking help and foster a supportive working environment

The Business of Health: continued

- Encouraging physical activity – reducing sedentary behaviour at work; promoting active (walking, wheeling) meetings; Cycle to Work scheme; in-house gym and sports facilities; subsidised gym memberships.

NHS Grampian's Public Health Workplace Team offer a number of short, free online training courses and awareness sessions. These sessions identify the key factors that contribute to a mentally and physically healthy workplace and ensure managers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to health and wellbeing at work.

Courses and awareness sessions are delivered virtually on Teams. The course content is most suitable for staff who have people management and supervisory responsibilities. Upcoming courses are detailed on the next page.

If you have any further questions please contact: gram.hwl@nhs.scot



Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce and RSM: Audit, tax and consulting services were pleased to host The Business of Health, a Business Breakfast sponsored by NHS Scotland and Lancia Consult. Chris Littlejohn, Deputy Director of Public Health, served as the keynote speaker at the event. The session highlighted the vital link between a healthy workforce and a productive, resilient and competitive economy. With growing pressure on health services and increasing workforce challenges, the relationship between employee wellbeing and organisational performance has never been more important.

NHS GRAMPIAN PUBLIC HEALTH WORKPLACE TEAM - TRAINING AND AWARENESS SESSIONS

- **Menopause Awareness for Managers and Supervisors** (Monday 13th April, 2pm - 3pm): Bitesized awareness session. Attendees will deepen their understanding of how the menopause impacts employees in the workplace, and will discuss the business and legal case for addressing menopause in the workplace.
- **Disability Awareness Training** (Tuesday 14th April, 2pm - 3.30pm): This new training session brings a focus to disability, taking a closer look at individual conditions and identifying specific adjustments that can support individuals in the workplace.
- **Workplace Stress with Working Health Services Scotland** (Tuesday 21st April, 10am-11am): Learn about workplace stress, what the cost and impact of it is, and discover practical strategies to manage stress and support staff.
- **Keep Active at Work** (Monday 27th April, 1pm-2pm): Learn how to reduce sedentary behaviour in the workplace.
- **Breathing Space NHS 24** (Wednesday 27th May, 2pm-3pm): Increase knowledge and understanding of Scotland's phone line and webchat service.
- **Mentally Healthy Workplace Training for Managers and Supervisors** (Thursday 28th May, 9:30am-2:30pm): Highlighting employers' responsibilities and improving managers and supervisors skills and confidence in dealing with mental health and wellbeing at work.
- Public Health Scotland will be running their next **MHWT Train the Trainer 2 day course on 21st April, 10am-4pm**. If you are a large organisation and are interested in attending this training to run your own workplace sessions click [Here](#) for more information.



For more information on our free awareness sessions or to book a space, please email us at:

gram.hwl@nhs.scot

Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework

Information on the Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework and how to implement it

The Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework is a free framework for any organisation, regardless of size or sector, designed to help you create a mentally flourishing workplace for all employees. Mentally Flourishing Workplaces (MFW) is the result of a collaborative development. Public Health Scotland worked with a range of organisations from across Scotland, ensuring the framework reflects real-world experiences and needs.

This co-production approach ensures that MFW is built on shared knowledge and practical guidance.

Knowing where to start in supporting employee mental health can be overwhelming. MFW has a series of dimensions with recommended approaches, not requirements, to help organisations tailor their own journey, to focus on the human side of mental health and wellbeing and build from there.

There is also a **short youtube presentation** available to help you get started.

If you would like more information, guidance or practical support to implement the framework within your workplace please contact our local team on **gram.hwl@nhs.scot**.



