

CACHE Level 2

Certificate in Understanding Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Advocacy in the Workplace

TYPES OF MENTAL HEALTH

PHYSICAL HEALTH

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

COMMUNICATION

SUPPORT

GUIDANCE

Workbook

How to use your learning materials

This course is delivered on a flexible learning basis. This means that most of your study will take place away from your Assessor/Tutor. It helps to carefully plan your studying so that you get the most out of your course. We have put together some handy tips for you below.

Study Guidance

- Try to plan an outline timetable of when and where you will study.
- Try to complete your work in a quiet environment where you are unlikely to be distracted.
- Set realistic goals and deadlines for the various elements of your course.
- Plan what you are going to study during each session, and try and achieve this each time.
- After each session, reflect on what you have achieved and plan what you hope to complete next time.
- Remember that not only do you have the support of your Assessor/Tutor, but it is likely that your family, friends and work colleagues will also be willing to help.

Assessor/Tutor Support

Your Assessor/Tutor will be available to support and guide you through the programme. They are experts in your area of study and are experienced in helping many different types of learners.

They can help you to improve the standard of work you submit and will give you useful feedback on areas in which you have excelled, as well as where you can improve.

Remember to listen to, or read, their feedback carefully. Ask if you are unsure about any of the feedback you receive, as your Assessor/Tutor is there to help.

Make note of any tips they give. Refer to the learning materials, as they contain the information you need to complete the end-of-unit assessments.

Look out for areas in which you can improve, and set yourself an action plan to make sure you complete the required work.

Take positive feedback on board; this demonstrates you are doing things right and have a good understanding of the subject area.

Use the feedback to avoid repeating any mistakes you may have made.

Enjoy your studies!

CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Advocacy in the Workplace

Workbook

Workbook Contents

In this workbook, you will learn about the different types of mental ill health and the factors that contribute to mental ill health. You will explore the signs and indicators of mental health and how you can support individuals with mental health issues and those facing mental health crises. You will find out when it is appropriate to refer an individual to others in relation to mental health issues. You will also learn about the perceptions of and attitudes to mental health and how mental health impacts on those around the individual. You will look at how to promote a mentally healthy environment and consider ways to support your own mental health.

Contents

This workbook contains four sections:

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Each section has a corresponding assessment that must be completed in order to achieve this part of the programme.

The assessments for this workbook can be found in:

Assessment

When you have completed this workbook, you should attempt the assessment. Your Assessor/Tutor will then give you detailed written feedback on your progress.

Remember that your assessment answers should be written in your own words. You should not copy answers directly from the workbooks.

The form is titled 'Assessment' and includes sections for 'Learner contact details' (Name, Contact address, Postcode, Contact number), 'Learner declaration' (I confirm that the answers in Assessment were completed by me, represent my own ideas and are my own work. Learner signature, Assessment date), and 'If you need any help in completing these Assessments, refer to the relevant section within Workbook, or contact your Assessor/Tutor.' It also includes a section for 'Please tick one of the boxes below to show what your status will be when you complete this course.' with options like EMP 1 in paid employment for 16 hours or more, EMP 2 In paid employment for less than 16 hours per week, EMP 3 Self-employed for 16 hours or more per weeks, EMP 5 Self-employed for less than 16 hours per weeks, NFE 1 Not in paid employment, looking for work and available to start work (including retired), NFE 2 Not in paid employment, not looking for work and not available to start work (including retired), and VOL 1 Voluntary work. There are also boxes for EUU 1 Gap year before, EUU 2 Apprenticeship, EUU 3 Higher apprenticeship, EUU 4 Other FE (Full-time), EUU 5 Other FE (Part-time), and OHR # (please state).

Upon successful completion of this qualification, learners will be awarded the NCFE CACHE Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Advocacy in the Workplace (QRN: 603/5148/2). This CACHE branded qualification is certificated by the Awarding Organisation NCFE.

Section 1: Exploring mental health

In this section, you will learn about what is meant by mental health and mental ill health and the factors that can increase the risk of mental ill health. You will look at examples of different types of mental ill health and the signs and indicators that may show that an individual is experiencing mental health problems. Finally, you will find out about the steps you can take to support an individual who may be facing a mental health crisis.

Definitions of mental health and mental ill health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 1.

Mental health can be quite difficult to define because a person's mental health issues, types of problems and the impact these have upon their life, family and friends are individual and specific to them. In other words, no two mental health problems will be experienced or managed in the same way.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) acknowledges that there is no 'official' definition of the term, but they define mental health as:

'A state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.'

The term mental health refers to the ability to function and deal with daily life. An example of good mental health would be a person who has a positive sense of who they are and the ability to deal with life on a daily basis. So mental health includes being able to:

- cope with the demands of everyday life
- make relationships and participate in society
- make sense of life and the world around you
- experience, understand and express emotions and feelings
- think clearly, solve problems and make sound decisions

Mental ill health is the absence of some or all of these positive factors on an ongoing basis. Mental ill health refers to a range of mental health conditions that affect an individual's mood, thinking and behaviour. Mental ill health can be any condition that disrupts an individual's everyday life. Examples include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and addictive behaviour. Everyone may have bad days occasionally where they feel they cannot cope, but for individuals experiencing mental ill health, most days will be like this.

Section 1: Exploring mental health



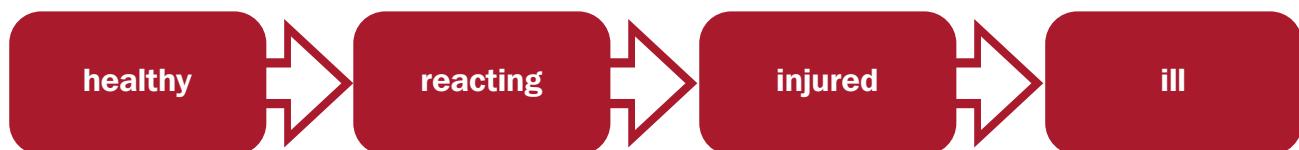
Did you know?

One in four people worldwide will experience a mental health problem at some point in their lives.

The mental health continuum

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 2.

Mental health professionals often refer to the ‘mental health continuum’. What this means is that mental health can be thought of as a scale that moves from healthy to ill. Everyone’s mental health is somewhere along this scale or continuum.



The diagram shows a simple representation of the continuum. At the ‘healthy’ end of the continuum an individual functions normally and at the ‘ill’ end they are experiencing severe mental distress which affects their daily life and may have been diagnosed with a mental disorder. The ‘reacting’ stage represents an individual experiencing temporary and reversible mental distress - for example, in response to a particularly stressful situation such as bereavement or sudden unemployment. At the ‘injured’ stage, there is severe and persistent distress that could impact on their daily life and lead to a mental disorder. The main point here is that mental health is not simply a dual state representing healthy or ill but a continuous spectrum.



Section 1: Exploring mental health

Factors that increase the risk of mental health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 3.

There are a number of risk factors that can increase the risk of an individual experiencing mental ill health. Factors may be temporary, causing short-term mental ill health or distress, or long-term, leading to more serious mental disorder. The risk factors may arise from inside the learning or work environment or from outside this environment in the individual's home and social life. Factors outside the learning or work environment may not appear to be the concern of educators and managers but may affect the individual's learning and/or work. It is important that educators and managers consider the support they can give to individuals even where factors are outside of learning or workplace control. Often it is a combination of factors from inside and outside the workplace that lead to stress, anxiety and ultimately mental ill health.

Did you know?



The World Health Organisation say that “work is good for mental health, but a negative working environment can lead to physical and mental health problems”.

Factors inside the learning or work environment

Risk factors for mental ill health in the learning or work environment include:

- Health and safety policies that are missing or inadequate so that stress and other health and safety issues in the workplace/learning environment are not identified and managed properly.
- Poor communication which means individuals do not feel that they know what they need to do in the work or learning environment and do not feel supported.
- Poor management practices such as failing to explain roles and responsibilities, unclear reporting lines, failure to provide sufficient resources and failure to manage staff/learners effectively.
- Limited participation of individuals in decision-making and limited control over their own work/learning.
- Inflexible working/study hours which do not support individuals in managing work/life balance.

Section 1: Exploring mental health

- Unclear tasks or objectives so individuals do not know what they need to do.
- Giving individuals tasks which are unsuitable for their competencies or insufficient training, knowledge and support with tasks which may lead to non-achievement of objectives.
- High or unrelenting workloads or study requirements which mean individuals do not have time to complete tasks.
- Unfair distribution of group work where one person is not doing their job properly and others have to compensate for them.
- Bullying and psychological harassment.

Factors outside the learning or work environment

Risk factors for mental ill health outside the learning or work environment include:

- Individual vulnerability such as low self-esteem and insecurity or inadequate coping mechanisms.
- Lifestyle choices, for example, alcohol or drug use which can put individuals at risk of developing mental health problems.
- Family history of mental ill health which may be hereditary.
- Problems at home such as domestic violence, neglect, divorce or family breakdown.
- Feeling cut off from family and friends or from the local community which can lead to feelings of isolation or rejection.
- Negative or traumatic life experiences such as unemployment, homelessness, bereavement, sudden illness, or being assaulted or abused.
- Big life changes even where these are positive such as getting married, having children or moving home which can be stressful for individuals.
- Financial worries arising from unemployment, redundancy, business failure, mounting debt or worries about the rising cost of living.
- Community or local environmental problems such as prejudice and discrimination, violence and crime or poor living conditions.

