

Protective Factors for Mental Health



KEY ISSUES

Anxiety & Depression

Anxiety is often described as a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome.

Symptoms can sometimes include feeling frightened, nervous or panicky all the time, getting down or depressed. The person may have difficulty sleeping, low appetite, lack of concentration, be tired and irritable. They can sometimes get palpitations – when the heart feels like its racing which can manifest itself in a physical panic attack.

Depression is a mental health condition where a person has a long lasting low mood, and/or may lose pleasure or interest in normal daily activities. Physical symptoms such as lack of energy, extreme fatigue, lack of sleep or excessive sleep, loss of appetite or increased appetite which can lead to significant weight loss or weight gain can often occur. Emotional symptoms can include feelings of worthlessness, impaired concentration, social isolation and lack of interest in normal daily activities and often no pleasure in life. Depression goes beyond feeling stressed as stress is usually short term bouts which go away when the external pressure (relationships, money worries etc.) causing it diminishes, whereas depression goes beyond just feeling 'blue'.

Depression and Anxiety can and often does go 'hand in hand' as depression can make you feel anxious and anxiety can often make you depressed. It is important that you seek professional help if you feel you may be depressed or your anxiety is impacting on your daily life. Your G.P or Healthcare professional will discuss with you and agree the best treatment options which can include talking therapies and/or medication.

Useful resource:
Mental Health Foundation: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/a/anxiety>
Steps for Stress <http://stepsforstress.org/>

Useful websites:
www.mentalhealth.org.uk
NHS Inform: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health>

Recommended training:
Understanding mental health e-learning module www.northlanmindset.org.uk
Scottish Mental Health First Aid Training: <http://www.smhfa.com/index.aspx>

Suicide

Suicidal thoughts are quite common but we tend not to talk about them. It can be embarrassing or frightening to tell someone else about such private thoughts.

Talking openly about thoughts of dying, is a way to reduce the stigma which prevents many people from seeking help or talking about how they feel. If you suspect someone may be feeling suicidal, ask them – it could save their life.

Useful resource:
The art of conversation: <http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/6021-Art%20of%20Conversation.pdf>

Useful websites:
<http://www.chooselife.net/>
<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/problemsdisorders/feelingoverwhelmed.aspx>

Recommended training:
SafeTALK
Applied Suicide Intervention and Skills training (ASIST)

Loneliness & Isolation

Loneliness can affect people at any age, but we often think of loneliness as only affecting the elderly population.

Loneliness cuts across all ages and stages in life. As many as 1 in 8 adults – around 7,000,000 people in the UK, do not have a close friend or confidant. Although most studies of the effects of loneliness have looked only at older people, Dr. Holt-Lunstad, who with colleagues has analysed 70 studies encompassing 3.4 million people, said that the prevalence of loneliness peaks in adolescents and young adults, then again in the older adults.

Feeling lonely isn't in itself a mental health problem, but the two are strongly linked. Having a mental health problem increases your chance of feeling lonely, and feeling lonely can have a negative impact on your mental health. The impact that loneliness and social isolation can have on the physical, mental and social health of isolated older people is well documented. The Campaign to End Loneliness points to research which shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.¹ Lonely individuals are more likely to visit their GP, use more medication or self medicate and have a higher incidence of falls.

Useful resource:
Campaign to End Loneliness; <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/>
Toolkit – Campaign to end loneliness; <https://campaigntoendloneliness.org/guidance/>

Useful websites:
MIND Charity; <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/loneliness/#.WvroSnFDbg>
NHS Choices; <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/loneliness-in-older-people/>

Recommended training:
Raising Awareness: loneliness, isolation and mental health

Maternal Mental Health

Up to 1 in 5 women and 1 in 10 men are affected by mental health problems during pregnancy and the first year after birth.

Unfortunately, only 50% of these are diagnosed. Without appropriate treatment, the negative impact of mental health problems during the perinatal period is enormous and can have long-lasting consequences on not only women, but their partners and children too. However, this is not inevitable. When problems are diagnosed early and treatment offered promptly, these effects can be lessened.

Sometimes there is an obvious reason for perinatal depression (PND), but not always. You may feel distressed, or guilty for feeling like this, as you expected to be happy about having a baby. However, PND can happen to anyone and it is not your fault.

It's never too late to seek help. Even if you have been depressed for a while, you can get better. The help you need depends on how severe your illness is. Mild PND can be helped by increased support from family and friends. Things you can try yourself include: talking to your family and friends about your feelings and what they can do to help; making time for yourself to do things you enjoy; resting whenever you get the chance and getting as much sleep as you can at night; as well as exercising regularly and eating a healthy diet. With the right support most women make a full recovery.

If you are more unwell, you will need help from your GP and health visitor. If your PND is severe, you may need care and treatment from a mental health service.

We often forget that fathers may be affected as well; encourage your partner to seek help if you think they might be having problems. Don't struggle alone hoping that the problem will go away.

Useful resource:
Association for Post Natal Illness: <https://apni.org/>
Perinatal Mental Health Toolkit; <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/resources/toolkits/perinatal-mental-health-toolkit.aspx>

Useful websites:
Panda Foundation: <http://www.pandasfoundation.org.uk/>
Best Beginnings: Out of the Blue Campaign to improve awareness and access to help for perinatal mental health problems, including informative videos. <https://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/>

Recommended training:
Understanding Maternal Mental Health e-module; <http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/maternalhealth/learning/maternal-mental-health.aspx>
Raising Awareness: Basic mental health

Self Harm

Self-injury is a coping mechanism. An individual harms their physical self to deal with emotional pain, or to break feelings of numbness by arousing sensation.

