

# Staff Disability Newsletter

## *Happy New Year!*



Guy's and St Thomas'  
NHS Foundation Trust



January 2021

Welcome to the January edition of the Staff Disability Forum newsletter.

I first of all want to say a big Happy New Year to you all. Although the year has begun with continued challenges, we hope to provide you with information that will support your wellbeing through this time and update you with the latest GSTT information on health and wellbeing services. Last month we also heard from Judith at CareTrade. This month we hear from member Martin, who has experience of the support offered by CareTrade.

### In this edition

- Tips to keep positive when working from home or shielding
- Supporting your well-being: Rest and Recharge zones
- Trust wide news: COVID-19 vaccine updates
- Member story: Martin and his CareTrade Job Coach, Judith
- Get involved:
  - Upcoming awareness days
  - Our next Staff disability forum meeting

### Tips to keep positive when working from home

It's been a year since many staff members transitioned to a working from home environment. Working from home may have been a difficult adjustment or great at first, but as time has gone on, you may feel feelings of frustration, loneliness and low mood. It is ok to be feeling this way.

To support you, here are a few tips to help you take care of your mental wellbeing while working from home:

1. Create your Wellbeing Action Plan and put practical steps in place to ensure your mental health in a way that works for you. Mind have a great template [here](#).
2. Find ways to connect with others and share experiences. Just because you may not be able to go into the office, doesn't mean you can't re-create those water cooler moments. As a member of the disability forum, why not link up with fellow members to keep each other feeling supported, motivated and positive.
3. If you're feeling claustrophobic or trapped; open the window and let fresh air in, even for a short time. Try and spend time looking at the sky, to help give you a sense of space.
4. Regularly take mental health breaks and stretch your legs.
5. Keep your work space separate to your relaxing space. If you live in a small space, try creating different sections of the same room for different things, as this can give a sense of variety.
6. Ask for help. Working from home may create the feeling you have to solve every problem on your own. Use video chat to ask your teammates for help if you need it.
7. Once your workday is over, give yourself permission to step away and actually be done. Have time to have a wind down and get some sleep.

**Staff Disability  
Forum**



## Rest and Recharge

Have you seen our **Rest and Recharge** zones!

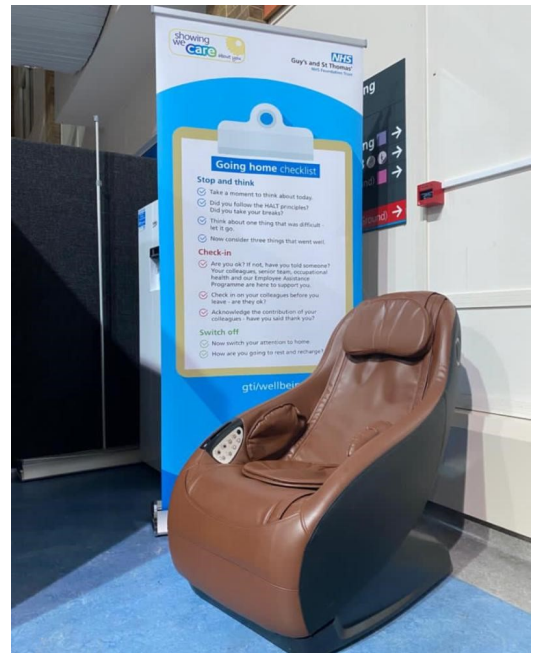
We have tea and coffee, massage chairs and some of our zones even have sleep pods. Whether it's for a quick morning pick me up or to relax during your lunch break, we are open for your wellbeing.

During the second wave, we have continued to promote our recruitment for Staff Wellbeing Champions. We have been so grateful to all the staff including those who have been redeployed to volunteer their free time to support at the zones.

Our Wellbeing Champions will show you around and provide any assistance you may need. All Wellbeing Champions have attended trainings to be able to support you during this time, and if they're unable to help, they can point you in the direction of someone that can. If you would like to have a wellbeing conversation, head over to the Rest and Recharge zones and find out more about what the GSTT Showing we care about you programme has got to offer.

We are looking to make improvements to our zones for staff with disabilities. If you have any ideas (no matter what they may be) please contact:

[siobhan.champion@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:siobhan.champion@gstt.nhs.uk)



### Come and visit our wellbeing spaces for staff



Our socially distanced quiet areas are designed for you take a break away from your usual workplace and relax. If we can kindly remind you to wear your mask throughout your stay, practice social distancing and ensure you please clean your area before you leave.

