



WELLNESS AT SEA AWARENESS RESOURCES

**FOR SEAFARERS, THEIR FAMILIES
AND SHORE STAFF**

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Welcome to Wellness at Sea

We're delighted that you are considering partnering with us on our expanded Wellness at Sea programme. By making this investment in your workforce, you will be breaking new ground and marking your company out as an industry leader in crew welfare.

This unique programme reflects Sailors' Society's considerable expertise in maritime wellness training and the experience we've gained in more than 200 years of seafarer welfare work – from supporting seafarers and their families through the challenges they face in their everyday lives, to helping them recover when their lives are hit by crisis.

The coronavirus pandemic, and the accompanying crew change crisis, brought seafarer wellbeing into the limelight; but as a charity working with seafarers, we have been championing the importance of good seafarer physical and mental health for many years.

Seafarers face unique challenges due to the nature of their work. Long contracts at sea, thousands of miles away from their loved ones, can be incredibly isolating and challenging. With human error accounting for 80 per cent of all accidents at sea, fatigue, stress and depression on board don't just pose a threat to seafarer mental health, but also to the effective running of a ship and the safety of its whole crew.

So, by signing up to our Wellness at Sea Awareness resources, you are not just making a commitment to the health of your crews, but also the safety of your ships and your bottom line.

The aim of this guide is to demonstrate how we would roll out Wellness at Sea Awareness to motivate your crews, their families, and shore staff, while also making them aware of the different resources that are available to them. It is a unique opportunity to invest in your workforce and we are excited to embark on this journey with you.



In 2021, we developed these resources as part of a bespoke campaign in response to the pandemic and more than 60 key players in the maritime industry, including shipping companies, manning agents, maritime schools, government organisations and P&I clubs, got on board. Having recognised that these resources are still highly relevant today, we have now refreshed them, taking on board learnings from the pandemic.

By joining these organisations, you will become part of an industry-wide drive to actively contribute, celebrate and enhance the wellbeing of seafarers, their families and shore staff. You won't just be investing time in individual wellbeing, you'll also be part of a bigger narrative helping change the maritime industry for good.

The Circle of Care

Our wellness programme aims to build the best environment for seafarers to thrive. We believe the most effective way to do this is to surround them with care, supporting their wellbeing in every area of their lives.

We call it the Wellness at Sea Circle of Care.

Through this approach, we offer seafarers:

1. Empowerment.

Wellness at Sea Awareness is one of the tools we use to teach seafarers how they can stay physically and mentally well at sea. We introduce them to the basic principles of wellness, exploring some of the most common challenges seafarers face and giving them the tools navigate these in a positive way.

2. Support.

When life gets tough, having someone to turn to for support can make all the difference. Wellness at Sea both equips seafarers to support each other and, through Sailors' Society's helpline, offers seafarers free advice and counselling whenever they need it, anywhere in the world.

3. Community.

No seafarer is an island. Each member of your crew is connected with other people who they depend on and influence, both in their work and personal lives, and these communities have an impact on their wellbeing. That's why we've expanded Wellness at Sea Awareness to some of the other key people in their communities: seafarers' families and shore staff.

Wellness at Sea – families and shore staff

Seafarers, families and shore staff all face different challenges. They depend on one another, not only in a professional sense, but also on a human level - giving purpose and meaning to each other's lives. They can either motivate, encourage and inspire each other or discourage one another, causing anxiety and tension.

By expanding our Wellness at Sea programme to families and shore staff, the aim is to:

1. Create a shared language, through which difficult conversations like mental health can be confronted. A shared language creates shared meaning.
2. Create understanding and empathy for the unique challenges each person faces.
3. Build solidarity and unity through shared experiences.



What can you expect over the nine modules?

MODULE 1

WELLNESS AT SEA: AN INTRODUCTION

Introducing the key concepts of wellness, this section looks at the unique and complex elements that make up each person and the value of keeping these in balance.

MODULE 2

HELP IN A CRISIS

What happens when life spirals out of control? This section introduces crew, shore-based staff and families to Sailors' Society's Crisis Response Network and how it can help them in a crisis.

MODULE 3

YOUR WELLBEING IN YOUR OWN HANDS

This section outlines the different tools offered by the Wellness at Sea programme and how crew, shore-based staff and families can use these to support their wellbeing.