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Jenny's story

Jenny is a teacher in a big comprehensive school. After a fellow teacher left and was not replaced due to lack of funding, Jenny was given additional teaching hours. While she can manage the teaching, she's finding it hard to keep up with all the marking and additional tasks required by her job. Jenny spoke to her manager who told her to 'just get on with it'. She feels she has no support in the workplace and is finding the job extremely stressful. She is staying up late to mark books and complete administration work which means she isn't getting enough sleep. Then her mother died, and her manager made a fuss about her having time off to grieve and to support other family members. Jenny went to her doctor with symptoms of stress and anxiety and is now signed off work.



Knowledge Activity 1: Identify the long-term and temporary risk factors for Jenny and whether they are from inside or outside the work environment.

It is a mixture of factors that are affecting Jenny's mental health. She is under too much pressure at work because she has been given too much work and she is not receiving the right support from her manager. This is likely to be a long-term issue. The death of her mother has added to her distress and, whilst the immediate situation of the death is a temporary issue – she needs to take time off on a short-term basis – added to the other problems and her manager's poor attitude, it has led to her being signed off work sick.

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The effects of physical health on mental health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 4.

It has long been recognised by medical professionals that there is a link between physical and mental health. Individuals who feel well physically are more able to cope with the mental strains and stresses of everyday life.



Knowledge Activity 2: Describe how you feel about life when you are physically well and how you feel when you are ill.

When they are ill, most people will find that they also feel a bit sad and sorry for themselves. They are less able to cope with everyday tasks and might be irritable towards others. Often, they just want to curl up in bed! Where physical health problems are long-term, individuals may become depressed.



Did you know?

Around 30 per cent of all people with a long-term physical health condition also have a mental health problem, most commonly depression/anxiety.

(The King's Fund <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/time-think-differently/trends-disease-and-disability-mental-physical-health>)

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By looking after physical health, we also protect our mental health, and lifestyle factors have an impact on our mental well-being. Lifestyle factors include:

- Physical activity and being outdoors – exercise leads to the brain producing more serotonin which is a chemical in the body that lifts our moods and makes us feel better. In addition, exercise keeps the body fit and helps weight loss which makes people feel more positive. There is some evidence that being outdoors also lifts a person's mood so exercising outside may bring even more benefit for well-being.
- Nutrition – the food we eat affects the development and day to day maintenance of the body. A balanced diet helps to keep the body healthy and provides the proteins, vitamins, minerals and other elements the body requires to maintain and repair itself. It is known that some deficiencies (e.g. of certain vitamins) can affect mood and poor diet can leave people feeling tired and lethargic which will lead to low moods. Keeping a healthy weight is important in feeling better physically but also for good self-esteem and self-confidence. A healthy, balanced diet will help individuals maintain a healthy weight.
- Healthy lifestyle – smoking, alcohol and drugs all have an impact on mood and mental well-being. Though they may make people feel happier for a short while, they may feel very low when the effects wear off and long-term or excessive use of alcohol and drugs may lead to mental health issues. Nicotine, for example, has been shown to interfere with the levels of dopamine in the brain and can switch off the brain's mechanism for making dopamine. Dopamine is a chemical which supports positive feelings so lack of it may cause depression.
- Rest/sleep – the body needs to rest in order to repair itself. A lack of rest or sleep puts pressure on the body and can make people unwell. It can also lead to issues with memory and thinking processes, cause individuals to be irritable and behave in ways that are out of character and trigger anxiety and depression.
- Long-term health conditions – long-term health conditions, even where they are not life threatening or life shortening, can lead to mental health problems. For example, skin conditions such as psoriasis may cause embarrassment, anxiety and distress. Other conditions such as chronic migraine are painful and can disrupt home and work life, leaving individuals feeling worried and depressed. In most cases, individuals with these types of conditions will not see a counsellor as part of their treatment plans and may develop long-term mental health issues alongside their physical health condition.

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Did you know?

Some individuals may experience seasonal affective disorder which is a type of depression that appears to be affected by the seasons. Individuals may experience low moods, irritability and lethargy in the winter months when there is less sunlight.



Knowledge Activity 3: Think about your own physical health and write down three things you could improve. Say why you need to improve these areas and how you could achieve it.



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Different types of mental ill health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 5.

The *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD-11) published by the World Health Organisation and *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) published by the American Psychiatric Association list some 250-300 different mental health disorders that can range from mild to severe. We will look at some of the more common ones here.

Stress

Stress is a physical, mental and emotional response to feeling threatened or under pressure in daily life. Stress is very common and, in some cases, can be beneficial in that it motivates individuals to tackle the challenges in their lives. Stress can help an individual stay alert, energetic, focussed on the task in hand and provide the drive to meet deadlines or the strength to cope in a crisis.

Everyone reacts differently to stress so it can be difficult to measure but it is the individual's ability to cope with stress that is the issue. Temporary stress is not a serious mental health issue but too much stress or continually feeling under stress starts to affect emotions, behaviour and ability to think effectively as well as having physical effects such as raising blood pressure, increasing heart rate, muscle tension and insomnia. This can lead to serious mental and physical illness.

Stress can be caused by internal or external demands. Internal demands include low self-esteem, fear, uncertainty and other thoughts and emotions that affect individuals. External causes might be environmental issues such as constant noise or living in a poor, unsafe area; relationship worries such as constant arguments, breakdown of relationships or loss of a partner or family member; workplace demands such as high workloads, bullying at work, not earning sufficient amounts or worries about job loss; social situations such as being teased or bullied, or being isolated and alone.



stress [stres]
outside influence
body, used especially
stress without cause
stress on a person
stress on a person
stress on a person

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Knowledge Activity 4: Write down two things that cause you to feel stress and describe how it affects you and what you do to relieve the stress.

Anxiety disorders

Anxiety is a response to stress but may carry on after the factors causing stress have been resolved. Individuals may feel anxiety on a short-term basis, for example if they go to a job interview or have to give a presentation in front of lots of people. It becomes a problem when anxiety cannot be related to any particular situation or becomes long-term, overwhelming people and interfering with everyday life.

Anxiety involves having physical symptoms and worrying thoughts. In some cases, individuals may experience panic attacks which can cause a fast heartbeat, dizziness, nausea, difficulty breathing and a feeling of lack of control. Long-term anxiety and frequent panic attacks can be very disrupting to everyday life and relationships.

There are different types of anxiety disorders. The most common types are:

- **Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)** – This involves ongoing anxiety about lots of different issues in everyday life. The anxiety cannot be tied to one particular event or situation and can affect individuals very differently.
- **Social anxiety disorder** – This involves anxiety that occurs in response to social situations. Individuals may be nervous about talking to others, eating in front of them, and speaking on the phone, which can make work and social situations difficult as well as everyday activities such as shopping.

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- **Specific phobias** – Specific phobias are fear of a specific object or situation. This can be something like snakes, spiders, heights, germs, blood, injections, foods, activities such as flying or going to the dentist, and many more. Often they do not affect an individual in their everyday life because they can be avoided or the person rarely comes across them. Some people can still experience anxiety when the object or situation is not present or have such an extreme reaction to a common occurrence that their lives are disrupted.
- **Panic Disorder** – This is where the individual has frequent panic attacks for which there is no clear cause. Individuals can become constantly afraid of having another panic attack and their fear can actually trigger attacks.
- **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)** – There are two main parts to OCD: obsessions and compulsions. Obsessions are uncontrollable worries or thoughts that can make an individual feel anxious; compulsions are repetitive activities the individual will engage in to reduce their anxiety. So, for example, an individual may worry about germs and diseases which causes them to clean everything and wash their hands all the time; or they may worry about intruders and check the locks on doors and windows a set number of times before going out or going to bed. The thoughts and behaviours disrupt everyday life and can lead to the individual isolating themselves, or feeling ashamed or anxious all the time.
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** – This is an anxiety disorder that develops after the individual has experienced a traumatic event, either by being involved in an event, witnessing an event or hearing about a traumatic event (which can make counsellors susceptible to it). Individuals may feel numb and have trouble sleeping after a traumatic experience which is generally known as acute stress reaction. If these symptoms continue for longer than a month, the individual may be diagnosed with PTSD and may experience other symptoms such as flashbacks to the incident, intrusive thoughts and images, nightmares and distress and anxiety as a reaction to reminders of the incident.

Did you know?

The most commonly diagnosed mental disorder in Britain is mixed anxiety and depression, which is estimated to cause one fifth of work days lost.



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Kelly's story

Kelly was involved in a serious road traffic incident. The car in which she was travelling, which was being driven by her brother, was hit by a lorry and burst into flames. Kelly's brother was killed in the fire. At first, following the incident, she had trouble sleeping and nightmares. As time went on, she started to have flashbacks where she saw her brother in the accident and experienced panic attacks when she went near any open flame. She has been diagnosed with PTSD.