#### Rest and recharge areas

The following spaces include opportunities to speak to a staff wellbeing champion, as well as access to a massage chair and free tea and coffee:

- **Governors Hall, South Wing at St Thomas'** - open 24 hours, 7 days a week  
A staff wellbeing champion will be available from 9am-5pm (Mon-Fri) and weekends (Sat-9am-5pm and Sun 10am-2pm).
- **2nd floor balcony in Atrium 1, Southwark Wing, Guy's** - open 7 days a week (Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm and Sat-Sun, 9am-5pm).  
A staff wellbeing champion will be available Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm and weekends 9-5pm.

#### Rest and recharge areas in the community (Open 9-5pm)

- **Sunshine House:** basement, Sensory Room 27 Peckham Rd, Camberwell, SE5 8UH
- **Mary Sheridan Centre:** first floor, staff room 5 Dugard Way, Prince's, London SE11 4TH
- **Lister Health Centre,** 2nd Floor Room Number 010 101 Peckham Road, SE15 5LJ
- **Townley Road Health Centre,** G Floor opposite main reception 121 Townley Rd, SE2 8SW

#### Breakout areas

Shared, communal breakout area are available across the Trust. We are working hard to make more of these spaces available for you to access in your local area:

- **Roben's Suite,** 29th floor, Tower Wing at Guy's (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- **Shepherd Hall at St Thomas' and Toms@Guys** (check GTI for opening times)
- **Riverside café at St Thomas'** (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- **Maisey Room,** Lambeth Wing 3rd Floor, St Thomas (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

#### Space near St Thomas' Hospital for you to relax.

- **Etc venues,** 4th floor, County Hall near St' Thomas Hospital. The space is available from 25th January to 5th March 2021, 10am-4pm (Monday to Friday).

You can relax and enjoy free coffee and WiFi. Please remember to wear and show your NHS badge on arrival.

Keep up to date with new spaces and resources by visiting [gti/wellbeing-support](http://gti/wellbeing-support)  
Get in touch with the team by email: [showingwecareaboutyou@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:showingwecareaboutyou@gstt.nhs.uk)



## Trust wide news

### The Trust has now delivered over 50,000 vaccines!

The fantastic team of GSTT vaccinators have now delivered more than 50,000 vaccines to our staff and the general public - this is a brilliant achievement which has only been made possible through the team's dedication, hard work and commitment.

Delivering this important programme is our way out of the COVID-19 pandemic and every vaccination delivered is a step towards the nation's recovery from the devastating impacts of this global pandemic.

However, we understand you may still feel worried, have questions or simply don't know what to do, and it is normal to feel this way.

If you do have any concerns; On Thursday 14th January the Trust held an online session to help answer any questions you may have about our vaccination programme. The team answered some of the most common questions people ask about the vaccine, and addressed some of the concerns which people raised. You can [watch the session here](#). Additional sessions were held to answer questions and concerns about both the flu and the COVID-19 vaccines and aimed to address issues specific to black, Asian and minority ethnic members of staff. Further information is [available here](#).

### If you would like to book an appointment to have your COVID-19 vaccine:

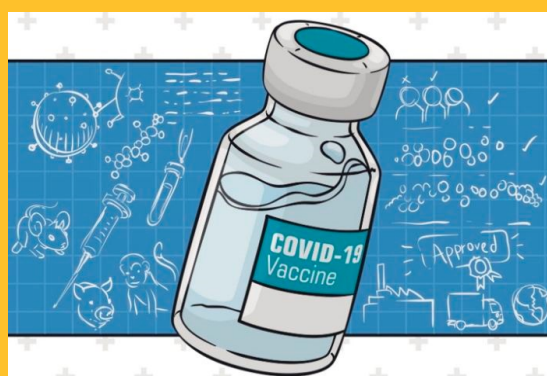
Visit:

[Burfoot Court room, Guy's](#)

[Westminster Bridge Vaccination Centre reception, St Thomas'](#) (ground floor, Gassiot House)

Or email:

[CovidVaccineBookings@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:CovidVaccineBookings@gstt.nhs.uk)





## Member story

Last month we heard from **Jemma Dear, Autism Project Manager** at **CareTrade**. This month we hear from **Martin**, a GSTT employee and staff disability forum member, and his **CareTrade Job Coach, Judith Kerem**.

