

GOOD CONVERSATIONS GUIDE

Supporting you to have good conversations with your manager

OVERVIEW

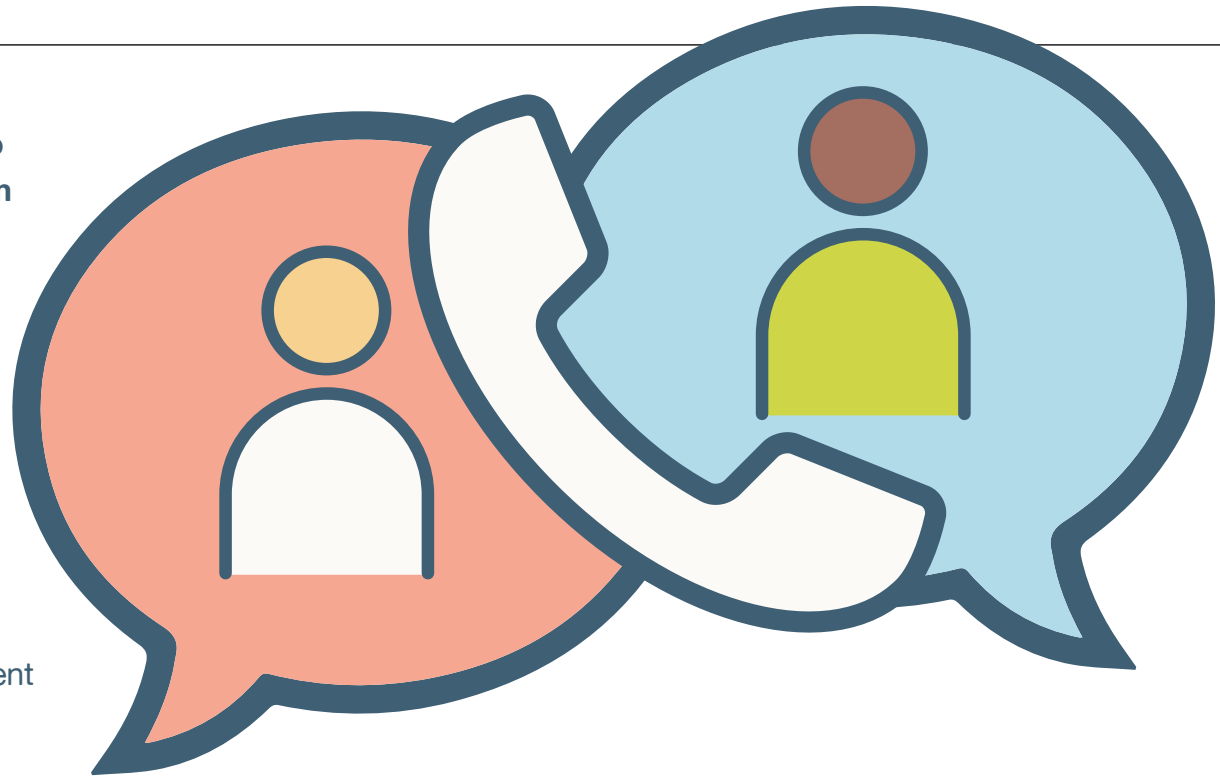
This Good Conversations Guide is designed to support a different conversation between team members and their manager.

The last year has been challenging for us all; as we have supported the pandemic response and balanced our own personal challenges at home. We also continue to operate in a landscape of uncertainty with the ongoing Integrated Care System development work. It is more important than ever that we are all having good and meaningful conversations.

This guide is a refresh of our Personal Development Review (PDR)/appraisal process with the aim of creating a 'one team' Partnership approach to regular 1:1, quarterly conversations, and annual reviews.

This guide is aligned with the Partnership's internal People Plan and has been developed by our People Groups.

This guide is for everyone at the GMHSC Partnership, no matter



your employment or contract status.

This guide will support both individuals and managers to have good conversations, which are focused on what is important to individual members of our team and support them in their role.

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GOOD CONVERSATIONS: LET'S TALK ABOUT YOU AND WHAT YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT

What is a good conversation?

A good conversation is focused on you as an individual and the issues that matter to you. It should cover the person as a whole; from your wellbeing, your experience of work, your development, your successes and where you want to improve.

A good conversation is not a tick box exercise, but a meaningful way of supporting individuals to develop – and be at their best.

A good conversation is just that – a two-way conversation where team members are listened to by their managers, and also have the opportunity to receive feedback.