Depression

People often say they are feeling depressed when they simply feel sad or down. Clinical depression is low mood that lasts for at least two weeks, affects behaviour and has negative physical, mental and emotional effects. Depression can interfere with and negatively impact on a person's work and relationships. Depression can be caused by life events such as bereavement or losing a job, by circumstances such as feeling isolated or living in a run down area, by having a life threatening or long-term illness or by using alcohol or drugs. Personality, gender and genetics can also be risk factors. Some people are more vulnerable because of their personality or genes and depression is more common in women than in men.

Depression makes people tearful and they may become withdrawn and isolated. It may lead to alcohol or drug misuse which can make depression worse, and it will start to interfere with everyday life as they feel they can't face life and feel hopeless. It can affect sleep patterns, energy levels and eating. At its most serious it can lead to thoughts of suicide.

Self-harm

Self-harm is any type of behaviour that could or does cause harm to the individual. It can include physical harm such as cutting or burning the skin, picking at the skin, pulling out hair or breaking bones. It may also include behaviours such as drinking, taking risks such as driving fast, having unprotected sex, gambling and causing fights. Usually the harm is used to relieve distressing feelings and help the individual to cope with difficulties in their lives. The self-harm gives temporary relief from negative thoughts and feelings and, in the long-term, may become a normal coping strategy for the individual.

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Suicide

Suicide is where an individual intentionally causes their own death. It may be as a result of factors such as mental ill health, traumatic or stressful events, physical illness, substance misuse or poor living environment. Quite often it will be due to a combination of factors. If someone can be prevented from suicide, they can often be supported to move away from suicidal thoughts and recover.

Eating disorders

Examples of eating disorders are:

- Anorexia Nervosa – where individuals refuse to eat, eat very little or exercise excessively in order to lose weight.
- Bulimia Nervosa – where individuals overeat then purge by taking laxatives or making themselves vomit.
- Binge eating – where individuals overeat on a regular basis.

Eating disorders are a type of obsessive behaviour and, although illnesses such as anorexia are often blamed on the desire to weigh less, they may be the response to traumatic events, stress and unhappiness. Anxiety and low self-esteem may also lead to eating disorders.

Bipolar disorder

Bipolar disorder is where an individual has dramatic mood swings, from extreme happiness and excitement (known as mania) to extreme depression. They can be so extreme that they interfere with the individual's ability to live a normal life. Individuals may also experience symptoms of psychosis where they have hallucinations or are convinced of things that are not true. Each episode of mania, depression or hallucinations can last weeks or months and the individual may experience periods of stability in between episodes that can last for months or years. The causes of bipolar disorder are unknown, but it is thought it could be triggered by genetic and chemical factors, excessive stress, traumatic or life-changing events or problems that the individual sees as overwhelming.

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Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a serious long-term psychotic illness that causes a range of different psychological symptoms. Contrary to popular belief, the term ‘schizophrenia’ does not mean ‘split personality’. It actually means being ‘split’ from reality. When a person with schizophrenia experiences a psychotic episode, they may not be able to distinguish between what is real and what is not. Therefore, with schizophrenia, unusual thoughts, feelings and experiences become the person’s reality.

Another misconception is that schizophrenia cannot be treated. In fact, around a quarter of people who develop schizophrenia recover within five years and go on to lead a normal life. According to the leading mental health charity, Rethink, approximately two-thirds of those who develop schizophrenia experience fluctuating symptoms over many years, which are difficult but can be managed. However, some people will experience long-term incapacity.

Signs and indicators of mental ill health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 6.

When individuals are experiencing mental ill health, they will show a variety of signs and symptoms. The most important indicator that managers and employers can identify is a change in behaviour and/or attitude of an individual that they work with. This can often indicate a problem. More specific signs will include physical, psychological and behavioural indicators and these are listed in the table.

Physical	Psychological	Behavioural
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Unexplained tiredness■ Indigestion or other stomach complaints■ Headaches■ Weight loss or gain■ Changes in appetite■ Complaining of joint or back pain■ Complaining of not being able to sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Appearng anxious or distressed■ Tearfulness■ Appearng sad or low■ Mood changes■ Indecision■ Loss of motivation■ Loss of humour■ Being more sensitive than usual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Increased or excess smoking and drinking■ Drug taking■ Withdrawal■ A resigned attitude■ Being irritable, angry or aggressive■ Over-excitement■ Restlessness■ Frequent lateness

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Shaking or obvious tension■ Complaining of throat or chest pain■ Sweating■ Complaining of always feeling cold	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Appearing distracted or confused■ Finding it difficult to relax■ Forgetting things■ Irrational or illogical thought processes■ Difficulty in taking in information■ Responding to situations that others cannot see■ Talking of hopelessness which may indicate suicidal thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Leaving early■ Taking extended lunch times/breaks■ Working longer hours■ Obsessive or intense activity■ Repetitive speech or activity■ Deteriorating or inconsistent performance■ More work errors than usual■ More absences than usual■ More problems with colleagues than usual■ Over-reacting to situations■ Risk-taking behaviour that is out of character■ Disruptive behaviour■ Being anti-social
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(Adapted from Mind/CIPD *Managing and supporting mental health at work: disclosure tools for managers*, 2011 at www.mind.org.uk/media/44253/Managing_and_supporting_MH_at_work.pdf)

Where individuals display a number of these symptoms and/or the symptoms are severe, they may be facing a mental health crisis. Signs that a crisis may be occurring may include breaking down in tears, having a panic attack, talking of suicide, behaving in unusual ways, totally withdrawing from other people, and/or experiencing a different reality (psychosis).

Section 1: Exploring mental health

Graham's story

Graham works in a customer complaints department as a call handler. Recently his supervisor, Tom, has noticed that he is not handling calls well and is not socialising at breaks and lunchtime with his colleagues, though they have always found him friendly previously. His timekeeping has deteriorated and there have been complaints from customers of him being rude and hanging up the phone on them. This is out of character for Graham and Tom is worried about him. One day, when Graham has taken a particularly difficult call from a customer, he sits on the floor in the corner of the office with his head in his hands. He won't speak to anyone and becomes aggressive when they approach him. Tom calls a workplace welfare supervisor for advice on what he believes is a mental health crisis.

Knowledge Activity 5: Write down what you think Tom could do to try and support Graham.



Dealing with mental health crisis

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 7.

If someone is experiencing a mental health crisis, there are a number of things you can do to support them. Your workplace may produce guidelines on supporting staff who are experiencing mental health problems and you should always follow these where appropriate.

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Steps to support an individual facing a mental health crisis include:

- Listening to them without making any judgements
- Concentrating on their immediate needs such as dealing with any wounds they might have if it is safe to do so, or helping them find a quiet area away from other people.
- Asking what would help them
- Being reassuring
- Signposting them to practical information where appropriate
- Avoiding confrontation
- Asking if you can contact someone for them
- Encouraging them to seek help from a local crisis team, their GP or other appropriate professional
- Providing first aid (or alerting a qualified first aider) if they have hurt themselves physically
- If they are seeing or hearing things, reminding them that you are there and not dismissing their experiences or reinforcing them.

(Adapted from the Mental Health Foundation website at www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/supporting-someone-mental-health-problem)

If there are any indications that the person is suicidal, they should be encouraged to seek immediate help. They or someone else should contact a GP, call NHS111 or contact the Samaritans on 116 123. Help can also be sought from friends, family or local mental health teams.

Where an individual is threatening suicide and someone has called for help, the person should then stay with them until help arrives. The person should talk to the individual, telling them how much they are cared for and wanted. They should take care for their own safety, for example, not offering first aid if the individual has a weapon and there is a risk of injury.

It is important for the person supporting them not to express their own views about suicide, challenge the individual or tell them to pull themselves together or similar sentiments as this could worsen the situation.

Section 1: Exploring mental health

Summary

In this section you have learned about:

- what mental health and mental ill-health are
- what is meant by the mental health continuum
- factors that increase the risk of mental ill health
- the effects of mental ill health on physical health
- the different mental health conditions
- the signs and indicators of mental ill health
- how to deal with mental health crisis

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

In this section, you will learn about how individuals with mental ill health can be effectively supported. You will look at the importance of positive relationships and effective communication in supporting individuals. You will find out about person-centred approaches and your responsibilities in supporting individuals in the workplace. You will also gain an understanding of the attitudes and perceptions of mental ill health and of how to support your own mental health.

The importance of positive relationships

Please read the following as it will help you to answer questions 8 and 9.

Positive relationships are important in preventing and supporting mental ill health in all aspects of life, including the workplace. Many full-time workers spend more time at work during the week than at home with family and friends. Being in a negative environment for this large amount of time can cause stress and make individuals feel isolated, which will reduce motivation and lead to low morale. Not only does this have a negative effect on mental health but also on productivity at work.

Positive relationships make employees feel supported and generate an improved attitude towards the organisation and work. They will feel happier and have better mental health, which will make them more resilient in the face of problems and stressful situations both in the workplace and outside it. It will lead to fewer workplace absences and a happier, more productive workplace.

Communication is important in supporting positive relationships. Effective communication will give individuals someone to share work concerns with and help them feel supported with problems and worries in the workplace. Managers, workplace mentors, tutors and welfare staff can actively help to support mental well-being by not being afraid of broaching the subject of mental health and of having difficult conversations with individuals about how they are feeling at work or worries they have about work or at home. Active listening is important to make individuals feel properly supported. This involves the listener showing the individual that they are listening and interested and being non-judgemental about what the individual says.

