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1.

Placement expectations

2.

Strategies to prepare you for challenging „situations on placement

3.

Your personal Toolkit development

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What to do when you „feel you aren 't coping

6.

QMU contacts and support

External support and resource links







Toolkit activity 1:

This is an activity for you to complete before you go on placement

Concerns I have relating to my placement

For example: There won't be anyone else from my course on my placement at the same time and I feel worried about this and not knowing anyone.

Actions to take

For example: I will set up a support chat with a few other students on placement and I am going to raise this with my Placement Coordinator next time we meet. I might also talk it through with my PAT.



Follow this link for some ideas to get you started:
[Examples of Pre-Placement Student Concerns and Stresses](#)

Easing my concerns

For example: I could set up a 'WhatsApp' group with students who are on my course who will also be on placement and we could support each other, we could arrange a weekly 'Zoom' session to talk through how things are. I know I can rely on family for support through this too.

For example: This will help me to feel less isolated. It will help me to feel connected to my peers and supported. We can share experiences and support each other through our placements.



2. Exploring placement challenges

We can't always predict and prepare for all aspects of our placement experience. One thing that you can rely on is that the unexpected will occur!

The following section helps you to think about how you might respond to some common placement challenges identified by students.

'Having to keep all my emotions inside when something upsetting happens, until there is a space to debrief'

'Placement can be

'Juggling other responsibilities and commitments whilst on placement, for example children/family life'

'Maintaining appointment times and managing a caseload with clients who have multiple, complex issues'

'Responding when a patient shares distressing information'

'Coping with distressing situations, for example, the death of a patient'

'Geographical logistics of accommodation/travel to and from placement'





Active listening and empathy

This is an opportunity to practice your listening and empathy skills, silence can be very powerful whilst showing physical signs that you are listening and there for the patient.

Here and Now

Try to maintain the conversation on the focus of the session, your role in assisting the patient.

Post Session Debrief

Debrief with support staff/colleague or supervisor, if this can't take place immediately afterwards then make notes to record any issues raised by the patient. Record appropriately any issues raised in the patient notes, although remember to remain objective and state the facts only.

Professional role

You can highlight in a sensitive manner your professional role to a patient whilst directing them to other support services/professionals if relevant. Don't feel pressurised into giving advice or support which is out-with your professional role or that you aren't qualified to do.

Sign Post

Signposting patients to other support services or suggesting that you will feed back on their behalf to the relevant key person involved in their care (eg. GP, Nurse, practice educator) can be very reassuring and proactive.



Managing challenging encounters with patients or carers

De-Stress

What works for you? Do it! You might be able to incorporate some breathing exercises/ mindfulness into the immediate moment or you might need to wait and plan a 'de-stress' walk or run later in the day.

3. Your Personal Wellbeing Plan

The purpose of developing your personal toolkit now is to prepare you for transitional times, like going on placement. You can plan and prepare your toolkit to respond to this, creating a plan that will fit into your time on placement helping you to manage challenging situations and look after your wellbeing.

When you return to university post-placement you can review your wellbeing plan and alter your routine and strategies to fit in to university life.

We want to identify strategies that nourish our whole selves which we maintain and practice on a daily/weekly or regular basis dependant on the strategy. For example, have a look at this image encapsulating

Managing work-life balance

When challenges occur in our lives, we often stop the activities which de-stress us, nurture our bodies and minds and help us cope.

It is important that when these challenges or disruptions enter our lives we respond by maintaining our positive coping strategies which nurture our wellbeing.

You may identify with different strategies at different times. For example, if in general you sleep well, have a positive sleep pattern and routine you might not pay a lot of focus to 'nurturing' this aspect of your health. However, if you don't because you exercise daily, eat well, drink lots of fluids, limit evening 'blue light' time and follow a good routine that you sleep so well. So, if something disrupts your ability to exercise and eat well you may find your sleep quality is also affected.

The following activity will help you to develop your personal toolkit. Strategies you identify here can help you maintain your wellbeing whilst on placement. You can review your personal toolkit when you return to university and continue to use this for upcoming placements and as you progress through university life.



Creating your personal toolkit. Consider your wellbeing strategies – these are personal to you and can be many or few.