MODULE 4

SOCIAL WELLNESS

This section explores the social aspects of a person, such as family and relationships. It looks at some of the social challenges seafarers, shore-based staff and families can face and offers practical tips on how to improve their social wellness.

MODULE 5

EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

With a focus on mental health, this section explains emotional wellness and encourages conversation about mental health as well as outlining some of the warning signs of depression and where to get help.

MODULE 6

PHYSICAL WELLNESS

How do you stay physically fit? This section explains the benefits of physical wellness and gives practical guidance about how to stay healthy on board and on shore, covering diet, exercise and illness.

MODULE 7

INTELLECTUAL WELLNESS

This section introduces and signposts your teams to where they can equip themselves with important information about the maritime industry, some of the challenges seafarers, shore-based staff and families can face – such as piracy or money troubles – and what they can do if things go wrong.

MODULE 8

SPIRITUAL WELLNESS

This section explores what spiritual wellness is and how spirituality can help seafarers, shore-based staff and families navigate life at sea and at home.

MODULE 9

WRAP-UP SESSION

This section gives crew, shore-based staff and families the space to review their learning and explore further any issues that have arisen during the course.

Material will be co-branded with your company logo to demonstrate this collaborative approach and modules can be delivered in a different order if that better suits your organisation's plans.

Ideas on how to use the resources

Wellness at Sea Awareness presents you with an opportunity to show that you care. We are passionate about the wellbeing of seafarers, their family and shore staff and for that reason we are firm believers in collaboration. Use our material as a base, but incorporate some of your own initiatives under every module heading. You are likely to have other solutions and programmes in place to take care of your seafarers; use our resources as a vehicle to promote and celebrate them.

TOP TIPS

- Be creative in how you roll out the material. Have a team meeting to decide the best course of action to ensure that your seafarers get the maximum benefit possible.
- Send hard copies of the posters and handouts to vessels so that they can be distributed to crew and displayed in communal areas.
- Load the videos and podcasts onto ships' servers.
- Send a pen drive of all the material to vessels without internet.
- Create a dedicated page featuring the material on your company's website so that crew can easily access it.
- Share the material with your seafarers through your company's social media channels. The podcasts, posters and flyers are also small enough to forward via WhatsApp or WeChat.
- Share the material with crew who have signed off, for example by email.
- Ask the crew of each vessel to vote for a Wellbeing Officer on board. His/her task is to provide information to the crew and help them to interact with the resources. Think of an incentive to motivate your Wellbeing Officers.
- Create a Wellbeing TV channel in your mess room. Use the video content from Wellness at Sea Awareness and other relevant content and play it in the mess room.
- Every module has got an action to motivate seafarers, families and shore staff to engage with the topic. Think of an incentive for seafarers who complete all the actions.
- Decide on one day per week/month as a wellbeing day, for example 'Feel Good Fridays'. Think of a practical action seafarers can take on board to boost morale. Link it to the relevant module in the resources.
- Ask seafarers their opinion about certain topics. Use the module headings as a way to get a fuller understanding of their wellbeing issues.
- Appoint a family liaison officer to engage with families and manage the material sent to them. Building these relationships are of substantial importance and putting a family liaison officer in place can have benefits that stretch well beyond these resources.



"Safety is in the core of Seaspan's DNA. It's what propels our relentless pursuit of innovative solutions to positively impact crew wellbeing. Our commitment to Wellness at Sea through the years embodies this focus on our crews' wellbeing and, in return, we saw our retention rates improve from 88 per cent to 96 per cent."

Torsten Holst Pedersen, COO,
Seaspan Corporation

Other Wellness at Sea solutions

Sailors' Society is industry leading in wellness training and services. On top of Wellness at Sea Awareness, we offer Wellness at Sea Maritime Schools' Conferences, award winning wellness training, Sea Ready pre-departure training, our 24/7 multilingual helpline, trained Crisis Response Network, Ship Connect programme and hugely popular Peer-to-Peer Support Groups. We are there for families too with our Wellness at Home training and support in any crisis from abandonment and accidents to imprisonment and natural disasters.

For more information, visit our website sailors-society.org or contact us for our Wellness at Sea brochure.

We're delighted that you are considering partnering with us on our Wellness at Sea programme. It is a unique opportunity to invest in your workforce and we are excited to embark on this journey with you.

With grateful thanks for the funding contribution from the Merchant Navy Welfare Board.



For further information or discussion on Wellness at Sea Awareness or any of our other wellness services, please contact

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