

Direct care staff are taking appropriate precautions to protect themselves from contracting COVID-19, but *prioritizing mental wellness and managing stress is critical* during these challenging times. We cannot underestimate the physical and emotional toll this work takes on frontline workers.



The Texas Hospital Association encourages frontline staff to consider these techniques and opportunities to prioritize and protect their mental health as they continue to combat COVID-19.



Be OK With Not Being OK

- Through the course of your work you may feel a wide range of emotion — anxiety, sadness, anger and even hopelessness. **These feelings are not a sign of weakness.** When you experience an unpleasant feeling, it is best to acknowledge it and then let it go.
- Your colleagues likely are overwhelmed too. Talk to them about how COVID-19 is impacting your lives. Work together to identify the most significant stressors and create solutions that are within your reach.
- Try not to ruminate on the things that are beyond your control. Instead practice mindfulness and **turn your focus to the things that you can control.**



Practice Positive Coping Strategies and Self Care

- Try to prioritize eating healthy meals, catching up on sleep and taking quick breaks during your shift when possible.
- Try to meditate — and think about nothing — even if it is only for 1 minute.
- During non-work hours, spend your time wisely and do the things that you enjoy.



Disconnect and Recharge

- Taking breaks from the news and social media can help you disconnect from the stressors that are beyond your control.
- Dedicate some time to unplug from COVID-19-related content and recharge. When you leave **work, try to leave COVID-19 at the hospital.** Listen to music or podcasts that will help you unwind on your way home — silence is OK too.



Seek Help

- If you're struggling to cope with a mental health condition or you find that your work is exacerbating your condition, **seek help.**
- Keep your providers up to date about any new or worsening symptoms.

