



Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation  
Working Together

# Covid-19

## Take care of yourself at this time

Your employer has a responsibility to protect your health, safety and wellbeing at work. Given the extraordinary situation in dealing with the COVID-19 emergency, below are some tips for looking after your own self-care during these times.

### Tips

Maintaining your energy levels and personal reserves is a major factor in helping you cope and preventing exhaustion during the current crisis.

### Physical Wellbeing

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle: keep hydrated, eat and sleep well, and exercise
- It is important that you take 'at work' breaks
- Don't feel guilty about taking your days off
- Avoid negative coping strategies - excess alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.
- If you are coming off a long shift and do feel too exhausted to drive take a rest before driving and follow the advice of the RSA: pull over in a safe place, sip coffee and sleep for 15 minutes.

### Emotional and Psychological Wellbeing

- Your stress levels and psychosocial wellbeing are as important as your physical health
- Remember it is normal to feel sad, stressed, anxious or overwhelmed during a crisis. These feelings are no reflection on your ability to do your job.
- Watch out for signs of stress
- Use strategies that have worked for you in the past to manage stress rather than learning new ones.
- Minimize watching, reading or listening to news about COVID-19 that causes you to feel anxious or distressed.
- Seek information updates, from trusted sources, at certain times of the day rather than a constant stream: [www.inmo.ie/Covid19](http://www.inmo.ie/Covid19), [www.gov.ie/](http://www.gov.ie/), [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

### Social Wellbeing

- The support and contact with family, friends and colleagues at this time is vital.
- Some nurses and midwives may have to minimise direct contact with family and friends. If possible, staying connected with your loved ones, for example using video messaging.
- Remember to plan and enjoy contact with family and friends (even if it is virtual).

### Support

- Talk to someone you trust or seek assistance from a counsellor
- If you feel you require further support. You can contact the INMO Members 24 Hour Counselling Helpline 1850 670407 or 01 8818047.
- Support is also available from the HSE Employee Assistance and Counselling Services <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-unit/>

### PPE

- Staff should have the protective and medical equipment they require to do their jobs safely and professionally. If you are experiencing any issues around PPE, **please contact the INMO's PPE freephone hotline on 1800 320 087, or text 087 719 7188.**

Sources: WHO, 2020; RCN, 2020, [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

The INMO Representing and Advocating for Nurses & Midwives during the COVID-19 Emergency



#### BEFORE LEAVING WORK

Shower if possible and change out of work clothes



#### ARRIVING HOME

Wipe steering wheel, controls and door handles



#### AT FRONT DOOR

Pause, Breathe, Reset, Take your time



#### KNOCK ON DOOR

Open from inside - Step in



#### PLASTIC BOX AT DOOR

Doff your work/commute shoes, outer clothes/coat/bag, keys, pens and glasses. Wipe down with damp soapy cloth



#### PHONE

Kept at work in clear zip lock bag. Empty out of bag into box - wipe phone clean and throw the bag away



#### WORK BAG

Has to be machine washable - keep in a locker at work and a box by the front door at home



#### WALK STRAIGHT TO SINK/SHOWER

Don't touch doors, get someone else to open them for you. Wash or shower especially hands, arms and face with soap and hot water



#### YOU ARE CLEAN Relax and enjoy your evening