A good conversation is an ongoing process – that you build on throughout the year, coming back to reflect on key themes and progress.

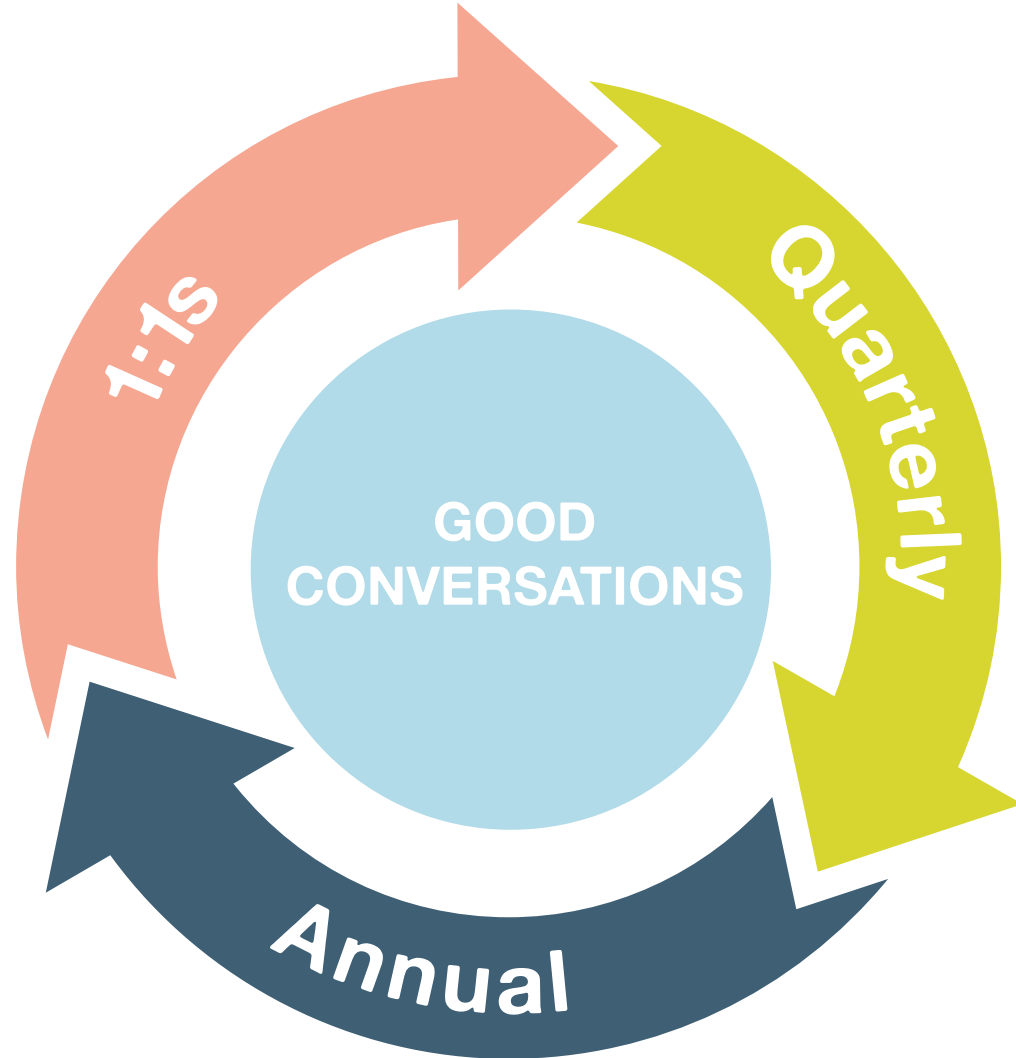


HOW OFTEN TO HAVE A CONVERSATION

Some people prefer very regular conversations with their manager and others not as frequently. This guide is designed to be flexible to meet your needs, but we would encourage you to have:

- **1:1 conversations** – as regularly as you and your manager feel is appropriate. This may be different for different people, anything from weekly to once a month
- **Quarterly conversations** – three per year (in the fourth quarter you have your annual review)
- **Annual review** – once per year

If you are (or have been) on redeployment during the pandemic please speak with your substantive and redeployment manager to agree the process for having your conversations. You may want to have a meeting so you can all agree this together.



MAKING TIME TO HAVE GOOD CONVERSATIONS

Often finding or making the time to have regular conversations can be a challenge; with busy workloads and back to back meetings, it is difficult to ensure we commit to regular catch ups.