Tips on having difficult conversations

Conversations with individuals about worries at work or in the learning environment or about their mental health can be difficult. The following tips will help.

- Make sure that the conversation takes place in a private, quiet area, where no one else can overhear or interrupt.
- Thank the individual for coming to talk about the problem.

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

- Give the individual as much time as they need to explain the issues.
- Make sure you focus on what the individual has to say.
- Remain open minded and don't judge the individual.
- Be aware that what they tell you may be unexpected, or even shocking.
- If you can, try to find out anything that might be causing the problem.
- Think about ways that the individual could be supported, or the problem could be sorted out.
- If you think more time is required to seek advice or think about the problem, explain this to the individual, gain their agreement and arrange another meeting at a later date.

Tips on active listening

Active listening is an important skill, especially for handling sensitive conversations.
Active listening involves:

- Observing the individual's body language to check that it supports what they are saying e.g. if they say everything is fine but appear very tense and anxious, you may need to probe further.
- Not interrupting.
- Listening without judging the individual or jumping to conclusions about what they are telling you.
- Listening properly rather than thinking about something else or planning what you will say next.
- Showing the individual that you are listening through making eye contact and positive body language e.g. facing them and leaning towards them slightly.
- Not forcing your opinions or solutions on the individual.
- Staying focused throughout the conversation.
- Not taking notes as it looks as if you are not listening.
- Asking relevant questions to gain more information or to clarify your understanding of what the individual is saying.
- Summarising what has been said to confirm you have got it right and picked up the main points.

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

Characteristics of positive relationships

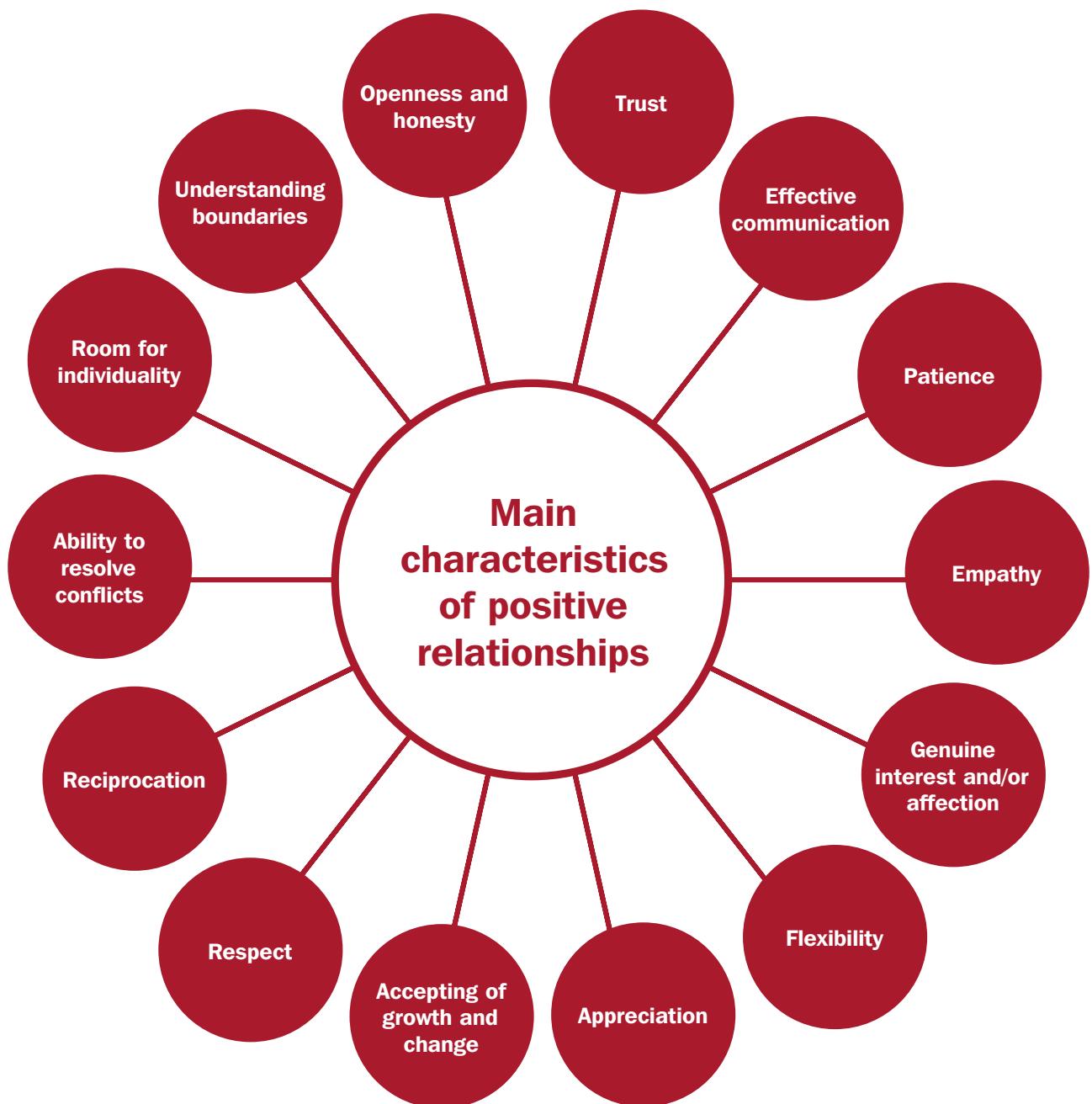
What does a positive relationship at work, in a learning environment or at home look like?



Knowledge Activity 6: Think about your own relationships with others at work, in a learning environment or at home. List the characteristics that you think make a positive relationship and say how they make you feel and why they are important.



Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health



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Trust

Individuals in a positive relationship trust one another. At work colleagues need to know that they are all working towards the same aims and that colleagues are reliable and support one another. Similarly, in personal relationships, individuals need to know they are supported by the other person. Where individuals make mistakes, they need to know they will be helped to move forward rather than just blamed.

Effective communication

In positive relationships, individuals will communicate effectively by making it clear what they mean and by actively listening to what others have to say about an issue. Individuals will be encouraged to communicate any issues and worries. They will also be able to tell the other person how they feel or what they think without the other person being offended.

Patience

In positive relationships, individuals are patient. When things don't go to plan, they don't get annoyed or irritated with the other person but stay calm and help to find ways to resolve issues and move forward. We all have bad days and people in positive relationships at work and at home appreciate this and make allowances for it.

Empathy

Another characteristic is empathy. Individuals should be able to understand the feelings of others, even where they don't necessarily agree or feel the same way, and be able to look at things from their perspective.

Genuine interest and/or affection

Relationships will be stronger where individuals have a genuine interest in the other person or, in the context of personal relationships, an affection for them.

Flexibility

For relationships to work on a long-term basis, it's important for the parties to the relationships to be flexible. This means being willing to adjust and to compromise as necessary to ensure the relationship can continue to be positive.

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Appreciation

Everyone wants to know that they and their efforts – especially in a work context – are appreciated. Saying thank-you to people and telling them that they have done a good job improves well-being and strengthens relationships.

Accepting of growth and change

Over time individuals grow and change and when they are in a relationship – either personal or professional – it is important that the other party can accept the changes where they are positive ones. If changes are negative, then it may indicate that the individual involved needs support.

Respect

Respect means having regard for the feelings of others. It means not belittling them, valuing their feelings and opinions, not making fun of them and protecting their privacy. Respect is something to be earned in a relationship and is not linked to status and position. For example, you won't automatically get respect from people just because you are a manager – you need to show that you deserve it by showing respect to others.

Reciprocation

Reciprocation in a relationship means that each person is prepared to give as well as take. It's not a case of counting up favours though! Just because you helped someone last week, you shouldn't feel that they owe you help in return. Over time, in positive relationships, you will usually find the give and take works out about equal.

Ability to resolve conflicts

In order for relationships to be maintained, it is essential that people in them have the ability to resolve conflict. Where there is a problem or difference of opinion, people in the relationship need to be able to talk it through in a respectful and empathetic way. Where conflicts are not resolved, the relationship will break down.

Room for individuality

One of the things that makes relationships interesting is that the people in them are individuals and it's important to allow for this individuality in the relationship. This means accepting another person's quirks and differences.

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Understanding boundaries

Boundaries are important for relationships to work. However close the relationship – even personal relationships – there are aspects of individual lives that are theirs and the boundary of the relationship needs to be respected by both parties.

Openness and honesty

One of the things that helps build trust and respect in a relationship is the openness and honesty of the people involved around the contexts and issues on which the relationship is based. This means, for work relationships for example, you need to be open and honest about workplace issues.

Ahmed's story

Ahmed works in a busy office. He is overworked, but when he takes issues to his manager, she tells him to just get on with it. The manager has a tendency to blame her staff when things don't go to plan. This makes for a very negative workplace environment where people are not willing to admit any mistakes and where people are so busy struggling with their own workloads that they don't support one another. After a particularly bad week at work, Ahmed feels he cannot carry on. He can't bring himself to get out of bed in the morning to go to work. He rings in sick and his housemates persuade him to see the doctor. Ahmed is signed off work with stress, anxiety and clinical depression. After some weeks, Ahmed decides that his job is not for him and starts looking for alternative careers.