### Martin

My name is Martin and I'm a band 7 manager within the Trust and I would like to talk about my experiences with the Department of work and pensions (DWP) funded In Work Support (ATW) along with my Job Coach Judith Kerem from CareTrade. I'm writing this piece in conjunction with my coach in a hope that this inspires other people, not just with similar related conditions. But to show that people with physical disabilities can also make use of these services and most of all. It is all totally free!!!!

I have been working for the Trust for over 10 years but have only received support in the last year. Please don't think you have to be a newbie to the game. I have autism but I only decided to get help earlier on this year. I simply went on the Department of work and pensions website and filled in an online form, I could have called someone if that would have been my preference. Within 3 weeks I had DWP work based assessment. Someone then came to the work place for an assessment to see what if any help I needed. And at the tender age of 49 I got a 100% funding for a specialist Job Coach.

Judith started by running group training half days for my immediate co-workers, including my team who I managed and my line managers and fellow managers who I would have daily contact with. Even one of my professors and senior managers joined in on the training. My work colleagues and managers were informed about my condition and what to expect and how they can better communicate and support me. Judith also informs and helps to guide management about any reasonable adjustments that might be needed. This can be very little to some people, but life altering to me. For example -changing my starting and finishing times to avoid rush hours and reduce the stress and anxiety that rush hour causes me.

So just by spending a few minutes online at the start of the year has resulted in a person that specialises in Autism coming into work to see me weekly and to go through my week and then try to decode it all for me and return all that information, so that I can understand it.

She regularly sits in on my 1:1s with management and is free to attend, if needed on any other meetings that I have with them. She is always at the end of an email or what's app if I need her in the meantime, she sorts out any reasonable adjustments and I feel that for the first time in my life, that life itself is making sense. I am finally getting the help I desperately needed!

I felt that taking about this would offer a broader and general help for anyone else that might be Autistic or any other disability that may need that help. After all if an 49 year old can get funding. Then, so there isn't any reason, regardless of age or length of service. You can't apply.



### Judith

I have been working Martin since February 2020. We have worked together with his line manager to look at Martin's reasonable adjustments and sharing with anyone he feels would benefit from training and this information. There is a wider issue around awareness and the fact that most adjustments can be quite small but make the biggest difference. I love the fact that there is flexibility in support to enable someone to be able to do their job and get to know them so that it is the right support for them.

Each person is unique, as is the way their condition affects them, and ATW support allows tailored one to one support to really make adjustments and training as person centred as possible. The time that I spend with Martin is agreed in the assessment and can change over time. Support can be reduced and increased as needed and as well as Job Coaches it can fund adaptive equipment if needed.

We work with a number of Trust employees and departments within GSTT as well as other employers across London. ATW can support any role of grade. In my role as a job coach I have supported Theatre Nurses (and had to observe in theatre) and Ward Food Service Assistants on wards as well as Admin roles in IG to name a few.

For further information about autism in the workplace please visit the CareTrade website at [www.care-trade.org](http://www.care-trade.org) or contact [judith.kerem@caretradeuk.org](mailto:judith.kerem@caretradeuk.org)

## Get involved

### Upcoming awareness days

#### World Cancer Day

*4th February 2021*

**World Cancer Day** an initiative of the [Union for International Cancer Control](#) (UICC), the largest and oldest international cancer organisation dedicated to taking the lead in convening, capacity building and advocacy initiatives that unite the cancer community to reduce the global cancer burden, promote greater equity, and integrate cancer control into the world health and development agenda.

To find out how to get involved [here](#).

#### Time to Talk Day

*4th February 2021*

**Time to Talk Day** is the day that we get the nation talking about mental health. This year's event might look a little different, but at times like this open conversations about mental health are more important than ever.

Find out how to get involved [here](#).

#### International Epilepsy Day

*8th February 2021*

**International Epilepsy Day** is a special event which promotes awareness of epilepsy in more than 130 countries each year. Every year on the second Monday of February people join together to acknowledge and highlight the problems faced by people with epilepsy, their families and carers.

Find out how to get involved [here](#).



**let's end mental health discrimination**



### Our next staff disability forum meeting

*18th February 2021*

Microsoft Teams

The staff disability forum is a safe space for staff to discuss physical and mental health needs in the workplace. The forum aims to provide support for staff members with disabilities and to managers in making reasonable adjustments. It also supports the WDES (Workforce Disability Equality Standard). To get involved email:

[Jenny.Hull@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:Jenny.Hull@gstt.nhs.uk)