WORKING WELL AT NIGHT

BEFORE NIGHTS

• Make sure you usually have a good sleep routine.
• Get extra sleep in the 24 hours before your shift - having an afternoon nap is ideal as it will reduce the length of time you have been continuously awake. A lie in is an alternative.
• Plan how you will get home. Is there an option other than driving? Will you need to rest before driving home?

DURING NIGHTS

• Keep well hydrated and eat healthy snacks. Calories on nights DO count; they contribute to the adverse health effects of night working.
• Maximise exposure to bright lights in non-clinical areas.
• Breaks are essential - work as a team to cover each other for these.
• A 15-20 minute nap can significantly improve alertness. Longer naps may result in sleep inertia.
• Be vigilant for the 4am dip - your lowest physiological point. Work as a team to check calculations and be aware of the effects of fatigue on decision making.
• If you can, a consistent routine during shifts can help.

BETWEEN NIGHTS

• If you are too tired to drive, have a short nap before leaving work.
• Have a snack before sleeping so you don't wake up hungry.
• Go to bed as soon as possible to maximise the amount of sleep you will get.
• Do not plan deliveries or daytime activities for the days in between night shifts. Warn your housemates that you need to sleep.

RECOVERY AFTER NIGHTS

• Have a short sleep in the morning and then get up.
• Aim to go to bed at your usual time; avoid a long lie in the next day.
• You'll need at least 2 normal nights sleep to reset your sleep routine.

References