Here are some suggestions for ways we can all make sure we are making the time for good conversations:

- Plan ahead and agree a time that works for you and your manager and book in all your conversations throughout the year well in advance
- Agree a rhythm that works for you both and is realistic to commit to
- Preparing in advance is an important part of having a good conversation – pencil time in your diary to prepare and make sure you get the most from your conversation



Where to have your conversation

Where do you feel most comfortable having a conversation? Discuss your ideas with your manager and agree a location you are both comfortable with, while ensuring to follow the latest Covid-19 restrictions.



Some suggestions:

- MS Teams at a time when you feel at your best and to suit your work/life balance
- A walking conversation or even a standing conversation – in a local green space
- And as restrictions are lifted you may want to do it face to face, sitting down (in line with the latest Covid-19 restrictions)

It is up to you to choose the space that is right for you; to have the conversation you need, safely and confidentially.

PLANNING FOR YOUR CONVERSATION

These conversations are about you and this is your opportunity to share and to shine.

Ahead of your conversation take some time to think about:

- What is important to you and what do you want to talk about?
- Think about your past, present and future
- You may want to speak with your colleagues to hear their reflections and feedback. Click here to access this handy [360 tool](#).
- Take time to focus on your aspirations and development
- Use this [Discussion Wheel](#) tool to help your thinking – particularly for your quarterly conversation and annual review
- Think about what you set out to achieve and what your goals are going forward



YOUR 1:1s

This is your opportunity to:

- Catch up with your manager on the things that are important to you
- Provide an update on your programme of work
- Talk about how you're doing and any support and/or development you need
- Review what has gone well and what you have found challenging
- Receive support on any issues as and when they happen
- Give and receive feedback with your manager

Recording your 1:1

You do not need to keep a formal record of 1:1 conversations, but it is good practice to agree some actions for your next meeting. Click [here](#) to access our 1:1 conversation template which you may like to capture notes on.



YOUR QUARTERLY CONVERSATIONS

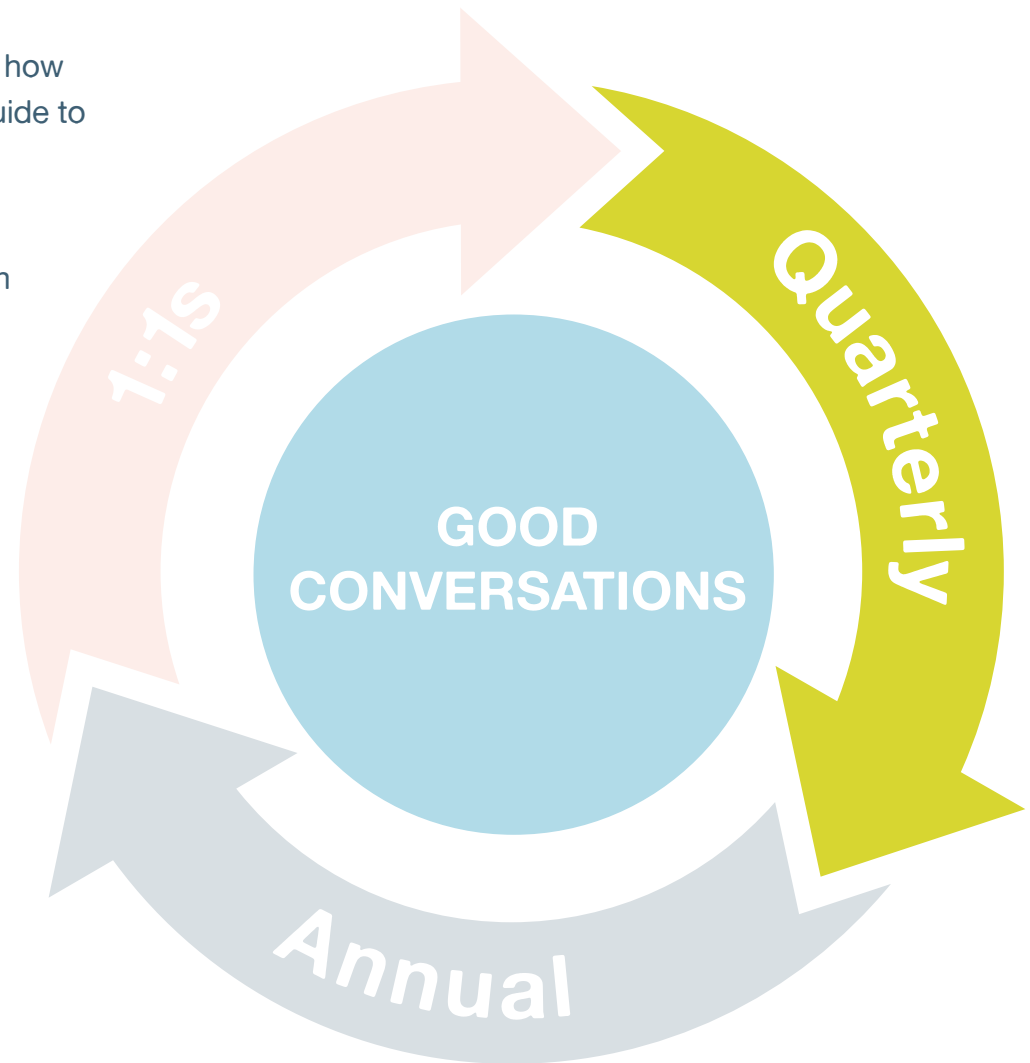
This is your opportunity to:

- Have a more in-depth conversation with your manager about how things are going by using all of the **themes** included in this guide to help frame your conversation
- Review the last three months
- Scope any skills development you feel you would benefit from
- Celebrate what has gone well and what you did that made it a success
- Think about what you could do differently
- Refocus what you want to achieve for the next three months

You and your manager may want to complete your Covid-19 Risk Assessment during your quarterly conversations.

Recording your quarterly conversation

Click [here](#) to access our quarterly conversation template which we would encourage you to completed to capture your conversation.



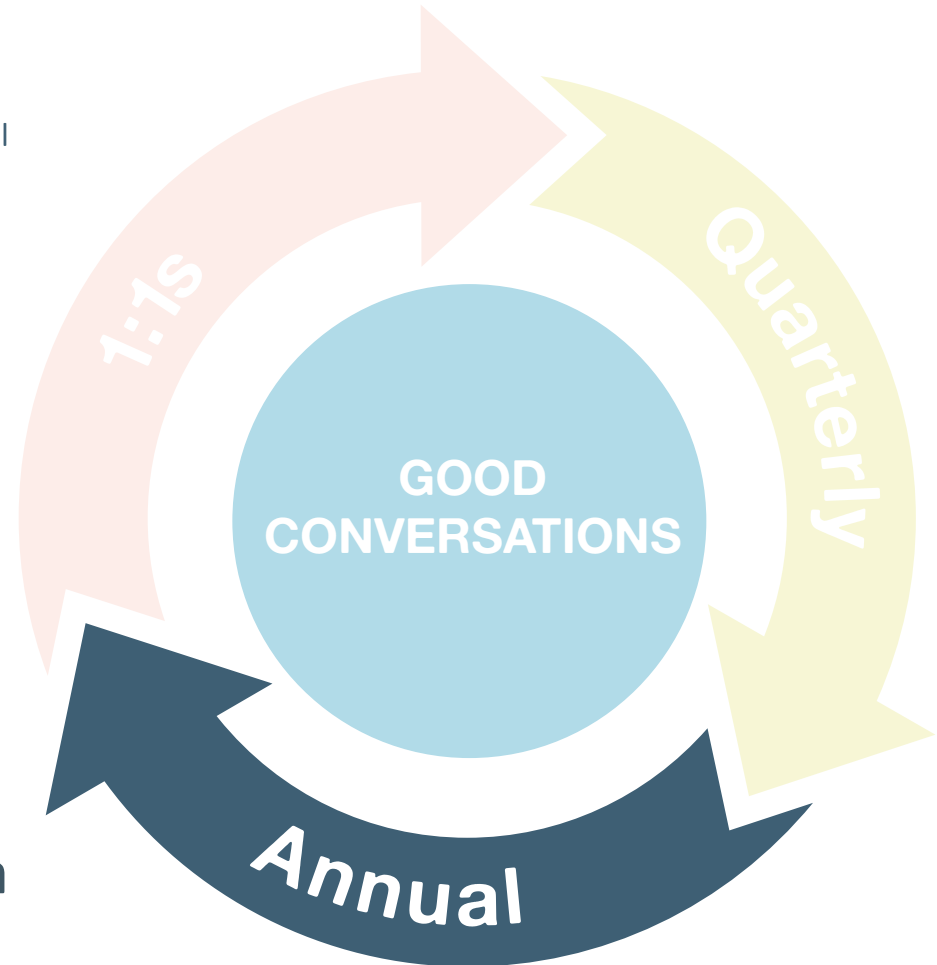
YOUR ANNUAL REVIEW

This is your opportunity to:

- Build on your quarterly conversations and have an in-depth conversation with your manager about how things are going, using all the themes included in this guide
- Review the last year and assess progress against your objectives
- Celebrate what has gone well and what you did that made it a success
- Think about what you could do differently
- Refocus your priorities for the next three months and for the following year
- Agree any skills and development opportunities and any actions required to progress these
- Discuss if you have met your objectives, completed your statutory and mandatory training requirements and where applicable, if you have met you increment pay progression.

