



# Mental Health

Mental Health fact sheet for Adults Social Care and Health

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EAST RIDING  
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# Mental Health

...for Adults Social Care and Health

<b>Overview:</b>	This fact sheet explains what the term mental health means, outlines the main types of mental health conditions, and describes how these conditions may affect a person's daily life. It also provides information about the support available for people experiencing mental health difficulties.
<b>Content:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is Mental Health?</li><li>2. Diagnosed Mental Health conditions</li><li>3. Anxiety and Depression</li><li>4. Support</li><li>5. Caring for someone with a Mental Health condition</li></ol>

## I Introduction

Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It influences how an individual thinks, feels, and behaves, as well as how they cope with challenges, interact with others, form relationships, and manage daily activities. Everyone has mental health, and it can naturally fluctuate throughout life.

A person's mental health can be affected by a range of factors, including:

- The demands and stressors they experience
- Their physical health
- Significant life events
- The amount and quality of sleep they get
- Relationships and social connections
- Diet and nutritional intake
- Environmental, societal, and cultural influences

## 2 Diagnosed Mental Health conditions

There are many different diagnosed mental health conditions. Below are some of the more commonly recognised ones.

### Eating Disorders

Eating disorders affect people of all genders, and most individuals with an eating disorder are not underweight. Common types include:

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- Anorexia nervosa – involving attempts to maintain an extremely low body weight, often through restricting food intake or excessive exercise. A person may also experience a distorted perception of their body size or shape.
  - Bulimia nervosa – characterised by cycles of eating large quantities of food followed by behaviours intended to prevent weight gain, such as vomiting or using laxatives.
  - Binge eating disorder – where a person repeatedly eats large amounts of food in a short period and feels unable to control their eating during these episodes.

## **Bipolar Disorder**

Bipolar disorder involves recurring episodes of depression (very low mood) and mania or hypomania (very high mood). Individuals may feel well between these episodes.

These changes in mood can significantly affect daily life, relationships, and work. For example:

During a depressive episode, a person may feel sad, hopeless, or irritable, experience low energy, have a reduced appetite, or lose interest in usual activities.

During a manic episode, a person may feel unusually energetic, have an elevated or inflated sense of confidence, become easily distracted or agitated, have racing thoughts or plans, and need little or no sleep.

## **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**

OCD includes both:

- Obsessions – unwanted, intrusive thoughts, images, or urges that repeatedly enter a person's mind and cause distress.
- Compulsions – repetitive actions or mental rituals that an individual feels driven to perform in an attempt to reduce the anxiety caused by the obsession.

Common obsessions may involve fears of contamination, fears of harming others, or a need for order or symmetry.

Common compulsions include repeated checking, excessive cleaning, or counting in set patterns.

## **Personality Disorders**

Personality refers to the unique ways in which a person thinks, feels, and behaves. For some individuals, these patterns are significantly different from cultural expectations and can cause distress or difficulties in daily life. This is known as a personality disorder.

These difficulties may affect emotional wellbeing, self-image, and relationships. Personality disorders can be challenging to recognise and diagnose, and many individuals remain undiagnosed for long periods. It is estimated that approximately one in 20 people in the UK may have a personality disorder.

## **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

PTSD can develop after experiencing or witnessing a traumatic or extremely distressing event. It is not a sign of weakness, and it can affect anyone.

Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares, avoidance of reminders of the event, heightened alertness, and strong physical or emotional reactions. Effective treatments are available, even when the trauma occurred many years earlier.

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## Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

SAD is a form of depression linked to seasonal changes. While it is more common during winter, it can occur at any time of year. Some individuals experience symptoms in summer and feel better in winter. Symptoms are similar to those of depression and may include low mood, low energy, tearfulness, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and changes in sleep or appetite.

## Self-Harm

Self-harm refers to any behaviour where a person intentionally causes harm to themselves. It is not always visible and may include behaviours such as misusing alcohol or drugs, restricting food, over-exercising, placing oneself in unsafe situations, or engaging in physical harm.

Self-harm can affect anyone but is more common among women and girls, young people, individuals with a mental health condition, and LGBTQIA+ people.

3	<h2>Anxiety and Depression</h2>
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### Anxiety

Feeling anxious is a normal human response to situations that feel stressful, uncertain, or threatening. Anxiety can sometimes be helpful, as it may increase alertness, highlight potential risks, and motivate problem-solving. However, anxiety can become a concern when it is ongoing, intense, difficult to manage, or out of proportion to the situation. When this happens, it may indicate an underlying mental health difficulty.

Anxiety can affect both the body and the mind. Common symptoms include:

#### Psychological symptoms

- A sense of dread or fear that something bad may happen
- Feeling on edge or experiencing episodes of panic
- Difficulty concentrating
- Irritability
- Restlessness

#### Physical symptoms

- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Weak or unsteady legs, or tingling sensations in the hands and feet
- Shortness of breath or episodes of hyperventilation
- Heart palpitations
- Nausea
- Sweating
- Sleep difficulties
- Panic attacks

#### Behavioural effects

Anxiety can also influence behaviour. Individuals may withdraw from friends or family, find it difficult to attend work or education, or begin avoiding certain places or situations. Although avoidance may offer short-term relief, it often maintains or worsens anxiety over time, as the feared situation is never tested in reality.

