

# First Aid for Mental Health

RQF Level 2 (1 day)



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## Housekeeping

- Sign In
- Write your preferred name on a sticker and stick it to you
- Facilities
- Health & Safety
- Mobile Phones (use if you need to)



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## Overview of course

1. Introduction to the course
2. What is FAMH or MHFA?
3. Identifying poor mental health conditions?
4. Stress & Burnout Syndrome (Discuss a scenario and how to approach it)
5. Drugs & Alcohol
6. Starting a conversation, providing advice & using the C.A.R.E plan **Practice Practical Assessment**
7. Specific mental health conditions
8. Mental Health in the Workplace (Reduce stigma)
9. Revision Activity
10. Course assessments



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## Assessment Process

1. Practical demonstration of the first aid action plan (5-10 minute conversation using scenarios provided).
2. Assessment paper of 14 questions (18/26 required) - up to 30 minutes.  
(professional discussion may be required to confirm answers).

*Your certificate will be emailed by the examination board within 90 days of completion and you will receive an email badge to attach to your signature to raise awareness.*



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## Module 2



# What is FAMH or MHFA?



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## What is FAMH or MHFA?



1. Read the bullet points.
2. What are the missing words?

| Mental ___ <del>Ment</del> Health  | Mental ___ <del>Ment</del> al illness  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone has it</li> <li>• <b>Affects how we think, feel and act</b></li> <li>• Determines how we deal with stress, relate to others and make choices</li> <li>• Poor mental health can lead to mental illness</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems functioning in day-to-day lives</li> <li>• Are either diagnosed or diagnosable and <b>treatable</b> (not always curable)</li> <li>• Range of conditions</li> <li>• Affect people's thoughts, emotions, behaviours and relationships.</li> <li>• Stigmatised</li> </ul> |



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# What is FAMH or MHFA?

- **4 Aims of a FAMH?**

1. Preserve life – if in danger to self or others
2. Alleviate – Suffering provide comfort, reassurance and support
3. Prevent – condition developing to more serious problem
4. Promote recovery – supporting, signposting and guiding towards professional support

- **What is the role of a FAMH?**

1. Point of contact (confidentiality?)
2. Identify warning signs & assess risk of self harm or suicide (use emergency services if required)
3. Start a supportive, reassuring and non-judgemental conversation
4. Reduce mental health stigma
5. Guide towards professional support and signpost to supportive resources (website, charities and leaflets).



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# What is FAMH or MHFA?

- **Ice breaker activity**

Move around the room and when the music stops find someone, introduce yourself and discuss the following questions:

1. Why is it important to have FAMH in the workplace?
2. Why might people become stressed or overwhelmed at work?
3. Why are people reluctant to admit they are stressed or overwhelmed?



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## Module 3



# Identifying mental health conditions

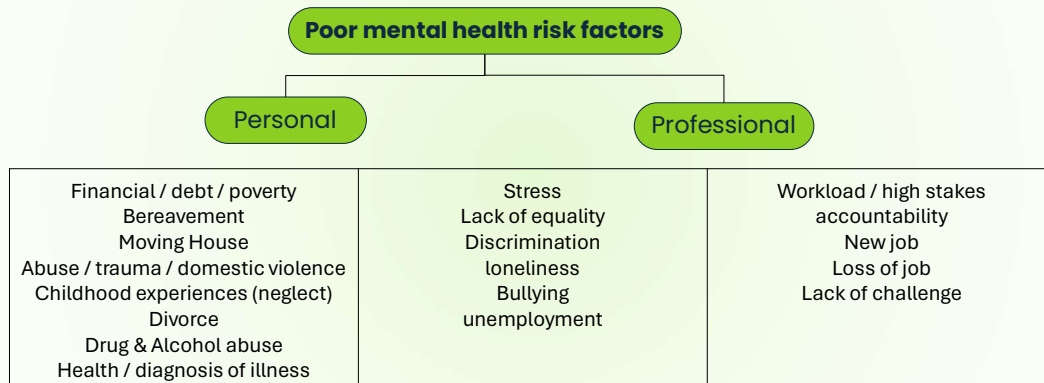


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## Identifying mental health conditions



What factors might affect someone's mental health?