Recording your annual conversation

Click [here](#) to access our annual review template which you need to complete with your manager to capture your conversation. This is your PDR/appraisal and your evidence if you have met your increment pay progression.



KEEPING A RECORD OF YOUR QUARTERLY CONVERSATIONS AND ANNUAL REVIEWS

You and your manager will need to agree on how to make and retain a shared record of your quarterly conversations and annual reviews. We would encourage recording the conversation in our [quarterly conversation](#) and [annual review](#) templates (you will need to do this to evidence any pay increment met during your annual review).

It's a good idea to refer back to the record you made for any previous conversations you had with your manager.

Keep an ongoing record of [‘What I want to achieve’](#) and revisit it at each quarterly conversation and annual review.

Remember to revisit your [Discussion Wheel](#) at each quarterly conversation to review progress and how you are feeling.

Don't forget – your role may require you to maintain your CPD and professional portfolio.



CONVERSATION THEMES

My wellbeing

My development and aspirations

My achievements

My challenges

About me and my role

My values and behaviours

Flexible working

Compassion and inclusion

My feedback and impact

For each of the conversation themes there are some questions for you to reflect on with your manager during your conversation. These are designed to be discussion prompts, you may not feel you need to cover them all. Remember, it is a great time to hear your managers feedback as well.

We would recommend discussing the following themes at your meetings:

- **Your 1:1s** – my wellbeing, my development and aspirations, my achievements and my challenges.
- **Your quarterly conversations** – all of the themes.
- **Your annual review** – all of the themes

Wellbeing

- Share how you are feeling
- Share how you feel about your work/life balance
- Share what helps you to stay well
- Share what you find challenging

*You might find it helpful to have a read of our [Wellbeing Toolkit](#) when thinking about your wellbeing.



My development and aspirations

- Share when you have had access to the development opportunities you need to do your job well
- Share when your personal development and future career aspirations have been listened to and encouraged at work
- Share your thoughts about your opportunities to learn and grow in the last year. What did you learn? What can you share?
- Share your thoughts about how you would like to learn and grow over the coming months/year



My achievements



- Share what you are most proud of at work
- Share a story about your most enjoyable experience at work
- Share what you hope to achieve in the coming year

We are keen to share achievements as good news stories, if you have an achievement you would like to share please let the Workforce Team know by emailing gmhscp.hr.gmhscp@nhs.net

My challenges

- Share what challenges you most in your role
- Share a story about something you have found challenging and how you would do things differently next time
- Share what gets in the way of you performing at your best



About me and my role

- Share what a good day looks like at work for you
- Share what is important to you at work
- Share something that you are grateful for at work
- Share what have you learnt about yourself in the last quarter/year
- Share how you think others would describe working with you
- Share what you do well
- Share how you know if you are doing a great job



My values and behaviours

- Share what values and behaviours are important to you
- Share how you feel your personal values complement the aspirations of your team and organisation
- Share when your goals and priorities at work have aligned with what is important to you

Flexible working

- Share how you feel flexible working is working for you
- Share what else you might need to help you manage your work/home life balance effectively?
- Consider our **flexible working conversation starter** ahead of your conversation



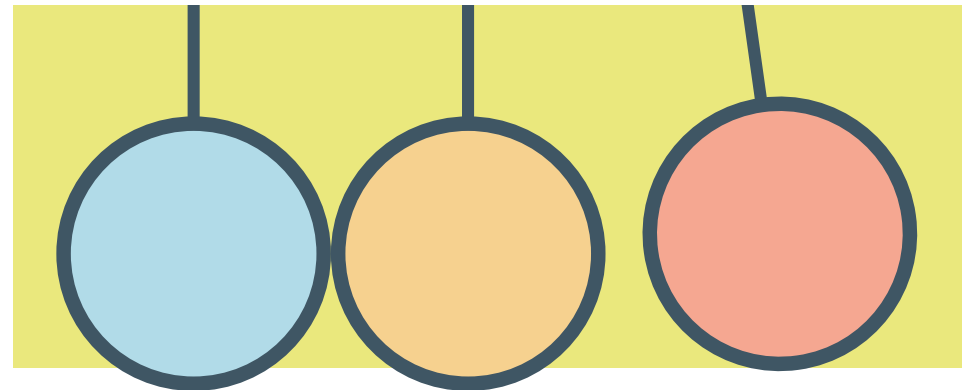
Compassion and inclusion

- Share how you feel valued by your team
- Share whether you feel your diverse characteristics and needs are valued
- Share where you feel you are being supported compassionately by your colleagues and manager