The Seven Dimensions of the Mentally Flourishing Workplaces Framework



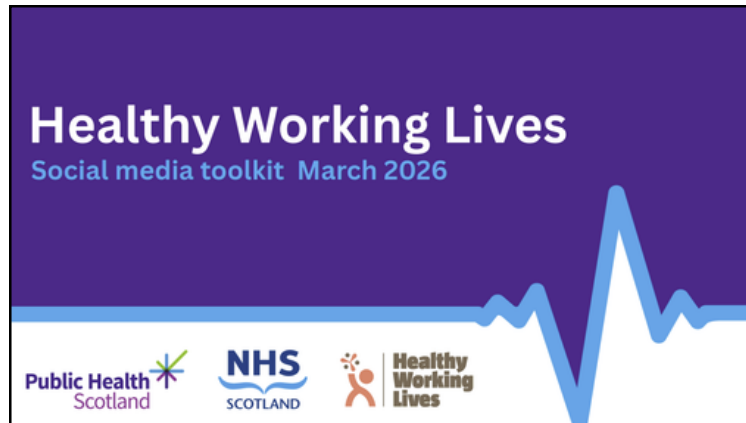
Public Health Scotland Free Online Learning Zone



On this platform, you can access a range of learning resources on public health and health inequalities. Public Health Scotland aims to provide all learners from across the public, private, and third sectors with the knowledge and skills to work together to create a Scotland where everybody thrives.

[Access the Learning Zone here](#)

Healthy Working Lives Toolkit to Support Workplace Health



Healthy Working Lives is a free NHS Scotland service dedicated to improving workplace health, safety and well-being across Scotland. As part of Public Health Scotland, our mission is to help employers create environments where employees can thrive physically and mentally. This benefits individuals, families, businesses, communities and the wider Scottish economy.



Workplaces play a vital role in keeping people healthy and in work. Small, practical changes can prevent absence, strengthen resilience and protect productivity. Healthy Working Lives offers free resources, training and local expert support to help employers take early, effective action that enables staff to stay well, engaged and performing at their best.

To help raise awareness of the Healthy Working Lives service among employers and employees, Public Health Scotland has developed a promotional toolkit including suggested newsletter copy as well as social media assets and suggested copy for use across your communication channels.

All resources are available to download [here](#).

For further information about the Healthy Working Lives service, visit [Healthy Working Lives - Public Health Scotland](#)

Your support is greatly appreciated in helping promote healthier, safer and more resilient workplaces across Scotland.

<p>Is workplace health on your mind?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Access free NHS advice✓ Practical tools for your workplace✓ Support your people		
<p>Assets</p> <p>View folder</p>	<p>Healthy Working Lives Toolkit March 2026</p> <p>Download</p>	<p>HWL Social Media and newsletter Copy March 26</p> <p>Download</p>

First 'Take Some Breathing Space' Bench installed at NHS Grampian hospital site



Staff, patients and visitors at NHS Grampian can now take a moment to pause and recharge thanks to the installation of the first Breathing Space Bench at a hospital site in the region.

Installed within the garden area beside Foresterhill House on the Foresterhill Health Campus, the bench offers a quiet outdoor space where people can sit, reflect and take time for their wellbeing.

Delivered by NHS 24 and NHSG Public Health workplace team, Breathing Space offers employers advice on their services and initiative to promote mental health awareness. The 'Take some Breathing Space' Bench initiative encourages people to take a moment to look after themselves or reach out for support if they need it. More than 100 benches have already been installed in communities and public spaces across Scotland, helping to create visible reminders that support is always available.

Continued overleaf...

The bench at Foresterhill has been generously donated by TechnipFMC following joint work with NHS Grampian Public Health workplace team and Breathing Space. The donation reflects a shared commitment to supporting fair work and staff wellbeing both in workplaces and across local communities.

Julie Phillips, Public Health Practitioner Advanced (Workplace) with NHS Grampian, said:

"We deliver a range of sessions for employers to upskill and support staff on mental health and wellbeing at work. We're very grateful to TechnipFMC for their generous donation and support in helping bring the first Breathing Space Bench to a hospital site in Grampian."

Gary Lloyd, Senior Manager – HSE - Subsea Operations, said:

"On behalf of TechnipFMC, I am proud to support the Breathing Space initiative. This bench is a token of our appreciation, and it recognises the NHS staff at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary for their unwavering dedication to serving our local communities. We all have mental health - some days it feels strong, and other days it can be more challenging. We hope this serves as a gentle reminder that it's okay not to be okay, and that during life's everyday struggles, you are never alone"

Lisa-Jane Dock, National Development Officer for Breathing Space said:

"Breathing Space benches are designed to offer a quiet moment to pause, reflect and take stock, especially during life's more challenging moments. They provide a visible reminder that looking after our mental wellbeing matters and that it's okay to slow down. For anyone who needs more than a moment to pause, Breathing Space offers mental health support by phone and webchat. The service provides a safe, free, and confidential space to talk and be listened to."