Did you know?

According to research by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), teachers endure greater job-related stress than other professionals. They are faced with impossible workloads, endless accountability, poor salary and reward systems and negative organisational culture. Many are leaving the profession for good after finding they cannot cope with the stress.



Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

Supporting an individual with mental ill health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 10.

If you suspect that a colleague, team member or anyone else in the workplace or learning environment is experiencing mental ill health, you need to be able to give them support. Not only is this the right thing to do morally, under health and safety and equality laws, organisations have a responsibility for the mental well-being of people in the organisation and to provide support for those with ongoing mental ill health.

Early intervention

Managers, tutors and colleagues in the workplace or learning environment can play an important role in the early intervention to prevent mental health decline. They should be able to identify any early signs that individuals are stressed or that their mental health is declining. Most importantly they should be aware of any changes in mood, behaviour or relationships with colleagues as this can be an early sign of mental ill health.

It is important that individuals feel that there is someone they can talk to in the workplace or learning environment who is approachable. Individuals should be encouraged to talk about any problems they have with their work, learning or other aspects of the environment. Workloads should be monitored to ensure that individuals are not placed under too much stress and individuals should be supported to work through any conflicts or challenges.

By identifying potential problems early, encouraging individuals to talk and understanding what support is available, managers, tutors and colleagues may be able to help stop or prevent mental health decline.

Did you know?

ACAS, the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service, has advice about having sensitive conversations on their website at https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/4931/Approaching-a-sensitive-conversation-regarding-mental-ill-health/pdf/Tips_to_approach_having_sensitive_conversations_2018.pdf



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Short-term support

Where someone is experiencing stress or mental ill health, they should be supported. Employers have a duty of care which means that they should support individuals in the workplace.

In the short term, talking to individuals and finding out about any issues will help in providing the support they need. Support might include helping them to prioritise workloads, allowing extra rest breaks, reducing their workload temporarily or simply talking through issues with them or referring them to someone in the environment who can help. Individuals can also be signposted towards other people or organisations who may be able to give them help and support.

Where other people in the work or learning environment know about the individual's mental ill health, this may be worrying for them, in which case they should also be supported.

Long-term support

In the longer term where mental health declines or there is a more serious mental health issue, individuals may need time off from work or learning. This may be because they are not well enough to do the work they need to do, or because they are taking medication which may mean they are unable to carry on with their work, e.g. it makes them sleepy and unable to operate machinery or to drive. It is important that contact is maintained with the individual during their absence from the workplace or learning environment. However, they should not be pressured to return before they are ready. Contact should be supportive and positive and not from anyone who the individual feels may be part of the cause of their stress or anxiety. Sending a get well card just as you would with a physical illness can be part of this contact.

It may also be appropriate to refer the individual to an occupational health expert where available. Occupational health specialists can assess the individual and suggest adjustments that may help the individual when they return to work.

Long-term mental ill health may be a disability covered under the Equality Act 2010. This gives an employer or service provider (e.g. an education provider) the responsibility to consider making reasonable adjustments so that the individual can carry out their work or continue using the service. Reasonable adjustments should be made following discussion with the individual and agreement as to what is appropriate and possible. Occupational health specialists may help in identifying suitable adjustments. Any proposed adjustments should be documented, monitored to ensure they are appropriate and reviewed to ensure they provide the right level of support.

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Even where an individual's mental ill health is not considered to be a disability, it is sensible to support them and make reasonable adjustments where possible to help meet the duty of care.

Vivek's story

Having witnessed an industrial accident at work when a friend of his was seriously injured, Vivek has experienced symptoms of anxiety and depression and sometimes has flashbacks and panic attacks. He has been diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder and is on medication. The condition means that he may have absences from work when his symptoms are particularly bad. He may also experience panic attacks at work. An occupational therapist and his manager have spoken to Vivek and come up with a series of adjustments that will help to support him. He will move to an office that is away from the noisy machinery which may set off panic attacks or flashbacks. The organisation has created a quiet area where Vivek, and other employees, can spend quiet breaks at work. This will help Vivek manage his anxiety at work. The organisation has relaxed their flexible working scheme (which is currently based around core hours) so that Vivek can take time off for appointments or to manage his symptoms. They have also provided a computer for Vivek to work at home when he feels he cannot come to work.

ACAS publish a fact sheet of adjustments that can be made for individuals experiencing mental ill health. This can be found at https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/4932/Common-adjustments-for-staff-experiencing-mental-ill-health/pdf/Common_types_of_adjustments_2018.pdf



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Knowledge Activity 7: Harry is at college taking a practical course in computer programming. He is experiencing general anxiety which started at school when he was bullied. Although he feels more comfortable at college, social interaction can set off his anxiety. Harry has had a number of days absent. When he is feeling well, he does well in his studies. His tutor is looking at how Harry might be better supported in his studies. The college has a full-time and a part-time version of the course Harry is taking so could be flexible in supporting Harry in his studies. He is currently on the full-time option.

Describe the adjustments the college and tutor could make to support Harry.
(You may wish to look at the ACAS document mentioned.)

Recovery

As well as supporting individuals with mental ill health, it is important to support recovery. Recovery in mental health is regarded not as an absence of symptoms – as everyone is on the mental health continuum and symptoms may come and go – but as the development of a resilience to cope with the stresses and strains of everyday life. Recovery in mental health is about individuals achieving personal goals and developing relationships and skills that support a positive approach to life, whether or not they have ongoing mental health problems. (Mental Health Foundation at www.mentalhealth.org.uk).

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The recovery process is often described using the acronym CHIME, which stands for:

- **Connectedness** – support from others and belonging to groups at work, in education or in the community.
- **Hope and optimism** – the individual's belief that they can recover, and the building of relationships that make them want to recover and believe in the future. Also having aspirations for the future and thinking positively about life.
- **Identity** – building a positive sense of own identity and overcoming the challenges and stigma of mental ill health.
- **Meaning and purpose** – having a meaningful life including social roles and goals in work or education, for example.
- **Empowerment** – being able to take responsibility and control in respect of own life and using and building on the strengths they have.

(L. Davidson in Recovery, self-management and the expert patient: changing the culture of mental health from a UK perspective. (2005))

Did you know?

Research into the recovery process for mental ill health shows a strong link between social inclusion and recovery. This means being involved with others through work, education and leisure activities. (Mental Health Foundation at www.mentalhealth.org.uk).



From the research, we can see that support from the workplace or learning environment is a vital component in recovery from mental ill health, whether the cause is inside or outside of the workplace.

Organisations can support recovery by encouraging and supporting strong relationships within the organisation; by giving the individual goals and aspirations that meet their hopes for the future; by supporting them to recover and rebuild their own identity; by helping them to identify roles and goals that are important to them; and by encouraging them to take responsibility and control in the context of their work and learning and build on their strengths in these areas.

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

Return to work

When an individual is returning to work following absence due to mental ill health, they should feel supported. Someone from the organisation (e.g. a manager from the workplace) should meet with them before their return to discuss the organisation's expectations and any concerns they may have. They should be updated on anything they have missed while they have been away such as changes in structure or personnel and encouraged to talk about their absence and ask any questions they have. It should be decided, based on the individual's preferences, what colleagues will be told about their absence and return. Individuals may feel self-conscious and anxious about the return and little things like meeting them in reception and arranging for them to have lunch with a friendly colleague can help them. On return they should be carefully monitored to ensure their mental health does not deteriorate again – though there may be fluctuations.

Ursula's story

Ursula is returning to work after some time off with clinical depression which was partly caused by her stressful role in a customer call centre. She has had a conversation with her manager and someone from human resources who has been trained in mental health support. They have helped her to identify what is important for her in coming back to work and talked about the concerns she has about returning to work. They have also discussed changes that will support her return. She will return part-time initially, working three days a week. Instead of returning to the complaints team, which can be very stressful, she will return to the order queries team. This also means she will be working for a different team leader who is known to be very supportive and flexible. Ursula is happy with this arrangement and had actually requested a move to this team before her absence. Her manager has arranged for her to come in and have lunch with the team leader before she comes back to work. It will also give Ursula the chance to catch up with one of her friends who works on the same team and is keen to support her return to work.



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Person-centred approaches to mental health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer questions 11 and 12.

A person-centred approach means that care and support is focused on the needs of the individual rather than being organised around the support that services can offer. It involves putting the person at the centre of their care and support and taking account of the whole of the individual's life rather than just meeting the needs that arise as a result of their mental ill health. Support should be informed by what the individual wants from their life and services should be structured in ways that make this possible.

A person-centred approach is important for mental health support because it better supports the needs of the individual. While person-centred support is important for any illness, in cases of mental ill health it can be part of the recovery process, supporting individuals to take control and identifying what will help them to build resilience.

Person-centred approaches help the individual to develop knowledge, skills and confidence to make decisions about and manage their own support. Where individuals are at the centre of care and support and are making decisions about their own care and support, they will be more likely to follow any support plan that is developed.

Mental health professions have a responsibility to approach care and support in a person-centred way. Guidance and legislation require person-centred approaches and the personalisation of care services. These approaches will ensure that individuals receive care and support of the highest quality and that all their needs are properly met.

Own responsibilities and limitations

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 13.

