

Welcome to the third edition of our weekly bulletin Covid-19 edition of The Pulse. Now that the current rules around restrictions on movements have been confirmed as extending for a further three weeks (until 7th May) we can start to plan for an extended new “normal” way of working. This bulletin rounds up the work we have done this week to ensure you can continue to deliver in these unprecedented times.

We are here to support you and provide additional capacity to your organisations during this difficult time. Alongside this we are still operating all our normal services, albeit virtually, should you need them.

Take care and stay safe during this difficult time,
From the WME Leadership Team



Resourcing Support

Step Up Now

Social care students: These are tough times for the people who need our care – we need you to step up and get involved

#StepUpNow



Social care students in the West Midlands now urged to step up and join fight against Covid-19 outbreak

Council care directors in the West Midlands have widened their call for people with some experience and training in social work or care to join up urgently to help deal with the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Councils working hard to support vulnerable people during the outbreak say that staffing problems and increasing demand are putting a huge strain on services for those most in need.

Current figures show that of the 10,000 staff employed by local authorities in the West Midlands to support older and vulnerable adults, 1 in 5 are away from work because they are sick themselves or self-isolating.

Last week West Midlands councils launched a campaign to attract former social workers back to work. Now they are asking final year social work students in the region to “step up and get involved”

The students will be asked to do everything from supporting qualified Social Workers and connecting people within the community, to carrying our care roles to support people with everyday tasks that they now struggle to do without some help.

The campaign has been created by the improvement body West Midlands Employers (WME) and the regional branch of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (WMADASS) and reflects and supports similar campaigns nationally and in the NHS.

It has been endorsed by the 14 councils in the West Midlands region, which are responsible for providing advice, support and direct care to adults with disabilities and older people with physical or mental health needs, many of whom have been hit hard by the lockdown or by illness.

At the heart of the project will be a central website on which potential returners and social work students with the right experience or studies can be fast tracked into work as employees or volunteers.

Through the website the 14 councils will be able to match with a pool of candidates and get people on the front line or supporting the front line within days.

The site for students is at <https://stepupnow.org.uk/> says: "To keep our social workers on the frontline we need people with skills and commitment to help them behind the scenes."



We are also pleased to share that within a week of the site being launched we have received over 30 applications from social carers wanting to return back to care. We envisage these numbers increasing considerably over the forthcoming weeks with more Councils engaging with the campaign through their websites and local media press.

The campaign is calling for specialists in the following areas to come back to Adults Social Care;

- Qualified Social Workers
- Approved Mental Health Profession (AMHP)
- Crisis Intervention & Emergency
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)
- Disability Adults
- Hospital Discharge
- Occupational Therapists

Thank you to those of you have published this so far.



Please continue to promote the site <https://comebacktocare.org.uk/> to encourage further applications to join the regional talent bank for adults social care.

#ComeBacktocare #StepUpNow #CouncilsCan #ClapForCarers

Recruitment Support

As some of you will be aware the delivery of our executive recruitment has gone 'virtual'. It's been an exciting and interesting transition with our briefing meetings, long listing, assessment centres and final members panels all now taking place in a digital way. Ensuring the technology being used is compatible for both parties has been key, and where this is a challenge, we are continuing to explore alternative solutions to ensure we can meet your needs.

We have been responding quickly where our support has been needed and we're extremely excited about one of our most recent campaigns, with Bromsgrove and Redditch Council where we're supporting them with the recruitment of three new management roles across their organisation, which you can find out more about [here](#).

HR Support

HR Employment Advice

Our Covid-19 microsite is live and continues to be updated as events change. We are updating this daily and all national circulars and guidance issued are on here for your ease of access. <https://wmecovid19.org.uk/>

HR Guidance

This week we have consulted with Heads of HR and then published updated guidance on the management of disciplinaries through the remote working period, and a checklist of considerations for when these should (and should not) continue. With the extension on the current lockdown period HR teams need to consider the point at which a transition to some form of business as usual can be considered, and thinking about these issues can be a helpful way of keeping the organisation on track.

We have continued to use the weekly dial in for Heads of HR and the Thursday employment law webinar to keep our fingers on the pulse of the issues you are facing and provide support (either individually or in a broader context) to help you manage in situations which are foreign to us all.

Key topics have included the operation of refuse services and how this can be managed safely, home working allowances and the operation of other HR policies including annual leave.

L&OD Support

Executive Coaching in times of crisis, 3 Free Sessions until 1st July 2020 offer

Executive coaching in times of crisis aims support executive teams during Covid19, including Making Decisions; Re-framing; Resilience; and Wellbeing.

As a result of Covid19 drastic measures have had to be imposed on individuals and organisations, which has caused us to adapt, reflect and think differently within a “business as un-usual” time.

Our **Executive coaching in times of crisis** aims support executive teams during Covid19, in making proactive decisions, re-framing situations, building resilience and well-being.

Our expert coaches are highly experienced in supporting public sector leaders and have taken additional CPD in coaching through crisis.

Coaching in the Moment for Teams and Organisations

The benefits of Coaching during a crisis such as Covid19 can really help support your teams and your organisation and as members of the West Midlands Coaching Pool you and your managers can access free coaching at any time.

Our experienced Coaches will deliver confidential, virtual ‘in the moment’ coaching

sessions without 3-way contracting to adapt to these challenging times.

For more information visit [Coaching](#) on the WME Covid19 resources site.



Promoting the incredible work of our Local Government Heroes

We are currently working hard to launch our #WMHeroes campaign, look out for further details next week as we look to bring a regional focus to those that are playing a vital role in our response to Covid-19. We aim to work with news outlets and media channels to really champion our sector and our region.

If you are keen to be involved in this work with us and highlight your incredible staff, please email info@wmemployers.org.uk and we will be in touch.

WME Here When You Need Us The Most

Do let us know if there is any specific support you need that we can help you with:

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Click here to read our latest wider WME Newsletter [The Pulse March 2020](#)



WME Events

DATE	WME EVENTS 2020	VENUE
04 NOV	Strategic HR&OD Network	Lost & Found Birmingham
04 & 05 NOV	Inspire (Day 1 & 2)	BCEC
23 NOV	WM Coaching & Mentoring Conference	BCEC
02 DEC	Strategic HR&OD Network	Lost & Found Birmingham
03 DEC	WME Associate Consultants Network	TBC
03 DEC	Menopause 'a life event'	The Studio
DATE	WME EVENTS 2021	VENUE
06 JAN	Strategic HR&OD Network	Lost & Found Birmingham
07 JAN	Inspire (Day 3)	BCEC
08 & 09 JAN	Inspire - HRBP (Day 1 & 2)	BCEC
15 JAN	HOT Network	BCEC
22 JAN	WME Management Board	Sandwell Council House
03 FEB	Strategic HR&OD Network	Lost & Found Birmingham