Located along a popular pathway used by staff, patients, visitors and students, the bench adds to an existing garden space designed to support rest and relaxation away from the clinical environment. If you would like to consider purchasing a bench for your workplace or as a donation to the local Grampian area, please visit www.breathingspace.scot.

The Breathing Space service offers free, confidential support for anyone in Scotland experiencing low mood, stress or anxiety. Support is available by calling 0800 83 85 87 or visiting www.breathingspace.scot

Creating a Menopause Action Plan - Guidance for Employers

From April 2026, employers with 250 or more employees will have the option to produce and publish a voluntary action plan alongside their gender pay gap data. By Spring 2027, subject to secondary legislation, these action plans will become a legal requirement. Further Government guidance will be available soon. However, waiting for legislation to force change is a risk. Organisations that act now reduce legal exposure, protect their reputation and retain experienced talent. A clear action plan isn't just progressive — it's protective.

A Menopause Action Plan is a formal commitment outlining how your organisation will support colleagues experiencing menopause. It moves beyond policy statements and sets out practical actions, accountability and timelines — ensuring support is consistent, visible and embedded across the business.

Action plans will show the steps you are taking to:

- **reduce your organisation's gender pay gap**
- **support employees experiencing menopause**

You will also be able to highlight work your organisation is already doing to improve workplace gender equality. Find out more [here](#).



Download Henpicked's free "Are You Ready?" guide ...

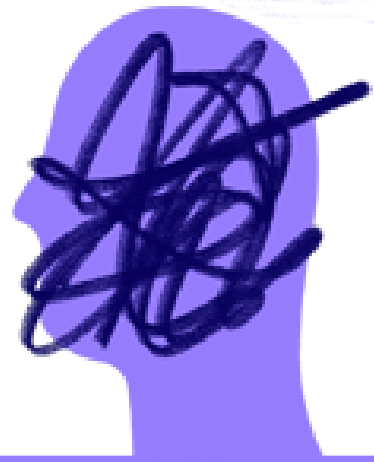
Whether you're just starting out or refining your approach to menopause in the workplace, this guide highlights the strategic case for action, helps you assess your current position and prepares you to build a credible action plan.

[Find out more here](#)





Free cCBT Support in Scotland



Are you stressed and overwhelmed? Do money worries impact your mental health? NHS Grampian have partnered with SilverCloud; a free, confidential, online self-help service to help you improve your wellbeing. SilverCloud provides a free, private space to help you feel better through personalised content, tools, and support.

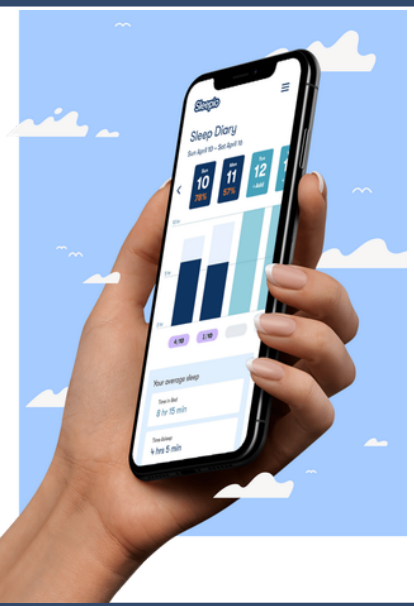
[Click here](#) and enter the code Scotland2020 to get started now.

Sleepio

Sleepio is an NHS-recommended digital program using CBT to improve sleep and tackle insomnia. It offers a six-week course with personalized sessions, a sleep diary, and community support.

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is a treatment for breaking the vicious cycle of negative thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and is recommended for a range of issues. Sleepio's CBT techniques are clinically effective in providing long-term relief from poor sleep and insomnia. People who follow Sleepio's treatment plan frequently notice benefits in as little as 2-4 weeks.