My feedback and impact

- Share feedback you have received at work
- Share a story about when you have received recognition and positive praise about your performance at work
- Share when your feedback or ideas at work have been engaged with and acted upon
- Share when you have raised a concern about something troubling you at work
- Share your thoughts about the difference you have made in the last year/quarter
- Share when your ideas and contributions have been valued and listened to at work
- Share a story of how your work contributes to our / your purpose and meaning



WHAT I WANT TO ACHIEVE

After talking through the conversation themes, at each quarterly conversation and annual review discuss and agree with your manager what your priorities and objectives are for the next three months.

Don't forget to agree:

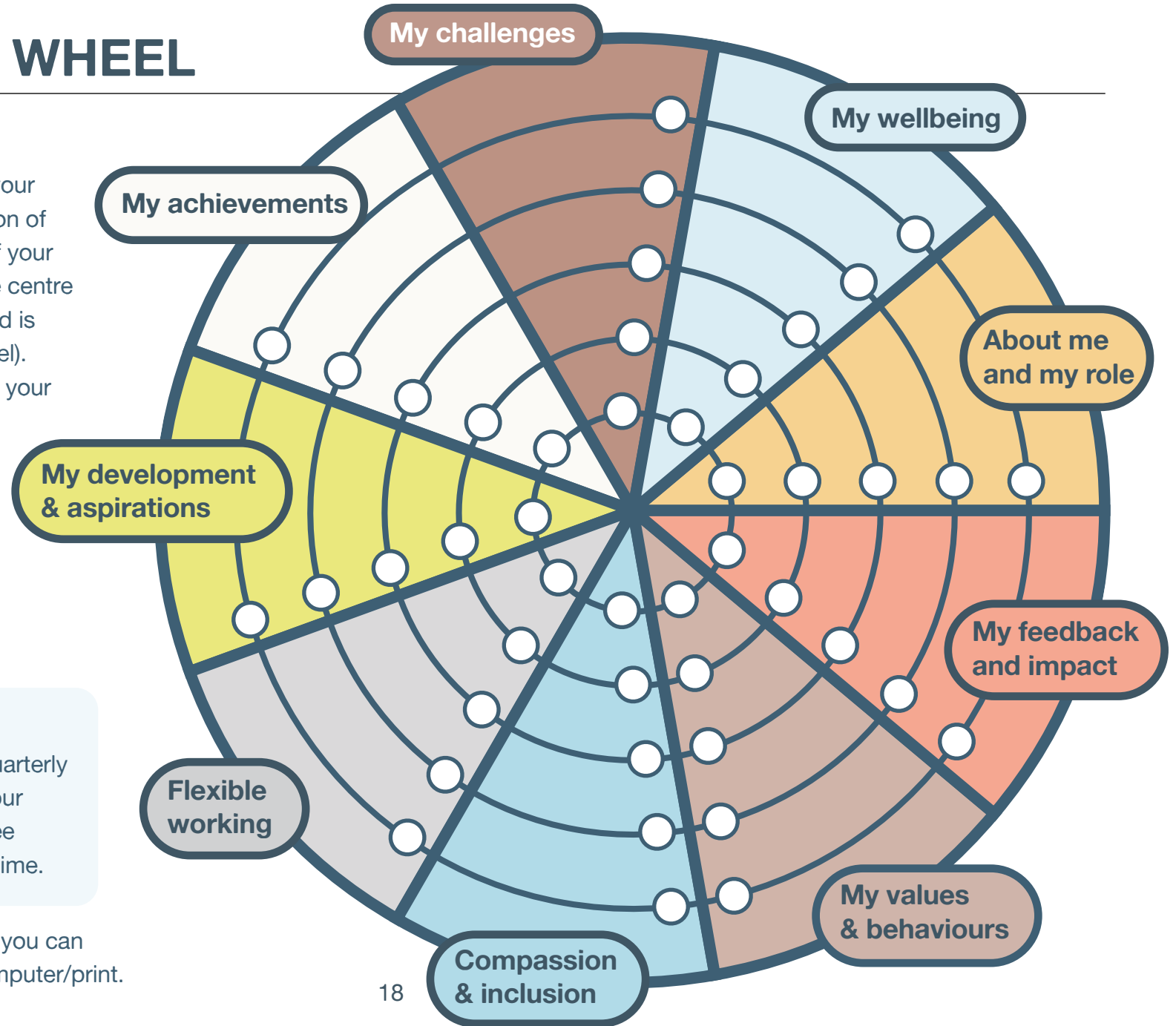
- Any actions to take this forward
- The timescales
- When you are going to review your progress

It is really important you keep a record of these. Click [here](#) to access our 'What I want to achieve' template.