Your responsibilities in relation to supporting mental health will depend on your role in your organisation. If you are a manager, tutor or mentor, for example, you may be trained to identify signs of mental ill health and there may be guidelines in your workplace on what you should do if you identify that an individual may have a mental health issue.

It is important to recognise your responsibilities and limitations in relation to supporting the mental health of others so that you do not do anything that may cause harm to the individual or the organisation. For example, if you don't follow the adjustments that your organisation has put in place for an individual, you may risk the health of the individual, your own job role and the reputation of the organisation as well as exposing the organisation to the risk of a discrimination claim.

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However, everyone has a responsibility to treat people with respect in the workplace and to support colleagues. You should know how to report a mental health issue so that the individual concerned can get the support they need. In addition, you should never discriminate against individuals with mental ill health.



Knowledge Activity 8: In your own organisation or for an organisation you know or have researched, find out about the policies and procedures that relate to individuals' mental health and support for mental ill health. Note the main points here.



Did you know?

One of the most effective ways to support mental health is for the individual to connect with someone and have people they can talk to. Many recent mental health campaigns encourage everyone to talk about mental health and to ask people if they are OK. This can help to support someone who has a mental health issue.

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

Referral to others

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 14.

Often individuals showing signs of mental ill health may need to be referred to others. The best scenario is where the individual agrees to seek help. In this case you can refer them to an appropriate person or service. If the individual cannot be persuaded to seek help for themselves, you may need to refer them if you believe they may be at risk or may put others at risk – for example, because of the work they are doing.

You should refer individuals if:

- You believe they are showing signs of serious mental ill health such as psychosis but refuse to seek help for themselves.
- If the individual is likely to harm themselves or is suicidal.
- If the individual is doing something that could put other people at risk such as becoming violent or aggressive towards others.

Who you refer an individual to will depend on your organisation and your own role within it. Referrals may be to:

- A line manager in the workplace where the individual is a colleague.
- The designated safeguarding lead in learning or other environments where individuals are under 18 or are vulnerable adults.
- The emergency services by calling NHS 111 for advice or 999 if the individual is in immediate danger.
- A qualified Mental Health First Aider if one is available in the organisation.
- The human resources department or other department concerned with the welfare of individuals within your organisation.
- Local child and adolescent mental health services.
- The individual's GP.



Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

Role of the qualified mental health first aider

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 15.

The role of a Mental Health First Aider in an organisation is to provide support for individuals who may be experiencing mental health issues or emotional distress. The Mental Health First Aider will be a point of contact for any employee who experiences mental health issues including stress. They are not trained therapists but can recognise the signs of mental ill health, listen and provide guidance.

The Mental Health First Aider's role involves:

- Identifying early signs and symptoms of mental ill health.
- Talking to individuals to provide support through discussion.
- Listening to the individual without judging them.
- Assessing the risks to the individual e.g. from work activities, self-harm or suicide.
- Encouraging the individual to seek help. This may be from internal counselling services or external medical or counselling support.
- Contacting emergency services if appropriate.
- Maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality.
- Completing required documentation for the organisation particularly where there is an emergency.

It is important that they protect themselves physically and mentally when performing the Mental Health First Aider role. Organisations may set up networks for Mental Health First Aiders so that they are able to support one another.



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Support for own mental health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 16.

Supporting individuals with mental ill health or who are distressed or experiencing stress at work or in the learning environment can be stressful for the person supporting them. If you are working to support individuals with mental health issues, then you should make sure that you take care of your own mental health. If you become stressed and anxious yourself, you will not be able to properly support individuals you are trying to help and you may find your own work, learning and/or personal life is affected.

Some of the things you can do to support your own mental health are:

- Keep a reflective diary – often writing things down helps you to think through and resolve any concerns.
- Look for advice on self-help – there are a variety of online tools and sources of advice for improving your own mental health and books recommended by professionals which may be of use.
- Talk to someone – while you shouldn't discuss the details of someone else's problems, you can talk about your own feelings. This might be to a family member, manager or colleague.
- Use your network – some organisations will set up networks for those supporting mental health so they can support one another.
- Seek professional help – if your mental health is declining and you are worried about stress, depression, anxiety or other mental issues, you should talk to your doctor or a counsellor.



Knowledge Activity 9: Check the NHS website about self-help for mental health and list three ways to support your own mental health. You can access the site at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/self-help-therapies/>

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

Mental health illness stigma and stereotypes

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 17.

In the context of mental health, stigma and stereotypes usually mean that individuals are labelled as different in a negative way. Stigma arises from the misconceptions that people have about mental health illness. These misconceptions also form the basis of stereotypes about mental health illness. Misconceptions arise from a lack of knowledge about mental health among the general public.

Did you know?

A stigma is a mark of disgrace that sets a person apart from others.

A stereotype is a widely held, oversimplified – and often incorrect – image of a type of person or group of people.



The common misconceptions that underpin stereotypes and stigma are described in the table.

Misconception	The facts
Individuals with mental health conditions are violent.	The majority of individuals who have a mental health condition are more at risk from harming themselves or being victims of violence than harming others.
Individuals with mental health conditions cannot work or function properly in society as they are unpredictable and unreliable.	Many individuals with a mental health condition carry on their day to day lives and work. Many hold down very responsible jobs.
Individuals with mental health conditions do not get better.	Most mental health conditions can be treated and individuals recover and go on with their lives.
Mental health conditions only affect people who are weak or have character flaws.	Mental health conditions can affect anyone and are not a sign of weakness or a flawed character but often a result of stress or trauma.
Mental health conditions are rare.	Mental health conditions are common, affecting 1 in 4 people at some point in their lives.

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

The impact of attitudes and perceptions

Please read the following as it will help you to answer questions 18 and 19.

The attitudes and perceptions arising from the misconceptions about mental ill health can have a negative impact on individuals.

Public attitudes and perceptions can lead to:

- The stereotyping of individuals with mental health conditions as unpredictable and dangerous, which can lead to them being socially excluded. They can become isolated from the community which can in turn cause a further deterioration in their mental health.
- Prejudice where people hold opinions about those with mental health conditions that may affect the way that individuals are treated. For example, somebody may be wary of talking to someone who has a mental health condition.
- Discrimination where individuals are treated differently due to their mental health condition. For example, they are not offered a job because of it or are excluded from activities.

These attitudes and perceptions also have an impact on how individuals with mental health conditions feel and behave. Fear of misunderstanding, prejudice and rejection may lead individuals to isolate themselves from others and may be reluctant to speak up about their mental health difficulties. This can lead to the worsening of symptoms and the recovery process taking longer which impacts on the individual and on society. It may also make them wary of applying for jobs. They may even come to believe that they will not be capable of holding down a job. Individuals who are treated negatively may develop low self-esteem and low self-confidence.

Alejandra's story

Alejandra has bipolar disorder and faced prejudice and discrimination in her workplace from her line manager and colleagues. This led to her giving up her job and becoming isolated from friends. She had no family to support her and, when her savings ran out, Alejandra had to move out of her flat and became homeless, living on the streets and in hostels. A helper at one of the hostels talked to Alejandra about her mental ill health and supported her in getting support for her health, claiming benefits and finding suitable accommodation. Alejandra is now finding it easier to manage the condition and is rebuilding her confidence and self-esteem. She is now applying for new jobs and understands her rights in relation to discrimination.

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

The way that mental illness is portrayed and reported in the media is an important influence on the public. More recently there have been several high-profile campaigns to raise awareness of issues associated with mental health and to challenge stigma. For example, On World Mental Health Day 2019, the magazine Marie Claire carried interviews with celebrities speaking out about their own mental health issues.

(<https://www.marieclaire.co.uk/news/celebrity-news/celebrities-speak-out-about-mental-health-12047>)

In the past, people with mental illness were commonly portrayed in the media as violent and dangerous with severely disturbed thought processes and unpredictable behaviour. Horror movies about ‘psycho’ killers escaping from mental institutions were a prime example. The media played a role in spreading some of the myths about mental illness, which led to stigma.

Today the media more commonly represents people with mental health problems in a more non-judgemental and positive manner. This has been achieved by broadening the range of mental health conditions portrayed through film and television shows, and embracing the importance of equality and diversity. This has helped to minimise prejudice and fear amongst the wider community and has a more positive impact on mental ill health.

The media can have a big impact on people’s thoughts, feelings and self-image. It’s not just negative images of mental ill health that can have an impact – though these can leave individuals feeling ashamed and distressed about their condition – but also the pressure that media images can place on individuals. Images of glamorous celebrities and reality TV participants, for example, can leave individuals feeling inadequate and emotionally distressed. Most celebrities and reality TV stars conform to the ideals of what society expects men and women to look like, but the truth is most people don’t look like that. Young people especially may become disillusioned with their own bodies and appearance and this can cause stress and anxiety which could lead to depression and a decline in mental well-being.



Knowledge Activity 10: In your experience, have you found that attitudes towards people with mental health problems are generally positive or negative?

Give an explanation for your answer.

Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

The wide-ranging impacts of mental ill health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 20.

