



Creating a Culture of Wellbeing in Your Practice in 6 Key Steps

The nature of veterinary work means that many teams work in challenging conditions and stress levels can be unacceptably high. However, creating a culture in which each member of your team is engaged, motivated and equipped to perform at their best is certainly possible.

STEP 1



Be open in discussions with your team to de-stigmatise the issue of mental health

- Aim to create a supportive, open environment, in which their psychological safety is assured
- Set clear boundaries
- Help them to manage their time and take designated breaks. When they're off-duty, make sure they ARE off-duty!

STEP 2



A collaborative team is a happy team

- Aim to ensure optimal use of your team's combined skills and experience
- Lead by example in recognizing successes
- Encourage constructive discussions around challenges and debriefs on difficult cases

STEP 3



Physical exercise is a fantastic stress-buster

- Provide facilities to enable team members to take exercise during their breaks
- Offer a 'quiet room', separate to the staff room
- It gives team members a space in which to relax during or after a busy shift

STEP 4



Keep your HR processes up to date

- Ensure all team members are familiar with them
- Make sure that regular one-to-one meetings are diarised for every team member
- Use them to discuss performance and set goals, give encouragement or raise concerns

STEP 5



Buddy schemes help new team members feel they have someone to turn to

- They're ideal for new graduates who can shadow their buddy for a period of time
- A mentor program can also positively impact the experience and confidence of your team
- A mentor will provide valuable support and guidance for those working at any level

STEP 6



Research shows that helping others makes us happier

- Offer your team one paid day off a year to support the charity of their choice
- Or invite the team to select a charity of the year
- Run fundraising events throughout the year to support the chosen charity

This resource was created following a panel discussion entitled 'Practical tips on how to implement wellness in the veterinary practice' during WSAVA 2023. We thank all participants for their contributions.



Check this link for more resources to help you from the WSAVA's Professional Wellness Group, including the WSAVA's Professional Development and Personal Wellbeing Certificate.