Strategies I currently use that help me

For Example: I use a meditation and mindfulness app every day.

For Example: I like to exercise daily, the gym, or a run or walk.

How this helps me

For Example: It calms my busy head and helps reduce my anxiety levels.

For Example: It energises me, helps me de-stress and can make me feel more positive and calm.

How I feel when I don't use this strategy

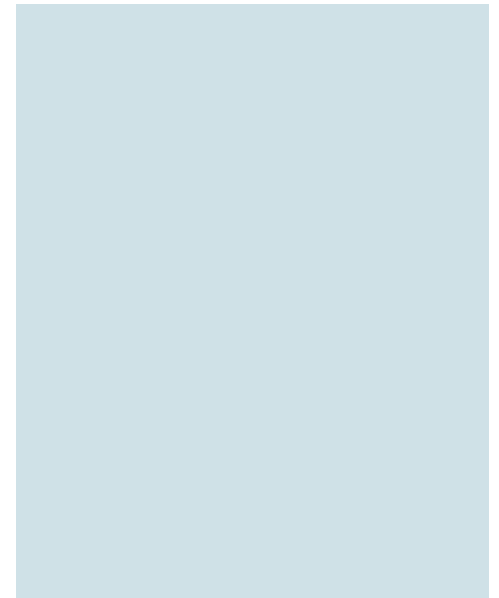
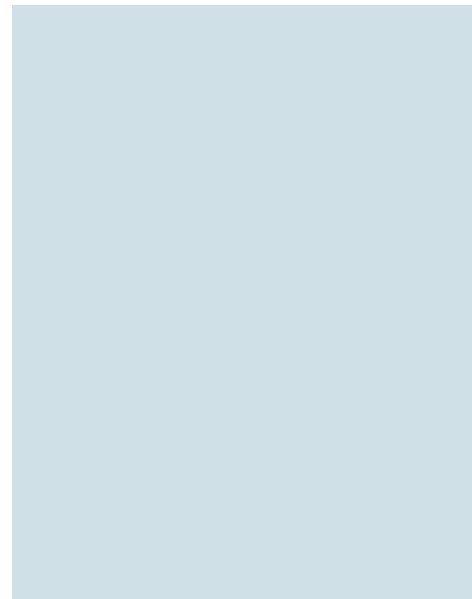
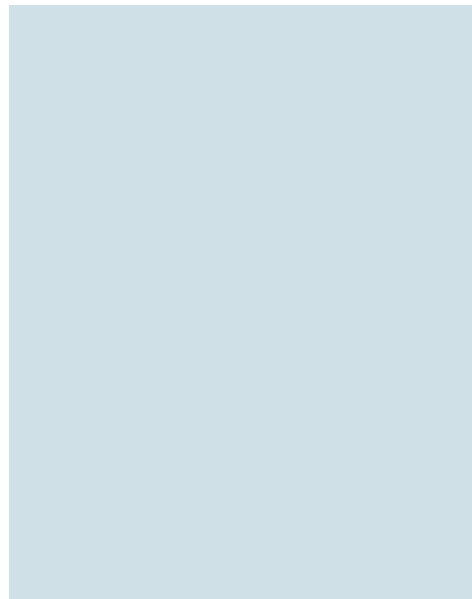
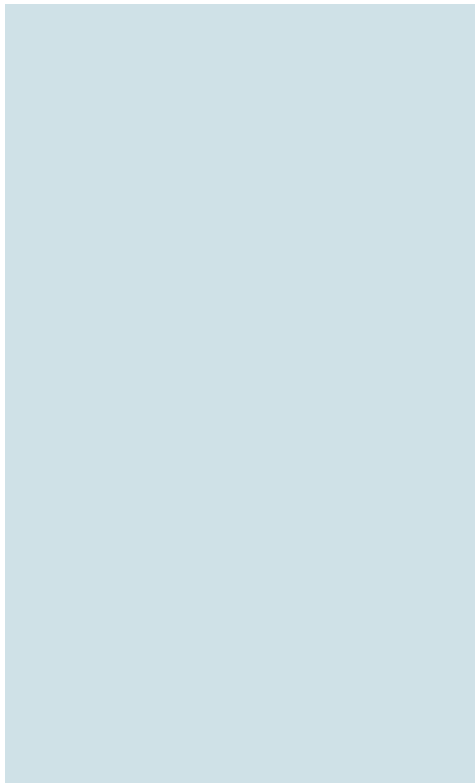
For Example: I feel more anxious and overwhelmed, I don't cope with challenges as well.