The impacts of mental ill health can be wide-ranging, affecting the individual, their lives and those around them. Mental ill health may affect:

- **The self** – mental ill health can lead to individuals feeling inferior and having a negative self-image, intense feelings of self-hate, anger or disgust, and uselessness. These can lead to extreme depression, psychosocial disorders (such as anxiety, phobias or obsessive disorders which prevent the individual being part of society) or eating disorders. Physical health can also be affected by high blood pressure, for example, and by lack of sleep and unhealthy eating as the individual fails to take proper care of themselves.
- **Family, friends and colleagues** – mental ill health can affect even basic interactions with family, friends and colleagues. Most individuals experiencing mental health problems find it difficult to nurture relationships, have problems with commitment or intimacy and frequently encounter sexual health issues.
- **Learning/education** – individuals who are living with mental ill health may socially isolate themselves and develop anxiety disorders and concentration problems. This can affect their access to educational opportunities and their inclusion and success in education and learning.
- **Work/employment** – mental health conditions may make it more difficult for an individual to engage with workplace activities and colleagues, meet and manage deadlines and manage their own role at work.
- **Day to day living** – preparing meals, getting dressed, personal hygiene, cleaning the house, looking after children and working to schedules can be more difficult for those with mental ill health. Individuals living with a mental health condition may also find budgeting, planning and coping with finances and paying bills more difficult. This may be at a time when finances are reduced due to absence from unemployment and can lead into financial difficulty.



Section 2: Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health

Summary

In this section you have learned about:

- the characteristics and importance of positive relationships
- how to support individuals with mental ill health and person-centred approaches to support
- your own responsibilities and limitations in respect of supporting people with mental ill health and when to refer individuals to others
- the role of the Mental Health First Aider
- supporting your own mental health
- attitudes to and perceptions of mental ill health and impacts of these
- the wider ranging impacts of mental ill health

Section 3: Understand a mentally healthy environment

In this section, you will learn about the legislative framework relating to mental health and how mental health policy can support individuals. You will develop an understanding of what contributes to a mentally healthy workplace environment including strategies to promote well-being, sources of information and resources about mentally healthy environments, strategies to reduce barriers to accessing mental health support and the importance of promoting a mentally healthy workplace. You will explore the idea of a wellness action plan, what this would comprise and why it is important.

Mental health legislation

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 21.

Mental health legislation is an area of the law that applies to people who have received a diagnosis or who have a potential diagnosis of mental illness, and to those involved in managing or treating this group of people. There are currently two specific pieces of legislation that apply to people who have mental health problems. These are the:

- Mental Health Act 1983 and 2007
- Mental Capacity Act 2005

The Mental Health Act 1983 sets out how a person can be admitted, detained and treated in hospital against their wishes and details safeguards which ensure that service users' rights are upheld. The Act was amended by the 2007 Act which introduced new definitions of mental illness and some new provisions on admission to hospital.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 aims to protect people who are unable to make decisions for themselves due to mental impairment or incapacity. It provides clear guidelines for carers and professionals about who can make decisions and under what circumstances. There is also legislation protecting the liberty of individuals which ensure people's freedoms are not restricted in care homes and hospitals so they cannot be detained unnecessarily against their will.

These laws are largely used to protect individuals who do not have the ability to act in a legally competent manner. These people may require treatment and/or another person to act in their best interests.

Section 3: Understand a mentally healthy environment

Other key pieces of legislation that will impact on individuals experiencing mental illness are the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and the Care Act 2014. These acts provide a framework for the provision of care of all individuals who require it. The Health and Social Care Act 2008 set up the regulation of adult health and social care services to ensure that service users received safe, quality care. The Care Act 2014 focuses on the improvement of independence and well-being for individuals through the provision of joined up, person-centred, health and care services.

As well as legal requirements, there are various guidance documents and codes of conduct which offer guidance on best practice in healthcare. These include:

- Code of Conduct for Health Care Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers published by Skills for Health (www.skillsforhealth.org.uk)
- Code of Conduct for Nurses published by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (www.nmc.org.uk)
- Common Core Principles of Dignity published by Skills for Care (www.skillsforcare.org.uk)
- Guidance and quality standards for mental health and well-being produced by NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) (www.nice.org.uk/guidance/lifestyle-and-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing)

Whilst these codes and guidance documents are voluntary, they do reflect best practice and complying with them will support the delivery of high quality care that complies with legislation.



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Drivers of mental health provision

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 22.

Legislation made by the UK government sets out the framework for mental health provision. This legislation is guided by research and statistics from organisations and government bodies involved in and interested in mental health. These organisations and government bodies are the drivers for legislation and national strategy on mental health as well as promoters of the mental health agenda. They provide information to the government and consult with the government on mental health issues.

Drivers include:

- The National Health Service (NHS) – is the major provider of healthcare services including dealing with mental health through GPs, hospitals and specialist mental health services. As well as providing services, the NHS collects data on the numbers of mental health patients seen, the types of mental ill health and the quality of provision.
- Public Health England is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care. This means that it carries out the policy and strategy set by the Department of Health and Social Care. They have a role in mental health promotion, prevention of mental ill health and suicide, and in improving the lives of people living with mental ill health.
- The Department for Education is responsible for education in the UK. They are responsible for setting the agenda for schools and this includes collating data about mental health in schools and setting the agenda for learning about mental health.
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) are responsible for providing clinical and care guidance and quality standards to health professionals, including guidance on mental health provision.
- The King's Fund is an independent charitable organisation who work to improve healthcare in England. They carry out research and produce reports on health issues as well as providing consultancy and advisory services to organisations including the government on health issues.
- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation is an independent social change organisation who are primarily concerned with addressing poverty. They are concerned about mental health because mental ill health can arise from and cause poverty. They produce reports on issues related to poverty.
- Charities such as Mind, the mental health charity, lobby the government on behalf of individuals who experience mental ill health. They collect and provide information about mental health and work to improve the lives of individuals with mental health problems.

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Knowledge Activity 11: Public Health England has supported the development of resources to help people improve their mental health. Have a look at www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/ and write down some of the support measures it offers.



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How policy supports mental health

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 23.

Mental health policy as defined by the government sets out the national vision for mental health relating to:

- Prevention of mental ill health
- Prevention of suicide
- Treatment of mental ill health
- Rehabilitation of mental disorders
- Promotion of mental health and well-being in the community

Mental health policies support mental health by setting benchmarks for all these areas and co-ordinating the programmes and services that will realise the government objectives for mental health. Without this overall vision, programmes and services to deliver them will be fragmented and inadequate.

Policy is supported by legislation which sets up the framework by which the provision is delivered, and individuals should benefit from co-ordinated, quality support for mental health. The aim of policy is to deliver better outcomes for individuals through the introduction of suitable legislation.

A priority in the current government policy is the prevention of ill health and promotion of well-being (including mental health and well-being as well as physical health) to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities. Health and care professionals and providers of services are given responsibilities in relation to these.

'All Our Health' is a resource to support health and care professionals to prevent ill health, promote well-being and build resilience in individuals as part of their everyday service provision. One of the topics in 'All Our Health' is about well-being and mental health. This is an initiative designed to influence direct action to improve health outcomes.

HOW POLICY SUPPORTS
MENTAL HEALTH

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Strategies to promote well-being

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 24.

Creating mentally healthy environments to promote well-being is more than simply creating safe and pleasant physical environments. The physical environment is important but psychological and social factors are more important for the mental well-being of individuals working or learning in the environment.

Strategies to promote well-being in the workplace or learning environment include:

- Giving individuals greater control over their work or learning. This involves giving individuals more responsibility for organising their own work, setting appropriate deadlines and showing a level of trust in them, as well as building self-esteem and self-confidence which contribute to well-being.
- Involving individuals in decision making. This adds to the sense of responsibility and gives individuals an investment in the successful outcome of decisions which acts as a motivating factor, raising morale and satisfaction.
- Training line managers or tutors to ensure they can support the delegation of control and decision making.
- Promoting good leadership and good relationships between leaders in the organisation and those guided by them or reporting to them. This will reduce conflict and build strong relationships which support well-being.
- In the workplace, engaging employees and ensuring they buy into the organisation's goals. Where everyone is working towards the success of the organisation, motivation and consequently well-being is better.
- Allowing flexibility in the workplace so that employees have greater control over their work-life balance. Evidence shows that long and/or irregular working hours leads to poorer well-being and mental health.
- Rewarding commitment and effort is important to show that individuals' efforts are recognised and appreciated. This leads to greater job satisfaction and contributes to well-being.
- Reducing stress and early intervention for mental health is an important factor in improving well-being. In addition, it reduces excess absences which can cause dissatisfaction and stress for others in the environment. Initiatives such as training and appointing Mental Health First Aiders can help to prevent the escalation of mental health issues.

It is important that any strategies are available to all individuals.

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Hameed's story

Hameed is a new manager in a residential care home. Care workers in the home worked long hours and had little control over the work they were required to do. Staff sickness absence levels were high and job satisfaction was low. Hameed was concerned about the environment as he felt it affected the well-being of the staff, which then impacted on the well-being of the residents. He decided to consult the staff on the issues they had with the working environment. He found that many staff had ideas for activities and initiatives that would benefit residents but had never been encouraged to implement these. In addition, staff had not been allowed any flexibility with shift patterns or working hours. Hameed made changes to address these issues and found that the level of absences and staff turnover went down and the well-being of staff and residents increased.

Sources of information, resources and support for mentally healthy environments

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 25.

