

Mental Health Fact Sheet

What is Mental Health?

Mental health is also known as ‘emotional health’ or ‘well-being’ and is just as important as physical health.

Good mental health enables you to think, feel and react in the ways that you need to live your life.

Poor mental health can make thinking, feeling, or reacting become difficult to cope with.

Feelings of stress often pass but they can develop into a serious problem. Common problems include depression and anxiety. Rarer problems include schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

Causes of Mental Health Problems

Each person’s experience of mental ill health is unique to them. Mental health issues can develop at any time and can affect individuals very differently. Mental health and wellbeing are often determined by a combination of these common factors:

- Biological – physical health, brain function, genetics, diet, sleep
- Psychological – beliefs, trauma, stress, stigma, and discrimination
- Social – relationships, family, culture, loneliness, debt, housing

Support and Treatment

An early diagnosis is important in order for individuals to have a significant and life-changing impact on their mental wellbeing. An early diagnosis can also provide:

- Improved diagnosis and treatment
- GP support for individuals to make informed choices
- Timely and targeted referrals to specialist care and support services
- Improved confidence and engagement of care providers
- Positive outcomes for families and children of individuals with a mental health condition

There are many different treatment options in mental health. The treatment will depend on what is best for the type of problem and other factors such as the individual's preferences and needs. Treatment options include:

- Medication – this is not used to treat all types of mental ill health; the medication that is prescribed will depend on the diagnosis
- Therapy – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy CBT, Psychotherapy, Family Therapy
- Crisis intervention - Crisis support teams can help individuals to manage their medication and provide practical and emotional support to prevent further escalation of the crisis.
- Practical support - Trained support workers support individuals to maintain their living skills and develop new skills to assist them to live as independently as possible.

Legislation

Legislation in the UK relevant to mental health includes:

Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended by the Mental Health Act 2007)	UK
Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003	Care Act 2014
Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986	Equality Act 2010
Mental Capacity Act 2005 (England and Wales)	Children and Families Act 2014
Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000	Human Rights Act 1998
Mental Capacity Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	

Useful links

NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/>

Mind - <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/>

Mental Health Foundation - <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>