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## Depression

Depression varies in severity. Mild depression may make daily tasks feel more difficult, while severe depression can cause feelings of hopelessness and, for some individuals, thoughts of suicide or self-harm. Depression is relatively common, and many people experience mixed symptoms of both depression and anxiety.

Depression is a complex condition influenced by multiple factors, such as genetic vulnerability, physical health conditions, adverse childhood experiences, and stressful life events, for example, bereavement, unemployment, relationship breakdown, bullying, or trauma.

Depression can affect thoughts, emotions, physical health, and behaviour. Symptoms may include:

### Emotional and cognitive symptoms

- Persistent sadness, low mood, or tearfulness
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or low self-esteem
- Irritability or agitation
- Feeling empty or emotionally numb
- Losing interest or pleasure in activities usually enjoyed
- Feelings of helplessness or hopelessness
- Excessive worry or anxiety
- Suicidal thoughts or urges to self-harm

### Physical symptoms

- Tiredness and reduced energy levels
- Disrupted sleep
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Constipation
- Reduced libido

### Behavioural and social symptoms

- Withdrawing from others, including close relationships
- Difficulty functioning at work, school, college, or in daily routines

<b>4</b>	<b>Support</b>
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## Support

It is important that individuals experiencing anxiety, depression, or any other mental health condition have appropriate support around them. Many people find it helpful to talk about what they are experiencing with trusted family members, friends, or colleagues. In these conversations, it is important that others listen to understand, offer empathy and reassurance, and avoid trying to immediately “fix” the situation or provide quick solutions.

Seeking professional support is also an important step. Often, the first point of contact is a GP, who can assess a person’s needs and discuss suitable treatment options. Many people delay speaking to their GP, but accessing help early can support recovery and improve outcomes.

A range of treatments and interventions may be recommended depending on the individual’s needs.

These may include:

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## Talking Therapies

- NHS Talking Therapies for anxiety and depression
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Interpersonal therapy
- Psychotherapy
- Counselling

## Medication

- Medication prescribed by a GP or mental health professional where appropriate

## Self-Help Approaches

- Self-help guides for anxiety
- Self-help resources such as books, online programmes, or structured activities
- Group exercise programmes available through GP referral
- Breathing techniques that may help during panic symptoms

## Specialist Treatments

- Specialist OCD services
- Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)
- Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR)

<b>5</b>	<b>Caring for someone with a Mental Health condition</b>
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Caring for someone with a mental health condition can vary day to day. It is important that any confirmed conditions are documented in the person's care plan, including information about what "good" and "bad" days look like for them, and any additional risks associated with their symptoms.

Care plans should also include details of any support the person receives, which may involve staff interventions, involvement from external professionals, and relevant supporting documents such as Positive Behaviour Support Plans, the Herbert Protocol, Body Maps, ABC Charts, Incident Forms, and Behaviour or Mood Frequency Charts.

The following should be taken into consideration:

- Ensuring the person is referred to appropriate trained professionals who can support both the individual and the staff team, such as the Community Mental Health Team, Crisis Intervention Services, and the GP.
- Placing the person at the centre of their care planning, encouraging them to set goals and make decisions that promote independence, empowerment, and self-expression.
- Ensuring that any medication prescribed for mental health conditions is reviewed at least annually, while remaining attentive to potential side effects and reporting concerns to the GP between reviews.
- Providing access to meaningful activities, social opportunities, and a balanced diet to support both physical and mental wellbeing.
- Documenting any significant risks relating to self-harm or behaviours that challenge within the person's risk assessment, ensuring clear prevention strategies, de-escalation techniques, and incident protocols are in place and consistently followed.

## Useful Support Tools

Below are a range of national and local support services that offer information, guidance, and emotional support for people experiencing mental health difficulties.

### Crisis Support (Immediate Help)

Samaritans — 24/7 confidential emotional support for anyone in distress.

Call: 116 123

Shout Crisis Text Line — Free, confidential text support for anyone feeling overwhelmed or in crisis.

Text: SHOUT to 85258

Under 19: Text YM to 85258

### National Mental Health Support & Information

Anxiety UK — Support, information, and resources for individuals affected by anxiety-related conditions.

Infoline: 03444 775 774

NHS Talking Therapies — Free NHS psychological therapies for anxiety and depression, available through self-referral in many areas.

Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/find-nhs-talking-therapies-for-anxiety-and-depression/>

Mind — Information, advice, and resources on a wide range of mental health conditions.

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

Mind Infoline: 0300 123 3393

Mental Health Foundation — Evidence-based resources on mental health, wellbeing, and prevention.

Website: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health>

NHS Mental Health Conditions — NHS information pages explaining symptoms, treatments, and support for different mental health conditions.

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

### Local Support

Hull and East Yorkshire Mind — Local mental health charity offering support services, advice, training, and community resources.

Phone: 01482 240 200

Email: [info@heywind.org.uk](mailto:info@heywind.org.uk)

Website: <https://www.heywind.org.uk/>