

Level 2 Guide Booklet



Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand mental health and your role
2. Provide advice & support
3. Recognise & Managing stress
4. Signs & Symptoms of other mental health conditions
5. How drugs & alcohol impact mental health
6. Use first aid action plan
7. How to influence a positive mental health culture at work

Signs & Symptoms of Mental Health Conditions

Stress

Stress is the “adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. (HSE)

Signs & Symptoms:

- Emotional:
 - Anxious / low self-esteem / overwhelmed / angry / sad / constant worrying / lack of concentration / difficulty making decisions / racing thoughts / frustration
- Physical:
 - Headaches / tiredness / muscle tension / chest pain / nausea / dizziness.
- Behavioural:
 - Outbursts of anger / restlessness / constant worrying / social withdrawal / undereating or overeating / exercising less often than usual / changes in sex drive.

Strategies for managing stress:

- Realise when stress is becoming a problem and identify the underlying causes
- Build emotional strength and re-organise your lifestyle to tackle the causes
- Eat a healthy diet, avoid skipping meals and try to adopt regular eating patterns
- Make time for yourself to relax and socialise with friends and family
- Set yourself goals or challenges to help build your confidence
- Avoid unhealthy habits such as smoking or excessive alcohol consumption
- Help others in situations worse than yours can help to put your own problems into perspective
- Look for the positives in life and things for which you're grateful, rather than the causes of your stress

Depression

Depression is when you feel persistently sad and unhappy for a long period of time and affects your everyday life

Signs & Symptoms:

- Avoiding contact with family and friends
- Avoiding social events and neglecting hobbies
- Not doing as well at work
- Continuous low mood, feeling upset and tearful
- Feeling hopeless and low self-esteem
- Lack of motivation or interest in things
- Feeling irritable and intolerant of other people
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- Changes in appetite or weight loss/gain
- Lack of energy, muscle aches and pains
- Disturbed sleep patterns and low sex drive

Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal body response which creates feelings of unease, such as worry or fear. Anxiety can be mild or severe and affects everybody in different ways.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Feeling tense and unable to relax
- A sense of dread and feeling constantly 'on edge'
- Irritability and difficulties concentrating
- Social withdrawal
- Seeking lots of reassurance from others
- Dizziness and tiredness
- Strong, fast or irregular heartbeat
- Trembling or shaking
- Excessive sweating and shortness of breath
- Lack of energy, muscle aches and pains
- Dry mouth, feeling sick and headaches
- Panic attacks

Psychosis

Psychosis is a mental health problem that causes people to perceive or interpret things differently from those around them. This might involve hallucinations or delusions. Psychosis could be a sign of several mental health conditions.

Hallucinations – where a person hears, sees and, in some cases, feels, smells or tastes things that aren't there; a common hallucination is hearing voices.

Delusions – where a person has strong beliefs that aren't shared by others; a common delusion is someone believing there is a conspiracy to harm them.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Hallucinations
- Delusions
- Confused and disturbed thoughts
- Lack of insight and self-awareness
- Suspiciousness
- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Depression and anxiety
- Suicidal thoughts or actions

Eating disorders

(can develop from disordered eating)

An eating disorder is when you have an unhealthy attitude towards food which can take over your everyday life and make you very poorly.

Often eat too much or too little and become obsessed with your body weight and appearance. Anyone, regardless of their weight, age or gender can be seriously affected by an eating disorder.

Anorexia nervosa: When you try to keep your weight as low as possible by not eating enough food, exercising too much, or both.

Bulimia nervosa: When you try to control your body weight by binge eating and

then deliberately being sick or using laxatives (to help empty your bowel).

Binge eating disorder: When you regularly lose control of your eating, eat large portions of food all at once until you feel uncomfortably full, and are then often upset or guilty.

Other specified feeding or eating disorder (OSFED): If you are given a diagnosis of OSFED it means that you have an eating disorder but you don't meet all the criteria for a diagnosis of anorexia, bulimia or binge eating disorder.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Dramatic weight loss
- Lying about how much and when they've eaten
- Eating a lot of food very fast
- Going to the bathroom a lot after eating
- Feelings of anxiety about eating or digesting food
- Obsessively exercising and sticking to a rigid diet
- Cutting food into small pieces or eating very slowly
- Avoiding eating with others or eating in secret
- Checking bodyweight and comparing to others
- Developing physical health problems

Suicide

Suicide is when someone deliberately ends their own life. In 2017, 5,821 suicides were registered in the UK.

In 2017, 4,382 (75%) were male and 1,439 (25%) were female.

In 2020, 3,682 (75%) were male and 1,230 (25%) were female.

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

People ages 45-49 are most at risk.

Reference: Samaritans – latest statistics for the UK and Republic of Ireland (September 2018)

Leading Causes of deaths in 2020:

- Males & Females ages 5-19 Intentional self-harm; and event of undetermined intent (17.1% Males/ 12.4% Females of all deaths)
- Males & Females ages 20-34 Intentional self-harm; and event of undetermined intent (25.6% Males/ 16.5% Females of all deaths)
- Males aged 35 to 49 years - accidental poisoning (12.3% of all deaths)

Suicide awareness and advice (This Morning Men): [Suicide Awareness | This Morning](#)

Risk Factors:

Previous suicide attempts

Mental health problems

Physical, sexual or emotional abuse

Losing a loved one to suicide

Drug and alcohol misuse / addiction

Imprisonment

Bullying and discrimination

Financial problems or homelessness

warning signs:

- Threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- Talking or writing about dying, death or suicide
- Making financial preparations such as writing or updating a will
- Recent trauma or life crisis such as the death of a loved one
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about being a burden or nuisance to others
- Anxious, agitated or acting reckless
- Increasing the use of alcohol and drugs
- Withdrawing from activities and feeling isolated

Self-Harm

Self-harm is when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body.

It's usually a way of coping with, or expressing overwhelming emotional distress.

Reasons why people self-harm:

- Relieving distressful emotions
- Trying to regain a sense of control
- A way of communicating their distress (cry for help)
- Bereavement or the end of a relationship
- Physical or sexual abuse
- A way of punishing themselves
- Confusion about sexuality
- Being bullied or having difficult relationships
- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Relieving unbearable tension
- A response to intrusive thoughts

Drugs and Alcohol

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

Leading Causes of deaths in Males ages 35 to 49 in 2020:

Males aged 35 to 49 years - accidental poisoning (12.3% of all deaths)

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.)

FAMH C.A.R.E PLAN

Check for risk of harm (Suicidal thoughts?)

- Saying they want to end their life or writing about hurting themselves
- Social Withdrawal & Mood swings
- Increased use of alcohol and/or drugs
- Saying negative things about themselves
- WHAT TO DO:
 - Immediate high risk - call 999 or take straight to A&E
 - Non-life threatening - Friend or family / samaritans / GP / NHS -111 / Mind / Education Support

Apply non-judgemental communication

- Active listening
- Open body language
- Empathy NOT sympathy
- Repeat back what they have said (to clarify and show you are listening)

Reassure and provide information

- Remind them they are not alone
- Let them know they can speak to you whenever they would like to
- Acknowledge their courage

Encourage professional support

- Ask if they have felt like this before - if so when helped last time?
- Person will need to make this decision themselves to get support
- Local GP good starting point / Charities / Trained therapists



Free listening services

Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the Shout Crisis Text Line

Call 116 123 to talk to Samaritans

Email jo@samaritans.org - reply within 24 hours

Further support:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health>

<https://www.headstogether.org.uk/>

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>

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