Dear Colleagues,

It is inspiring to observe the amazing way you serve society even during the challenging time, and I know that the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting all of us in different ways. Given that the well-being of our students, faculty and staff is one of my chief concerns, I wanted to send you well wishes and make sure you're aware of the resources available to you if you're in need of help.

As educators, researchers and staff members of Washington State University, we all have access to the Washington State Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP is confidential, and employees can self-refer. There are many EAP resources to assist you with an array of work and life concerns.

During this time, let's try to extend a sense of compassion and empathy to one another and to ourselves. Let's give ourselves space to engage in self-care. Ultimately, it is self-care that allows us to regulate our own emotions, while bolstering us to be able to care for others.

Here are some useful self-care tips and other strategies to help you cope:

- Use phone calls, text messages, video chat, and social media to access support networks and stay socially connected, while you are physically distant
- Practice active listening in your connections and relationships
- Find mindfulness, relaxation or meditation apps on your phone
- Pay extra attention to health, nutrition and exercise
- Create and follow a daily routine
Focus on what you do have control over

Additionally, faculty and staff may be worried about the mental health and well-being of their students. The *Creating a Culture of Caring* resource includes many tips for faculty on how they can create a safe environment for their students, including:

1. Normalizing the need for help
2. Actively listening with validate-appreciate-and refer (VAR)
3. Embedding courses with well-being practices
4. Remembering to practice your own self-care

If you're concerned about working remotely, or needing to take time off due to COVID-19, Human Resource Services has information sessions for both employees (*April 29*) and managers (*Today*) to provide you with guidance. The [Spokane HRS office](#) can be reached at 509-358-7566. Also, make sure you [bookmark this page](#), which includes leave and work information related to COVID-19. There is a [secondary link](#) for state and federal coronavirus programs with additional wage replacement and accommodation options that employees may not be as aware of.

It's important we all work together to ensure our colleagues are okay. Our methods of communication aren't as simple as walking down the hall right now, and we know Zoom meetings can cause fatigue. I encourage everybody to be patient, empathetic and understanding given these unusual circumstances. I have full confidence that we'll get through this and come out better than before with a new appreciation for our campus and for each other.

Sincerely,

Daryll DeWald
Vice President and Chancellor
WSU Health Sciences Spokane