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# Identifying mental health conditions

What might be some general red flags or warning signs that someone's mental health is declining, or they are experiencing mental illness?



Self-harming

Changes in appetite

Isolating themselves and not wanting to socialise

Signs of cuts or bruising to uncommon areas of the body

Changes in normal behaviour for them

Losing interest in hobbies

Hearing or seeing things that others don't

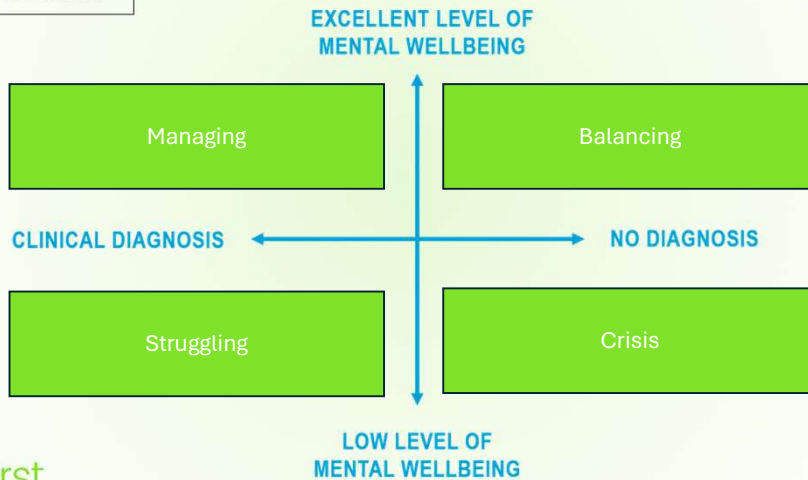
Increased anxiety levels, feeling exhausted and restless

Unexplained poor performance at work



# Identifying mental health conditions

Mental Health continuum



## Module 4

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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome



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## Stress & Burnout Syndrome

*Stress is the*

*“adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”.*

*(HSE)*

Stress can be positive but too much stress can lead to overwhelm and poor mental health.



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome



## **What are common signs and symptoms of stress?**

Difficulty concentrating  
 Worried or anxious  
 Feeling overwhelmed  
 Struggle with decision making  
 Become forgetful  
 Emotionally unbalanced - Irritable / Angry / sad, tearful  
 Increase in alcohol, smoking or drug use  
 Avoiding people, social situations, isolate self  
 Chronic pain, muscle tension, stomach problems



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome



## **Scenario 1**

Someone being negative, cynical and emotionally unbalanced

**READ SCENARIO & DISCUSS QUESTIONS BELOW**

### **Questions to discuss:**

1. What signs of high stress is this person presenting with?
2. Why might this person be in crisis, what are the red flags?
3. How might you initiate this conversation as a FAMH?



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## Interestingly

The more stressed we get the less time we dedicate to the things which destress us

Sometimes people just need a bit of support to rebalance and 'tap off' their stress.



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## ***Strategies for managing stress?***

- Talk to someone
- Address underlying cause
- Socialize with friends (increase social connection)
- Develop new hobbies/interests
- Exercise
- Improving quality of sleep
- Improve nutritional / dietary habits
- Avoid unhealthy habits (drinking / smoking / overworking)
- Meditation
- Journaling



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## Strategies for managing stress?

- Humour - watching comedy
- Get out in nature - gardening, walk in forests.
- Creative arts - making things, painting (active Mindfulness activity)
- Decluttering house/ working area
- Ironing - move your attention away from stress
- Music - listening and playing instruments
- Going to the beach - feel the sand in between the toes (but this could stress out others)



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## How to support someone who is stressed?

Stress is a good thing if we are able to manage it.

People sometimes create their own stress without knowing it.

Which means we, as FAMH, can help them to reduce it too.



## Stress bucket activity (Your bucket)

1. What fills up your stress bucket?
2. What helps reduce your stress?
3. How can you keep those activities going when other pressures build up?