DISCUSSION WHEEL

We've created this Discussion Wheel to help you prepare for your conversations. Rate each section of the wheel from 0–5 in terms of your satisfaction. (0 is low and at the centre of the wheel, whilst 5 is high and is on the outside edge of the wheel), and have it with you to share at your conversation.



Update and review your Discussion Wheel at each quarterly conversation and again at your annual review, so you can see progress and changes over time.

Click [here](#) to download a copy you can complete and save on your computer/print.

SUPPORT FOR MANAGERS

Top tips

The Workforce Team are here to support you and your team to have good conversations.

During the conversation keep in mind:

- It is key your team members get to lead the conversation about what is important to them, as well as you providing updates and feedback
- Understand and recognise when to listen, to step in, and to offer guidance
- Commit to regular conversations – try not to cancel or change at the last minute where possible
- The conversations need to be adaptable to the needs at the time
- Recognise your team member's successes and where they are asking for your support
- Familiarise yourself with the Partnership's **Skills & Development Protocol** for accessing training and development
- When having good conversations, it's important to make sure that wellbeing is at the heart of your discussions. **See page 21.**
- Don't forget staff who are currently not in work and consider how you are keeping in touch with them



- Everyone has had a different experience during Covid-19 including at work – are there key achievements from redeployments and/or secondments? Are there particular things as a manager you need to be paying attention to? Remember people might be fatigued returning to work and need support from you as their manager

By having these regular conversations, you'll be fulfilling PDR/ appraisal requirements regardless of your employer and ensuring staff are supported in their wellbeing, development, completing their mandatory training and successfully progressing through pay gateways. **Remember to record your annual reviews through your relevant organisation's process for increment purposes.** If you have any questions, contact your HR team.

SUPPORT FOR MANAGERS

Feeling safe in conversations

We know psychological safety is key to great teamwork – and this is also true when having good conversations. Creating a safe space is a crucial part of the preparation and thought needed for good conversations. This is especially true as we are working in remote settings, so having more and more conversations virtually.

It's important to create this safety for team members to feel that they are able to be honest and open in a conversation, and is sustained through the trust that you build and demonstrate over time.

You may want to think about the following tips to help build good psychological safety with your team:

- Reflect on how you approach conversations with team members, and are open to listening to what they have to say
- Equally important is how you respond to the discussions, and whether you do what you have discussed in your conversations – do you see through the actions you have agreed?
- And finally, how do you as a manager share your own psychological safety with your team, so they can see/hear you role modelling what you are asking them to do

These are practical tips to build these relationships with your team on a day to day basis, and the foundations of trust to have good conversations.



SUPPORT FOR MANAGERS

Wellbeing

Good wellbeing is when we are able to be at our best, both at work and home. It is something that is personal to the individual and we all need something different to maintain good wellbeing for ourselves, depending on our circumstances, norms, and behaviours

- Since the beginning of the pandemic, the impact on the ways that we work, and our home lives have been unparalleled. As the pandemic continues, and we are all feeling fatigued by the sustained nature of evolving changes at work and the impacts of national restrictions – it is critical that we continue to pay conscious attention to our wellbeing and our teams
- When having good conversations, it's important to make sure that wellbeing is at the heart of your discussions. Our **Wellbeing Toolkit** looks at how we help colleagues to look after for themselves, to support colleagues and practical links and tools to find help when needed. There is a dedicated section for managers and team leaders to help build wellbeing into your working practice, and this is supported by practical guides that you may want to refer to



- There is also a template of a **Wellbeing Action Plan** that you can keep as a record to help you understand how to help build the support for a great working environment

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT AND RECORD YOUR CONVERSATIONS

My Good Conversation – 1:1

This is a useful template to keep a note of your conversation. You do not need to use this template if you and your manager have other ways of keeping a record of your conversation.

