

# Loneliness and Isolation

# Overview

- What do we mean by loneliness and isolation?
- What can cause people to become socially isolated?
- The effects of loneliness and isolation on mental health
- How can we address loneliness and isolation?
- Resources and supports
- Looking after yourself

# Loneliness and Isolation: Same or different?

- Loneliness and isolation are often used interchangeably
- Social isolation is determined by the number of social relationships and contacts across groups and communities
- Loneliness is based on an individual's perception of the number and /or quality of social connections
- Lack of a useful role in society can also cause feelings of loneliness

- It is possible for an individual to be socially isolated without feeling lonely, likewise is it possible for an individual to feel lonely without being socially isolated

# Statistics

- 1 in 10 people in Scotland have reported often feeling lonely
- 100,000 older people in Scotland feel lonely all or most of the time.
- Lacking social connections is as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day
- Childline counselled over 5,000 children about loneliness, sadness and isolation

# What can cause people to become socially isolated?

- Getting older
- Health
- Death of a loved one/relative
- Moving to a new country
- Bullying
- Social Media
- Income
- Fear
- Social anxiety
- Disability
- Moving house
- Domestic Abuse
- Family relationships
- Access to transport

# What can be the effects of loneliness and isolation on health?

- Depression
- Dementia
- Anxiety
- Self harm
- Physically inactive
- Increase alcohol
- Self medicate
- Coronary heart disease
- Obesity
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Stroke
- Frequent use of public services due to lack of support networks

# How can we address loneliness and social isolation?

- Enable individuals to maintain existing relationships
- Create new connections
- Access to mental health resources and supports



# Looking after yourself

Things I can do

.....by myself

.....with others

People I can talk to.....