Sleepio is free to everyone aged 18+ across Scotland - [click here](#) to get started.



Daylight is an NHS recommended digital treatment, which uses Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to address worry and anxiety and is free to everyone aged 18+ across Scotland.

Daylight's CBT techniques are clinically effective in providing long-term relief from worry and anxiety. People who use Daylight frequently (approximately daily) can start to notice benefits in as little as 3-4 weeks. Using the app frequently for up to 6 weeks can lead to even better results.

Access Daylight instantly, for free, [here](#).

Parent Club Teen Mental Health Campaign Launch

The Parent Club 'Teen Mental Health' activity has launched. Aimed at parents and carers of children in S2-S4 across Scotland, the campaign seeks to help parents navigate the changing and sometimes challenging relationships with their teenage children.



Being a teenager isn't easy. On top of the everyday issues like social media, peer pressure, school worries - many teens feel isolated, anxious and withdrawn.

The campaign provides practical advice and guidance to help parents better understand the challenges their teens face and how to support them. It covers a wide range of topics, from anxiety, mood changes, school and exams to friendships, relationships, body image, social media and mental health.

A **new film** also offers advice on supporting a child while waiting for professional help — making Parent Club a comprehensive source of support for families and working parents.

[Explore expert advice and tips from Parent Club](#)

Real Living Wage vs Minimum Wage

The real Living Wage rate is £13.45 across the UK (£14.80 in London). This rate remains the only one calculated using the best available evidence on living costs. It applies to workers aged 18 and over and is a voluntary rate, unlike the UK Government's statutory minimum wage rates, which vary by age and are the legal minimum that employers must pay.

The real Living Wage plays a vital role in helping workers and their families achieve a basic but decent standard of living making it more crucial than ever in the fight against in-work poverty.



What is the real Living Wage?

LIVING WAGE FOUNDATION

£13.45 UK rate

- ✓ Recognises employers who have made the commitment to support their staff with a real Living Wage
- ✓ Provides security and dignity to thousands of workers by making sure they can afford the essentials
- ✓ Has an independently calculated rate which increases each year based on what it costs to live
- ✓ A separate and higher rate than the Government's minimum
- ✓ Paid by a growing movement of thousands of employers across the UK

Living Wage employers accredited at the time of the announcement of the current rate (October 2025) have until 1 May 2026 to implement this rate.

Scottish Living Wage recognises that this remains a challenging time for both businesses and workers and would encourage employers to reach out to them with any questions about the implementation date. Find out more [here](#).





Spring into Wellbeing: Supporting a healthy, energised workplace

Here are some simple, spring-inspired ideas to support your wellbeing at work this season:

- Take short outdoor wellbeing breaks: Even a 5 -10 minute walk in the fresh air can boost mood, focus, and energy. Lighter days make it easier to step outside between tasks.
- Refresh your workspace for a clear mind: A tidy desk or a small plant can help create a calmer, more productive atmosphere. Consider opening a window for fresh air to help reset between busy periods.
- Lighten your daily routine: Introduce gentle habits - morning stretches, regular hydration, or scheduled screen breaks. Small changes add up to a noticeable difference in wellbeing.
- Enjoy seasonal, energising foods: Fresh spring produce can help maintain steady energy levels. Try adding berries, salads, or lighter lunches to your routine.
- Try a spring “reset” at work: Reflect on what helps you feel balanced and focused. Are there small adjustments you can make to your workload or habits to support your wellbeing
- Connect with colleagues: Use the brighter weather as an excuse for a walking meeting or a chat outdoors. Social connection is a simple but powerful wellbeing tool.
- Bring nature into your workspace: Plants or nature-inspired décor can lift your mood and help create a more welcoming environment.
- Protect your rest and recovery time: Longer days don't mean longer working hours. Keeping healthy sleep and boundary habits helps maintain energy and resilience.



If you would like to contact the workplace team with any questions regarding our services, resources or training, please email us on: gram.hwl@nhs.scot



Useful Links

- [NHS Grampian Health in the Workplace](#)
- [Healthy Working Lives Scotland](#)
- [NHS Grampian Health Information Resources Service](#)



Like and follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/NHSGWorkplaceHealth>