



## Mount Sinai Health System Staff Support Guide for Leaders

Rounding by leadership is critical to addressing uncertainty and decreasing stress and burnout. At its core this means being present, transparent, genuine, receptive, and empathetic. It does not mean being a therapist for your employees. The framework below has proved useful in supporting staff and team members.

\*Adapted from Hartford Healthcare Leadership Rounding & [Shanafelt, Ripp & Trockel, 2020, JAMA](#)

### HEAR ME & RESPOND TO ME

- Use check-in and check-out routine each day with staff as an open forum to hear concerns and provide information (e.g. beginning and end of shift huddles)
- Ask open ended questions (e.g. “what are you worried about the most?”)
- Follow up on staff concerns, even if you have no answers yet or the issue cannot be resolved.
- Consider self-disclosure where appropriate (e.g. by sharing your own questions and personal concerns)

### PROTECT ME

- Ask about safety concerns and provide up-to-date information. [Staff Safety Hub](#)
- Acknowledge good adherence to COVID-related and more longstanding safety protocols

### PREPARE ME

- Assure that staff have the resources they need to do their jobs and/or clearly acknowledge resource issues. [Staff Resources](#)

### SUPPORT ME

- Acknowledge that everyone is affected in some way by the pandemic. A survey in March and April of 2020 of MSH frontline workers showed that 39% experienced symptoms of depression, anxiety, or posttraumatic stress.
- Educate yourself about the continuum of stress responses, both for yourself and your workers:

Stress Continuum Model			
Ready	Reacting	Injured	Critical
<i>Doing OK:</i> Sense of mission, problem solving/critical thinking, healthy sleep, effective and in control, coping well	<i>Transient, more mild distress:</i> Mild anxiety, problems with focus, worry, problems feeling joy and happiness	<i>Increasing severity and risk:</i> Sleep issues, numbness, burnout, disengagement, physical symptoms, exhaustion	<i>Persistent distress:</i> Insomnia, hopelessness, panic, anxiety, depression, substance use, thoughts of suicide

Adapted from: Nash (2011), US Marine Corps and Navy Operational Stress Continuum Model: A Tool for Leaders

- Know that stress may manifest in the workplace: lapses in attention or judgement, irritability, breakdowns in communication, or less efficient work. Be curious about issues affecting staff rather than assuming they are “checked out” or being difficult. Watch [Psychological First Aid: Dr. Katz](#) for more information.
- Staff may be grieving multiple losses [A Bereavement Toolkit for MSHS Leaders and Department Heads](#)
- Normalize help-seeking and provide up-to-date information about staff support: [Covid Staff Well-Being Resources](#)
- Share infographics in visible locations, during huddles and in regular emails: [Staff Mental Health and Support Infographic](#)

### CARE FOR ME

- Support staff access to basic needs: food, shelter, childcare, eldercare and transportation, as well as programs for physical and emotional health and well-being. [Staff Well-being: Basic Needs & Self-Care](#), [Mount Sinai Well](#)
- If the employee is struggling with work life challenges, consider other options such as schedule/shift flexibility, work from home options, or part-time programs, etc.

### HONOR ME

- Consider individual recognition and emailed notes of appreciation to your entire staff
- Note specific behaviors and traits that you are grateful for or wish to recognize
- [Sinai Spotlight Recognition Strategy Guide by TDL](#)

### Additional Resources:

- [Office of Well-Being and Resilience](#) 212-241-5057, [owbr@mssm.edu](mailto:owbr@mssm.edu) & [OWBR Pandemic Workforce Well-being Toolkit](#)
- [Center for Stress Resilience and Personal Growth](#) 212-659-5564, [MS-CSRPG@mountsinai.org](mailto:MS-CSRPG@mountsinai.org)