My Good Conversation – Quarterly Conversation

Click [here](#) for a template to keep a note of your quarterly conversation. Record your conversation and share with your manager via email afterwards so you so you both have a copy.

My Good Conversation – Annual Review

Here you'll find a template to keep a note of your conversation. Record your conversation and share via email afterwards so you both have a record. This is your evidence of whether you have met your increment pay. Please also send a copy to HR (Email).

Discussion Wheel

Complete this in advance of each quarterly and annual conversation and share it with your manager to support your conversation and measure progress and changes over time.

Feedback Tool

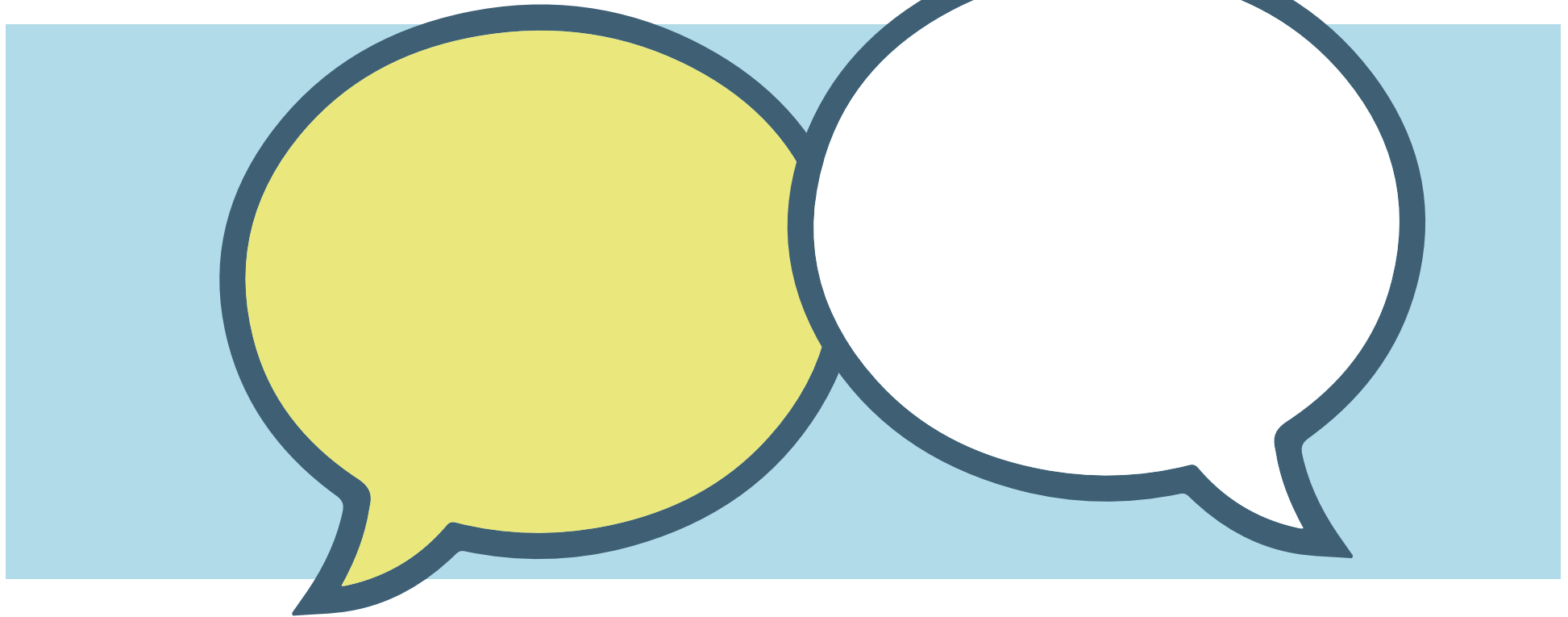
It can be great to get feedback ahead of your quarterly conversations and annual review from the people you work with. Click [here](#) for our 360 feedback template.

What I want to achieve

Use this resource to keep an ongoing record of your priorities and goals, your development and the support you need to achieve these. Review and update at each quarterly conversation and annual review. Start a new record each year.



KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING



Thank you for taking the time to read this Good Conversation Guide.

The importance of good conversations between you and your manager is key to helping colleagues feel supported; to feeling a sense of belonging to the Partnership team; supporting you to be the best you can be and having the opportunity for you to grow and develop for your future.

Please remember to refer back to this guide as and when you need it – it is so important that we keep the conversation going.

The Workforce team are on hand to support you and your manager with implementing this guide. Please do get in contact if we can help GM.workforce@nhs.net