For Example: I can feel more tired, tense and less motivated to do other things like my academic work.

How I will do this whilst I am on placement

For Example: I will use the App when I travel to and from my placement as positive relaxation time.

For Example: I will cycle from the train station to the h0o2l66less



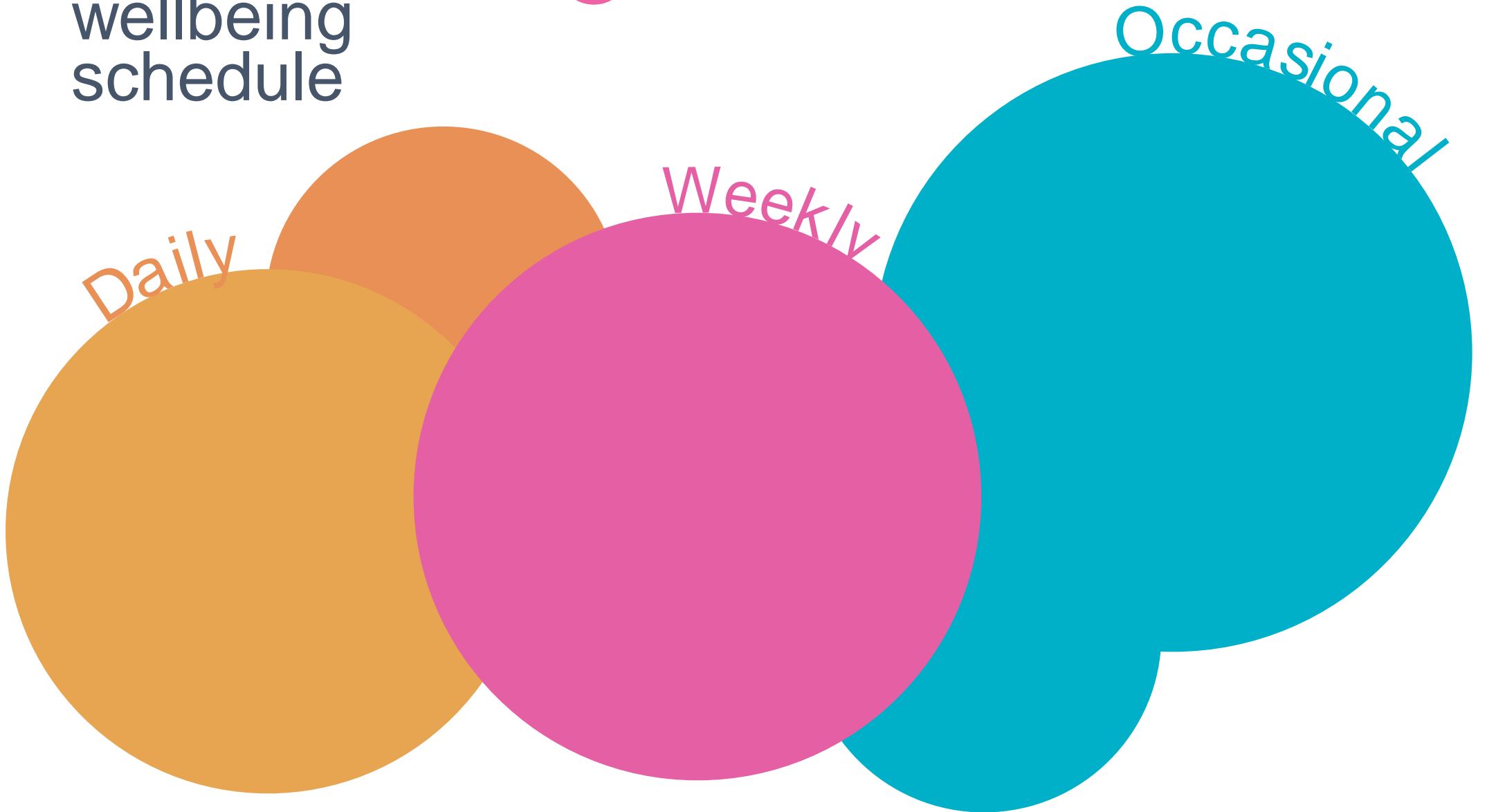
Your personal wellbeing schedule

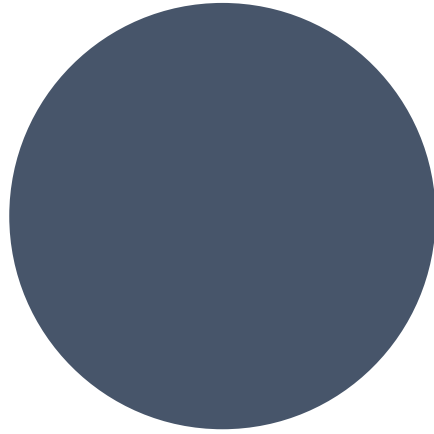
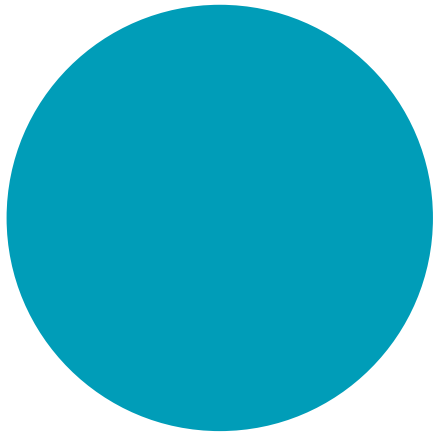


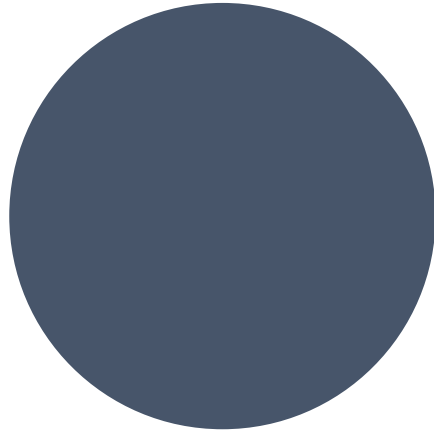
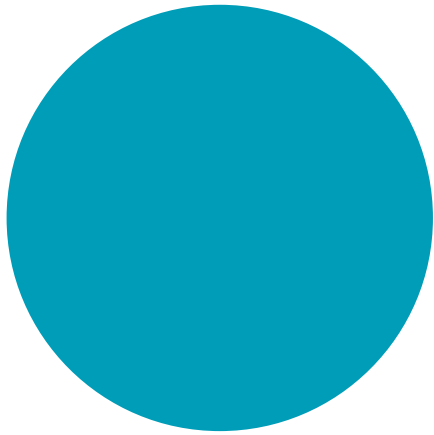
Your personal wellbeing schedule