Self-harm can happen at any age, but is most common in people aged 11-25. Self-harm or self-injury can be many things that people do to themselves in a deliberate and often hidden way like cutting, burning, overdosing, scratching, biting, hair pulling and breaking bones. Sometimes people think they are the only ones doing it but research shows that it is very common. People self-injure for all sorts of reasons, but often it is because feelings like anger, sadness and fear have got too painful to deal with.

Useful resource:
The Truth About Self Harm
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/truth-about-self-harm>

Useful websites:
<http://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk/>

Recommended training:
Self Harm e-learning module <http://www.selfharmlifelines.org.uk/register.html>
What's the Harm: Learning About Self harm

Loss & Bereavement

Change, loss and grief are universal human experiences. Most people grieve when they lose something or someone important to them.

The way grief affects people depends on lots of things, including what kind of loss they have suffered, their upbringing, their beliefs or religion, age, their relationships, and their physical and mental health. There may be a time in a person's life when they need some support to come to terms with a loss or bereavement, knowing what to say or where to signpost onto services can really help.

Useful resource:
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Bereavement Services and Resources
<http://www.nhs.gov.uk/your-health/health-services/bereavement-services/bereavement/#>
Coping with Grief Tip Card
<http://wellbeing-glasgow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Coping-with-Grief-Tip-Cards.pdf>

Useful websites:
<http://www.crusescotland.org.uk/>
<http://www.sad.scot.nhs.uk/bereavement/>

Recommended training:
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HEALTHY MINDS
A GUIDE TO PROTECTING AND PROMOTING GOOD ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH – DISPELLING THE MYTHS!

ONLY CERTAIN KINDS OF PEOPLE DEVELOP MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

FALSE

Anyone can develop a mental health problem

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

TRUE

In the course of a year, 1 in 4 people will suffer some kind of mental health problem. Many of these problems are mild and temporary and are often related to life circumstances

YOU CANNOT RECOVER FROM A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM

FALSE

The majority of people who experience a mental health problem do, with help, make a complete recovery

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT IT

TRUE

Support is a positive factor in preventing mental health problems and promoting recovery

Contact US...

For more information on adult mental health in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, please contact:

Heather Sloan
Mental Health Improvement Team,
Commonwealth House,
32 Albion Street
Glasgow G1 1LH

0141 287 0480
Email: heather.sloan@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Need to talk?

If you need to talk to somebody about your mental health, contact:

Breathing Space
0800 83 85 87

Samaritans
116 123

Online sign language video relay service:
<https://contactscotland-bsl.org/>



www.ayemind.com

Healthy Minds: Adult Mental Health Improvement Framework

Respond Better to Distress

Improve responses to people in distress, both from services and wider community, including action to prevent suicide and better support for people who self harm

Promote Wellbeing for People with Long Term Conditions

Promote holistic health for people with long term conditions – “healthy body, healthy mind”, promote recovery approaches and social inclusion

Promote Wellbeing and Resilience with People & Communities

Develop social connection, tackle isolation, build resilience, strengthen use of community assets - including social prescribing, strengthen self care and peer support

Promote Wellbeing and Resilience through Work

Promote mental health, wellbeing and resilience at work; address employability issues, including those affected by mental ill health

Promote Positive Attitudes, Challenge Stigma and Discrimination

Promote positive attitudes to mental health and to people with mental illness, raise awareness of mental health issues, reduce stigma and discrimination and promote inclusion, including better access to mainstream services

Tackle Underlying Determinants and Promote Equity

Address underlying determinants of good mental health, including financial inclusion, nurturing early years, healthy environments, active citizenship and participation, and ensure focus on promoting wellbeing of diverse communities

What can your organisation do to implement the framework?

- Link with your local choose life programme
- Undertake a basic training needs assessment to identify what mental health training staff require
- Develop and implement robust organisation policies that protect and promote mental health and wellbeing and equip staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence to respond if an individual presents in distress or has suicidal ideation

- Link with health social care services supporting those with long term conditions to ensure equitable access to supports and services
- Link with your primary community mental health team to promote and encourage referrals/signposting to your organisation
- Link with your local carers centre to raise awareness of the supports/services available to those with a caring role

- Find out what is happening and available in your community to support mental health and wellbeing. Make links with local third sector partners
- Work in partnership with organisations to share resources, information and to encourage cross agency signposting and referrals
- Establish links with your local health improvement team
- Utilise social media as a resource to promote mental health and wellbeing

- Find out what financial inclusion services are available to your local community and how to refer to these
- Link with your local job centre to encourage referral/signposting to your organisation
- Access the healthy working lives programme to support the mental health and wellbeing of your staff

- Find out if there is an anti-stigma alliance in your community that you can join/link to
- Engage, promote and participate in the Scottish mental health arts festival and other awareness raising mental health campaigns
- Access information and resources from national organisations such as See Me to support stigma work

- Engage with diverse communities and population groups experiencing inequalities in mental health eg LGBT, BME
- Support individuals and groups to access local and relevant programs eg parenting

Top 10 tips for Resilience

R **Remain Positive** Look towards the future, think of what you want from life.

E **Establish Realistic & Achievable Goals** This helps give you focus.

S **Strategies** Plan your coping strategies. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

I **Identify** Identify your strengths and be confident in yourself.

L **Learn from Experience** Learn from experience and move on.

I **Introduce** Introduce a positive way of thinking. Focus on the good things in your life.

E **Enjoy** Make time to do the things you enjoy.

N **Needs** Take care of yourself. Keep healthy and fit.

C **Connect** Build healthy relationships with your family, friends and wider circles.

E **Embrace Change** Don't dwell on the past. Put your energy into the present to shape your future.