

Mariam Nakatudde Buyana Foundation

Mental Health Webinar



BE BOLD BE BIRMINGHAM



Mental Health in Winter – a time to be alert!



Everyone has down days, but when someone is feeling low, or have been feeling worried for weeks or even months, it could be a sign of mental health issues.

. Some of this can be because of SAD or seasonal affective disorder which affects more than 2 million people in Uganda.

What do we mean by mental health?

- Everybody has mental health and it's important that we take care of it. Just like our physical health.
- Our mental health affects how we think, feel and act in our daily lives.
- Our mental health can go through periods of ups and downs

Poor Mental Health

Can make it difficult to cope with our daily lives and feel just as bad as physical illness



Affects around 1 in 4 people every year



Can include anxiety, depression, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder

How many people are affected by mental health?

In the Uganda , 50% of people are estimated to have a common mental health disorder (2017)

- 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in Uganda [1].
- 1 in 6 people report experiencing a common mental health problem (like anxiety and depression) in any given week in Uganda .

Suicidal thoughts and self-harm aren't mental health diagnoses. But they are related to mental health. Over the course of someone's lifetime [2]:

- 1 in 5 people have suicidal thoughts
- 1 in 14 people self-harm
- 1 in 15 people attempt suicide.

What can impact our mental health?

Loneliness

Loneliness has worsened during the Covid-19 pandemic and can be particularly difficult during the winter months. 7.2% of people in a 2021 study felt lonely all or most of the time.

Bereavement

Covid-19 has led to a disproportionate amount of bereavement.

Grieving can be emotionally overwhelming and impact our mental health.

Life challenges

Challenges in our every day life can often affect our mental health, including the loss of a job or relationship, work stress, housing situation, or financial problems.

Physical health

Poor physical health, whether temporary or a long-term condition, often impacts how we feel. Getting the right amount of sleep can have huge benefits for our mental health.

Our environment

Family, relationships and friendships can impact how we feel, and so can the world around us; for example the weather, national concerns or global issues.

Social media

People who use over 2 hours of social media a day are more likely to report poor mental health.

Use of social media is linked to anxiety, low self-esteem and feeling self-conscious.

Physical health and mental health – both are important!

Mental health and physical health are closely connected. People living with a physical health problem are twice as likely to have poor mental health, and this can have a detrimental effect on their physical condition.

And many people living with mental health difficulties struggle with their physical health. In fact, people living with a severe mental illness have a life expectancy that's 15-20 years shorter than those without.

So it's important that people working to support physical health don't forget about mental health, and similarly mental health professionals need to support physical health as well in those they support.

There is some overlap of symptoms between anxiety and depression, these are the most common mental health conditions.

(*) Somatic complaints:
unexplained physical complaints
such as headache, stomach
ache, chronic pain.

ANXIETY

trembling
rapid heart rate
palpitations
increased
breathing rate
sweating
muscle tension
feeling nervous
hypervigilance
agoraphobia
panic
sense of
impending danger



excessive
worry
somatic complaints*
difficulty with thinking,
concentration or
decision-making
restlessness
agitation
appetite or
sleep disturbances
social withdrawal



DEPRESSION

fatigue
irritability
loss of interest
in activities
guilt
low self-esteem
worthlessness
helplessness
hopelessness
prolonged grief
persistent sadness
suicidal thoughts

Signs of anxiety and depression

Anxiety

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried or afraid about a situation.

It's our bodies' natural response to things we perceive as dangerous and threatening.

Physical signs of anxiety

Physical symptoms may include fast breathing and heart rate, a tight chest, muscle aches, headache, nausea, dizziness and sweating.

Emotional signs of anxiety

People may experience frequent, uncontrollable worrying and feelings of dread. They may feel tense, restless, irritable or 'spaced out' and disconnected.

Depression

Depression is a low mood that can last a long time or keep returning, affecting your everyday life.

Physical signs of depression

People may feel low and easily upset, or tired and lethargic. They might feel even more sensitive than usual to criticism or external circumstances.

Emotional signs of depression

Depression often feels like a huge weight on top of you that stops you from moving, that follows you around everywhere you go.