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## *How to support someone who is stressed?*

1. Find out what is filling up their stress bucket
2. Find out what helps to relax or destress them and when they can make time for it.
3. Way forward (lowering their stress level):
  - 2 things they will pass on, pause or stop doing (Removal of stress factors)
  - 2 things that they will start & when (reducing existing stress)

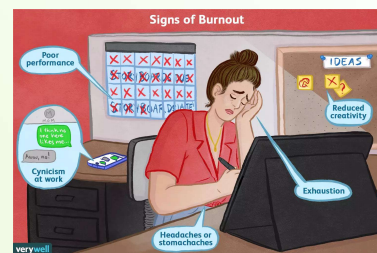


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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## **Research Task (4 groups):**

- How is Burnout Syndrome defined & what are the stages?
- What is the difference between Burnout Syndrome and stress/depression?
- What are the effects of untreated Burnout Syndrome?
- What are the signs and symptoms of Burnout Syndrome?



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# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## Definition

***"Burn-out is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed."***

It is characterized by three dimensions:

1. Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
2. Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
3. Reduced professional efficacy

Burn-out refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life



# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## 5 stages of Burnout Syndrome

**Stage 1 – Roaring campfire**



Energised, enthusiastic, excited

**Stage 3 – Flickering flame (chronic stress)**



Life is exhausting, withdrawn & distant, motivation decreasing.

**Stage 5 – Fire gone out (Complete Burnout)**



Can't cope, emotionless, depressed

**Stage 2 – Ignoring the log shortage (stress increases)**



Higher workload, feeling tired, work/life balance affected

**Stage 4 – Glowing embers (onset of Burnout Syndrome)**

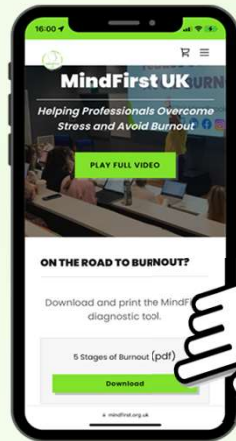


Pessimistic, unkind to self, feel worthless



# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## Burnout Assessment Tool



Ask them...

Which stage are you at?

Click to download

# Stress & Burnout Syndrome

## Burnout vs Stress/Depression

- Loss of interest in things used to enjoy
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Cognitive and physical symptoms
- Low confidence in ability/ Self Doubt
- Burnout is common in leaders who are 'people pleasers' and have a high need to achieve/be successful.
- **Stress > Overworking > Stress > Burnout > Depression > Suicide Risk**

## Effects of untreated Burnout Syndrome

- Alienation from work related activities
- Emotional Exhaustion
- Emotional Numbness
- Reduced Performance
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Cynical/Create Toxic Culture
- Risk of Suicide

# Coffee Break (15 minutes)

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# Module 5

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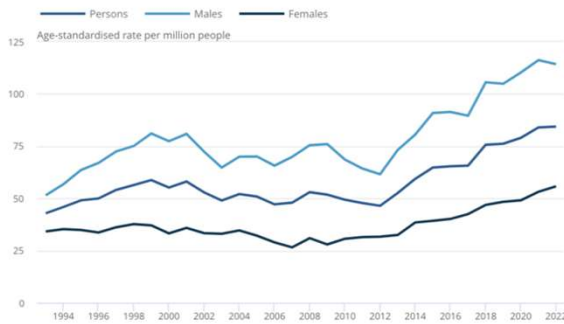
# Drugs & Alcohol



# Drugs & Alcohol

**Figure 1: Mortality rates from drug poisoning decreased for males and increased for females in 2022**

Age-standardised mortality rates for deaths related to drug poisoning, by sex, England and Wales, registered between 1993 and 2022



Source: Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales from the Office for National Statistics

The rate of drug-poisoning deaths was **81.5% higher in 2022** (84.4 deaths per million) **than it was in 2012** (46.5 per million people). The rate has **increased every year since 2012** after remaining relatively stable over the preceding two decades.