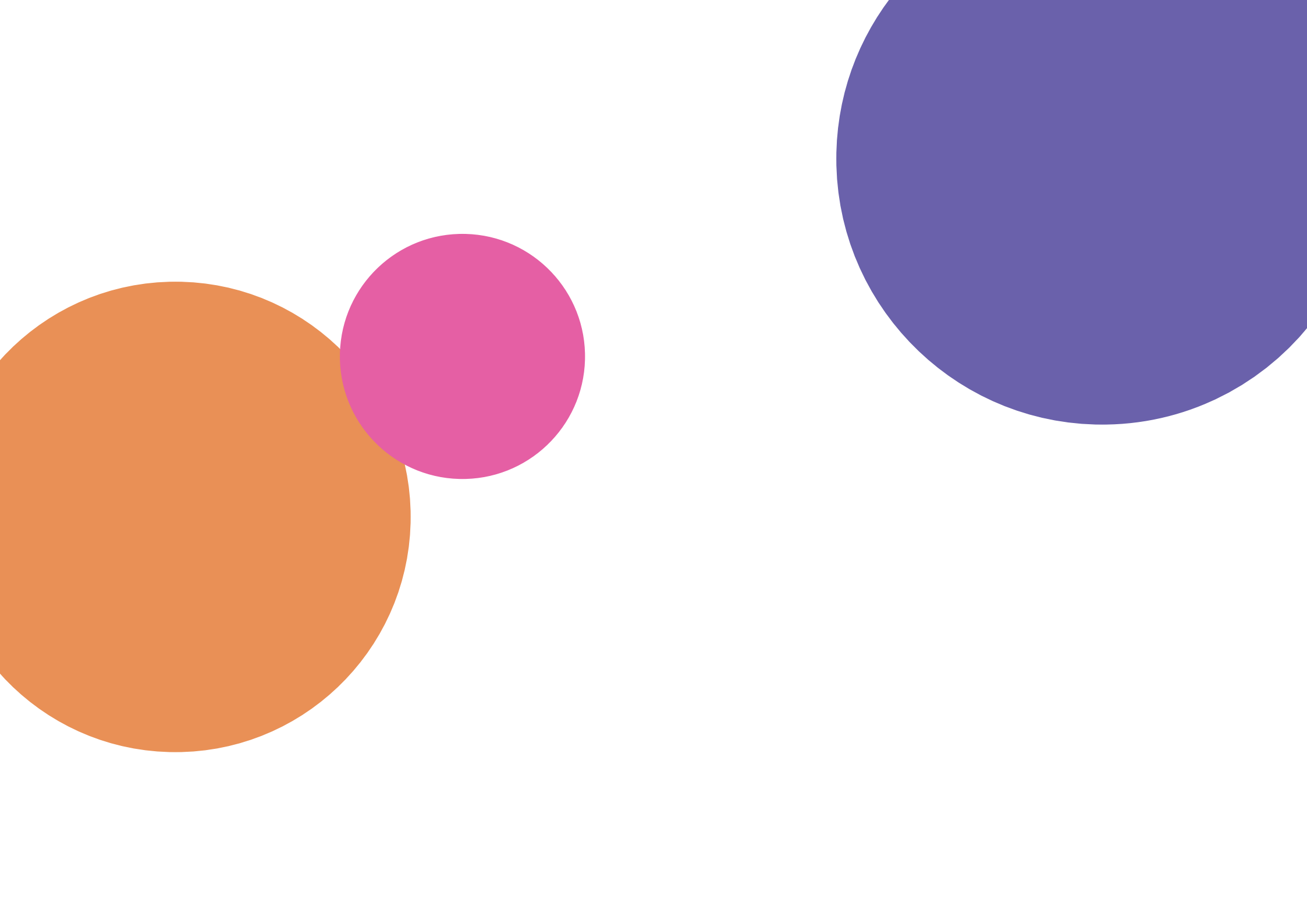


Toolkit activity 5:









6. Next steps to take if you are struggling...

You might want to consider engaging with support at QMU and sometimes acknowledging that you are struggling to someone can bring enormous relief.

You can speak with your practice educator and/or your PAT. You can also access our professional support services.

[QMU Wellbeing Service](mailto:wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk) ✉ email: wellbeing@qmu.ac.uk

[QMU Counselling Service](mailto:counselling@qmu.ac.uk) ✉ email: counselling@qmu.ac.uk

[QMU Student Support Services](#)

Please remember if you are on clinical placement you can still access these support services.

It may also be an idea to make an appointment with your GP to share with them how you are feeling.

Additionally, there are many resources and links online which you may find helpful and supportive – these are listed in the Resource Section.



7. Resources

Listening Support

[Breathing Space Support Line & online resources](#)
[Mind helpline and Support](#)

Financial

[SAAS Forms for Funding Support on Clinical Placements](#)
[Financial support around Healthcare placements](#)
[QMU funding advice and support](#)

Stress Management

[Preparing for and managing stress on Clinical Placement](#)
[NHS Inform – advice for managing your stress levels](#)
[NHS Time management tips and advice and managing stress](#)

Anxiety ...

[Advice and tips for managing anxiety and panic attacks](#)
[NHS advice on anxiety](#)
[Anxiety in young people](#)
[Mindfulness advice](#)

LGBTQ+ Support

[Student Minds advice and support for LGBTQ+ students](#)

Thank you to all the