Looking after your mental health

Top tips to improve your mental wellbeing

- Write (or type) your thoughts and feelings in a journal or diary
- Plan some recovery time to follow an upcoming difficult period
- Even if you're having trouble sleeping, you can still rest your body and mind
- Talk to your peers, family or friends about how you're feeling
- Keep active, enjoy the outdoors and eat regularly



Keep a diary to avoid 'bottling things up'



Plan ahead for difficult times



Relax & rest even if you can't sleep



Talk to someone



Take care of your physical health

What to do in a crisis

- If urgent mental health help is needed you can ring or **0800 200200** or advice and support.
- This line is **available 24 hours, 7 days a week** and can be used whether you are known to our services or not.
- You can also email [mental health @mental health ug.org](mailto:mental_health@mental_health_ug.org) the webchat
- If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Coping during a crisis

The mental health charity Mind has information on [ways to help yourself cope during a crisis](#). This includes calming exercises and a tool to get you through the next few hours.

Talk to members of your community

Is a single dad aware of what specialist support may be available?

Is an older neighbour living alone and struggling with feelings of loneliness?

Is a neighbour struggling with a relationship break-up and needs a friendly chat?

Is a mum at the school gate having difficulty finding time for outside interests?

Speaking about the impact of mental health on everybody helps to raise awareness and reduce shame and stigma

Do you know an unpaid carer who could find themselves feeling isolated as a result of their caring role?

Are childcare costs impacting a parent's decision around changing their employment situation?

Do rising rent costs may mean someone may be feeling insecure about their housing situation?

Are financial troubles causing chronic stress and anxiety for a colleague?

How can you provide brief support in everyday interactions?

- Provide a **brief intervention**
- Use open questions with the **Ask, Assist, Act** model

Use an example: For non-urgent mental health support

Ask

How are you?

How are you feeling at the moment?

What's been happening for you recently?

Assist

You mentioned you are feeling low, do you know why you feel like that?

Would you like some more information on services that may help you?

Act

- **Mind** The charity for better mental health' has an extensive range of self help resources available.
- The **NHS** has a range of self-help tools available.
- Birmingham City Council **Wellbeing resources** and support gives access to **Mental Health Services**.
- Their GP may be able to support them in various ways.

How can you provide brief support in everyday interactions?

- Provide a **brief intervention**
- Use open questions with the **Ask, Assist, Act** model

Use an example: For a neighbour who's looking tired

Ask

How are you?

Are you sleeping okay?

Are you feeling tired?

Assist

Do you know why you're not sleeping well?

Are you getting enough rest?

Would you like any information about mindfulness?

Act

Suggest [practical tips](#) to help sleeping.

Encourage them to try something that they find relaxing or learn some new relaxation techniques.

Explain that whilst mindfulness can be taught in person, there are a range of free and paid apps and [resources](#)

Want to learn more?

- MN Buyana Foundation offers a range of sessions, which are open to service users, their carers and families, members of the Trust and staff.
- [Mental Health First Aid Uganda](#) offers a variety of training courses which teaches people how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue.
- MN Buyana [Foundation Uganda](#) has a selection of mental health education and training opportunities and information. This enables health and care professionals to have an awareness of mental health needs and how they may affect their patients and service users.
- [and professionals](#) providing e-learning to educate and train the health and care workforce.

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What to do in a crisis

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- This line is **available 24 hours, 7 days a week** and can be used whether you are known to our services or not.
- If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Coping during a crisis

The mental health charity Mind has information on [ways to help yourself cope during a crisis](#). This includes calming exercises and a tool to get you through the next few hours.

[Campaign Against Living Miserably \(CALM\)](#) stands together with everyone who's struggling with life, no matter who they are, where they're from or what they're going through.

[Mind](#) provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem & campaigns to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding

[Samaritans](#) are available day or night, for anyone who's struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure.

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Connect to specific support for physical health

Activity resources

There are lots of *things you can do to keep physically active* besides exercise.

The Active Wellbeing Society run free, accessible peer support groups and activities across Birmingham including:

- Walk and Talk sessions
- Cycling groups
- Gardening groups

Sleep resources

If you're not getting 7 hours sleep, try moving more or reducing caffeine intake and screen time close to bedtime to help improve your sleep

For further self-help tips to sleep better visit the MN BUYANA 's *self-help tips to fight tiredness* and *practical tips* to help sleeping

Our environment
support



Case study 2

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Thank you for being an MN Buyana Foundation

Champion!



We look forward to working together to improve the wellbeing of everyone in Uganda

By volunteering to receive the latest health information, you can use these messages to help you support yourself, your family, your friends and your wider community with:

- **Monthly themed webinars**
- **Tailored resource packs**
- **Health awareness training**

If you know someone else who might like to get involved, they can read more about the programme at MN BUYANA Foundation



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birmingham.gov.uk

Thank you for your time!



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