# Drugs & Alcohol

## The four main categories of drugs are:

- Stimulants (e.g. cocaine, ecstasy etc.)
- Depressants (e.g. alcohol, cannabis etc.)
- Opiates (e.g. heroin, codeine etc.)
- Hallucinogens (e.g. LSD, magic mushrooms etc.)



Source: Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales from the Office for National Statistics



## Drugs & Alcohol



*“Substance abuse (or misuse) refers to the **harmful or hazardous use** of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs”*

**‘Self-medicating’** - coping mechanism

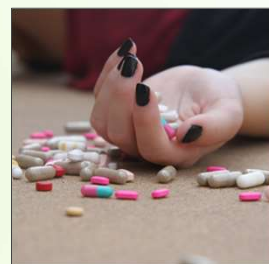


## Drugs & Alcohol

What is the impact of drug and alcohol on **someone’s mental health**?



- Poor Judgement
- Mood swings
- Increased anxiety and depression
- Cause drug induced psychosis
- Long term health problems (Cancer)
- Loss of motivation
- Increased negativity

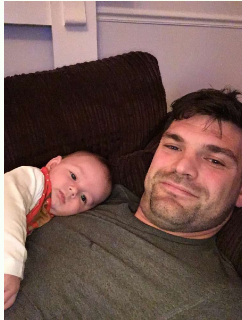




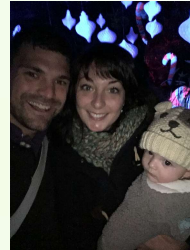
# Drugs & Alcohol



What is the impact of drug and alcohol on **someone's Life**?



- Relationship problems
- Reduced work performance
- Losing their job
- Physical health issues
- Financial problems
- Stealing money from family or friends



# Drugs & Alcohol



**How would you approach someone, as a FAMH, who you know is overusing drugs or alcohol (or is intoxicated)?**

How might people react if a member of staff was a FAMH response? the workplace?

- Talk with them compassionately
- Find out what they have taken - for emergency services/report

- Don't make assumptions with drugs and alcohol in the workplace?
- Ensure the safety of you and them
- Be patient
- Sign post & check in later



# Drugs & Alcohol

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Further information:

**drinkaware**  
**drinkaware**  
**drinkaware.co.uk**

[Drinkaware Home](#) | [Drinkaware](#)



# Module 6

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Starting a conversation,  
providing advice & using the  
C.A.R.E plan  
**Practice Practical Assessment**



# Module 6

As FAMH should we be

**sympathetic** or  
**empathetic?**



# Module 6

Sympathy makes the conversation about you not them!

We MUST be:

- 1. Non-judgmental**
- 2. Empathetic**



# C.A.R.E plan (FAMH ACTION PLAN)



**C** - Check for risk of harm



Signs & symptoms of distress including suicidal thoughts (indicators of suicide?)

**A** - Apply non-judgement communication



Active listening / Open body language / Empathy NOT sympathy

**R** - Reassure



Not alone / speak to you whenever / Acknowledge their courage

**E** - Encourage person to engage in support



Felt like this before? / Signpost to get support / make a call or send an email together



# C.A.R.E plan (FAMH ACTION PLAN)



## Role play 2 (groups of 3)

In pairs 1 will play person in crisis and the other FAMH.