There are a number of sources of information, resources and support for a mentally healthy environment. Sources may be internal to the work or learning environment or external.

Internal sources include:

- Mental Health First Aiders who have been appointed in the work or learning environment
- Mental Health Champions
- Internal counsellors
- Other support such as human resources or trade union and staff association support

External sources include:

- Government organisations such as Public Health England who provide advice, guidance and resources relating to mental health and well-being. (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england)
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who publish advice on mentally healthy environments as part of their support to organisations to help them meet their health and safety responsibilities. (www.hse.gov.uk)

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- ACAS (The Advice, Conciliation and Arbitration service) who advise employers on workplace policy and produce information about supporting mental health in the workplace. (www.acas.org.uk/supporting-mental-health-workplace)
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) who produce health related advice to nations and organisations including mental health guidance on good practice. (www.who.int)
- Charitable organisations such as Mind (the mental health charity) and The Mental Health Foundation. (www.mind.org.uk/media/43719/EMPLOYERS_guide.pdf, www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/how-support-mental-health-work)

Reducing barriers to accessing mental health support

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 26.

Often individuals do not access mental health support because of barriers or perceived barriers. These include:

- The stigma of mental ill health
- Concerns about confidentiality and trust
- Concern about being seen as weak or incapable
- Dislike of talking about mental health problems
- Being unsure where to go for help
- Believing the problem is not serious enough to ask for help
- Not having easy access to health professionals who can help e.g. being unable to take time away from work for an appointment
- Concerns about the treatments that may be offered and their impact
- Concerned about what others will think
- Fears about the outcome of seeking help
- Language barriers where individuals don't speak English as a first language and may not be able to express themselves
- Different cultural perceptions of mental ill health may make individuals reluctant to seek help e.g. they may be ashamed of having a mental health issue

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Many of these barriers arise because of attitudes to mental ill health, a reluctance to admit a problem, and a lack of knowledge about mental ill health and treatments available. Strategies to reduce barriers in a mentally healthy environment include:

- Talking about mental health to address the misconceptions and developing a knowledge and awareness of mental health issues.
- Encouraging individuals to seek early help in the knowledge that this could prevent more serious mental ill health.
- Making it clear how individuals can access help in the organisation.
- Emphasising that no problem is too insignificant to talk about.
- Training individuals to identify the early signs of stress and mental ill health.
- Ensuring confidentiality around mental health matters to build trust.
- Creating safe environments where individuals do not fear the consequences of admitting to mental health issues.
- Making environments and information accessible to speakers of other languages by using translators and printed leaflets in other languages.
- Understanding and working to challenge different cultural perceptions of mental ill health.

Importance of promoting mentally healthy workplace environments

Please read the following as it will help you to answer question 27.

Promoting mentally healthy environments in the workplace is important. Mental ill health in the UK accounts for some 70 million lost working days each year which is a cost for employers. Mentally healthy environments reduce absenteeism but also boost productivity and performance in the workplace. A happier workforce is also more able to cope with change or difficult situations.

By developing a good working environment that promotes well-being, the reputation of the organisation is improved as well as the physical health of employees. The link between mental and physical health is well documented.

Finally, by creating a mentally healthy workplace, organisations will meet their legal responsibilities. Health and safety legislation gives organisations responsibilities in respect of the mental health of employees – prevention prevention and early intervention in mental ill health helps compliance with this legislation.

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Wellness action plans

Please read the following as it will help you to answer questions 28, 29 and 30.

What is it?

A wellness action plan is a confidential document that is agreed between the employer (or a manager within the organisation) and employee to identify what will protect the employee's mental health and well-being at work. Every employee should have a wellness action plan whether they have an existing mental health problem or not.

Why is it important?

The wellness action plan is important because it starts the conversation about mental health and sets out the expectations of employers and employees. It is a proactive approach to managing mental health at work rather than a reactive approach, so it anticipates what could go wrong and puts safeguards in place to prevent or reduce the risk rather than dealing with the impact of a mental health issue once it arises. Wellness action plans are personalised and practical tools that help to prevent stress and mental ill health in the workplace. They will also help to evidence the employer's commitment to workplace mental well-being.

What does it look like?

The key components of a wellness action plan are:

- Approaches that an individual can use and adapt to support their own mental well-being. For example, taking designated breaks.
- The signs and symptoms of stress or mental ill health that should alert the employee and employer that there may be an issue. For example, feelings of anxiety, changes in behaviour or sickness absence.
- Any triggers in the workplace that could lead to stress or mental ill health for the employee. For example, lack of communication, lack of control over own workload.
- Potential impacts of stress or mental ill health on performance. For example, being demotivated and not being able to manage workload effectively.
- The actions that the employer and employee can take if there are signs of stress or mental ill health. For example, meeting to discuss workloads and scheduling.
- A review date for the plan to assess whether any amendments or additions are required.
- Any other actions or support that it is felt would support mental well-being at work.

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Example of a Wellness Action Plan:

Wellness Action Plan	
Name:	
1. What will help you to stay healthy at work?	E.g. taking a proper lunch break, getting some exercise during the day, keeping a to-do list, a lighter and more spacious office
2. What could your manager do to support you to stay mentally healthy at work?	E.g. give regular feedback, have regular catch ups, allow flexible working, explain developments in the organisation
3. Are there any work situations that can trigger poor mental health for you?	E.g. conflict at work, organisational change, tight deadlines, things not going to plan
4. How could poor mental health impact on your work?	E.g. make decision-making difficult, make you confused, give you headaches, make you tired, make concentration difficult
5. Are there any early warning signs that we might notice if you are experiencing poor mental health?	E.g. changes in normal working patterns and routines, withdrawal from social interaction with colleagues

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<p>6. What could be put in place to minimise risks of poor mental health or help you to manage the impact?</p> <p>E.g. extra catch up time with your manager, guidance on prioritising workload, flexible working, consideration of adjustments</p>	
<p>7. Is there anything in your preferred individual work style or temperament that your manager should be aware of?</p> <p>E.g. preference for more or less face to face or email contact, a need for quiet reflection time before or after meetings, having clear deadlines and expectations for a task, tendency for particularly high/low energy levels in the morning/afternoon</p>	
<p>8. If we notice early warning signs, what should we do?</p> <p>E.g. talk to you discreetly about it, contact a named person</p>	
<p>9. What steps can you take if you start to experience poor mental health at work?</p> <p>E.g. take a break from your desk, go for a short walk, ask your manager for support</p>	
<p>10. Is there anything else that you would like to include in this plan?</p>	<p>Employee signature: Today's date:</p> <p>Line manager signature: Date to be reviewed:</p>

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Shona's story

I started a new job and was surprised that my manager asked me to complete and agree a wellness action plan. I explained that I did not have any current mental health concerns, but she explained that all employees had one and it was to protect our mental health and ensure that the workplace remained mentally healthy. I found thinking about what makes me feel stressed at work was a useful exercise. I also needed to think about what would help me avoid or deal with that stress and the things that support my mental health and well-being. I am quite a social person and like to be very organised in my work. It's important for me to be able to develop strong work relationships to support my well-being. Breaks are important for me to catch up with and just have a chat with colleagues. What stresses me out is if I cannot organise my workload. I like to know what I'm doing in advance and have time to plan my workload. My manager agreed a new system where the team are advised of the next week's work on Friday afternoon and actually this worked well for everyone. Of course, there are times when unexpected things happen, but knowing most of my work is organised, I feel I am much more able to deal with these.

Knowledge Activity 12: Write down your own triggers for stress or mental health issues in your workplace or learning environment and decide what would help you avoid or deal with the issues.



Section 3: Understand a mentally healthy environment

Summary

In this section you have learned about:

- mental health legislation and the drivers of mental health provision
- strategies to promote well-being
- sources of information, resources and support for a mentally healthy environment
- reducing barriers to accessing mental health support
- the importance of a mentally healthy environment
- wellness action plans

Section 4: Extension activities

Further your knowledge and understanding of the topics in this workbook by completing the following extension activities.

Exploring mental health



Extension Activity 1: For your own place of work or learning, or one that you have researched, identify the internal risk factors for mental ill health and suggest what could be done to address them.

Section 4: Extension activities



Extension Activity 2: Choose one mental health disorder and find out about it. Write a guide explaining the signs and symptoms, causes and risk factors and support that may help an individual experiencing the disorder.

Section 4: Extension activities

Understand how to support individuals with mental ill health



Extension Activity 3: Find out about ways to support your own mental health and explain how you could use two different methods of support and how they would help you.

Section 4: Extension activities



Extension Activity 4: Identify two portrayals of mental health in the media – one positive and one negative. Describe them and say why they are helpful or harmful to people experiencing mental ill health.

Section 4: Extension activities

Understand a mentally healthy environment



Extension Activity 5: For your own place of work or learning, or one you have researched, identify issues that may impact on mental health and describe strategies that could be used to make the environment more mentally healthy.

Section 4: Extension activities



Extension Activity 6: Write your own wellness action plan. You may work with a colleague or manager if you like.

Please use these pages for additional notes

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If you have any queries, feedback or need further information please contact:

Learning Curve Group
1-10 Dunelm Rise
Durham Gate
Spennymoor, DL16 6FS
info@learningcurvegroup.co.uk
www.learningcurvegroup.co.uk