Person 3 observes

**Scenario 2 (safeguarding disclosure + high stress/burnout)**



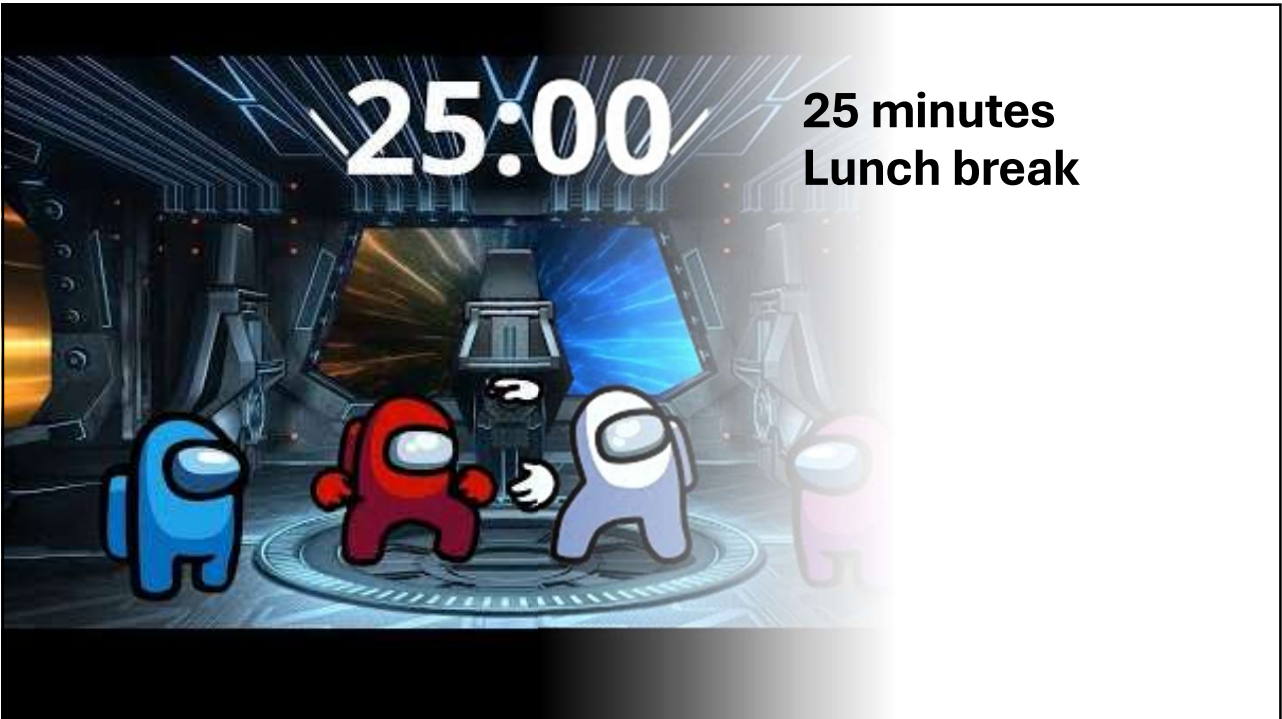
## Role play 2 feedback for FAMH

### **WWW/EBI?**

(body language, tone, questions, active listening, paraphrasing to clarify understanding, advice, scaling questions, check back in, sign posting)

### **Challenges?**







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Module 7

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Specific mental health conditions



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# Specific mental health conditions

## Research task (Split into 5 groups):

- What is it?
- Signs/Symptoms?
- 3 places to sign post someone.

1. Depression
2. Anxiety
3. Psychosis
4. Eating Disorders
5. Self-harm
6. Suicide



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Depression - Signs & Symptoms

*...persistently sad and unhappy for a long period...*

- Withdrawal
- Irritability and difficulties concentrating
- Lack of energy, muscle aches and pains
- Poor sleep patterns
- Continuous low mood, feeling upset and tearful
- Changes in appetite or weight loss/gain



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Anxiety – Signs & Symptoms

*...feelings of unease...*

- Feeling irritable
- Withdrawal
- Irritability and difficulties concentrating
- Lack of energy, muscle aches and pains
- Poor sleep patterns
  
- Panic attacks
- unable to relax



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Eating Disorders – Signs & Symptoms

*...unhealthy attitude towards food...*

- Avoiding eating with others
- Obsessively exercising and sticking to a rigid diet
- Going to the bathroom a lot after eating
- Checking bodyweight and comparing to others
- Cutting food into small pieces or eating very slowly
- Dramatic weight loss



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Self Harm- Signs & Symptoms

*...intentionally damages or injures their body...*

- Cutting themselves
- Alcohol abuse
- Over-eating (increase in weight)
- Under eating (decrease in weight)
- Over exercising
- Hitting themselves
- Piercing skin
- Pulling out hair
- Interfering with wound healing (pulling off scabs, sprains, breaks)



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Self Harm- Signs & Symptoms

*...intentionally damages or injures their body...*

### Why?

- Response to intrusive thought
- Punish themselves
- Trying to regain a sense of control - **unlikely suicide attempt - don't confiscate blade - 'harm kits'**
- Cope with overwhelming distress
- Bereavement or the end of a relationship
- Cry for help



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Self Harm - Signs & Symptoms

*...intentionally damages or injures their body...*

### FAMH procedure?

- Remove them from the danger
- Do not ignore or overly focus on injuries
- Provide physical first aid (if needed)
- Listen (without judgement)
- assist them to obtain professional help



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Suicide

*...deliberately ends their own life...*

Males are 3.1x more likely to die by suicide in England than females

Reference: Samaritans



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Suicide - Signs & Risk Factors

*...deliberately ends their own life..*



- Recent trauma or life crisis
- Anxious, agitated or acting reckless
- Increasing the use of alcohol and drugs
- Withdrawing from activities and feeling isolated
- Threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- Being Bullied and discriminated against
- Talking about being a burden



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# Specific mental health conditions



## Suicide - Signs & Risk Factors

*...deliberately ends their own life..*



### FAMH procedure?

- FAMH action plan (C.A.R.E)
- Thoughts but no plan – GP, daily check ins
- Thoughts and considered a plan – Ill for advice, GP appointment
- Thoughts and plan – 999, crisis plan



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## Module 8

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# Mental Health in the Workplace (Reduce stigma)



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## Mental Health in the Workplace (Reduce stigma)

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Combat the Mental Health **Stigma**

### Why?

- People are not defined by a condition
- To achieve employment equality
- 50% of mental health problems are established by 14 years old.
- Poor mental health carries an economic and social due to work related absence
- **Too many people die by suicide because of the stigma**



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## Mental Health in the Workplace (Reduce stigma)

Combat the Mental Health **Stigma**

### How?

- Raise the importance of mental health and wellbeing
- Educate people
- Challenge misconceptions
- Empower people to get the support they deserve
- Provide mental health support for adults in the workplace



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## Mental Health in the Workplace (Reduce stigma)

How might a poor mental health culture affect someone at work?



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## Mental Health in the Workplace (Reduce stigma)

How can the **EMPLOYER** provide positive mental health culture in the workplace?

- Publish and use a mental health policy
- Implement a mental health action plan
- Provide mental health training
- Provide staff recognition and rewards
- Initiate social networks and activities
- Offer work flexibility where appropriate
- Provide clear roles and expectations
- Consider workload when implementing change
- Include employees in decision making



How can you as the **EMPLOYEE** help build a positive mental health culture at work?

- Educate themselves about mental health
- Model talking about their feelings
- Challenge workplace 'politics'
- Show interest in colleagues opinions, cultures and beliefs
- Build friendships
- Socialise outside of work
- Encourage colleagues to eat away from their desks, classrooms, work areas
- Help others and show kindness
- Be positive and don't contribute towards negative conversations



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## Module 9

# Revision Activity



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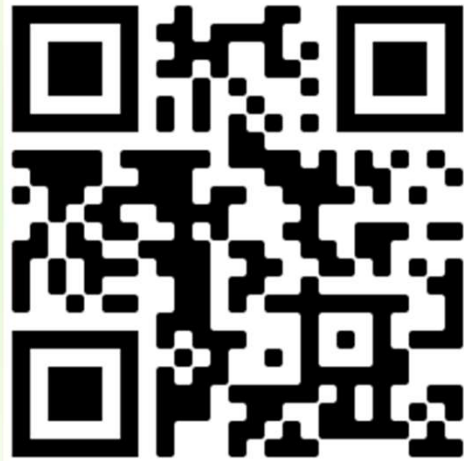
## Module 9

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- Scan QR code
- Enter game code
- Name
- Game on!

<https://play.kahoot.it/v2/?quizId=088166f6-8ca8-43cc-b157-0aa5146b3b7e>



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## Module 9

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Course  
assessments



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