

Looking after your mental health and wellbeing

Guidance for staff



As part of its Health and Well Being Action Plan the Trust is committed to supporting staff who are experiencing stress or mental ill health. As many as 1 in 4 people will suffer from a mental health condition at some point in their lives.

The purpose of this resource is to signpost staff to a range of services that are available both internally and externally to the Trust and to raise awareness. There are many support networks available some of which are listed in this document. The Trust has also developed Guidance for Managers to raise their awareness of stress and mental health conditions and to support them in the management of their staff.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that you feel comfortable to talk to your manager, human resources or occupational health department if you are feeling unwell and need support. You will be supported to stay in work as long as you are fit to do so and should you need to take time off reasonable adjustments supporting your return to work will be considered.

In order to recover from your stress or mental health condition you need to firstly seek help. The Trust would urge you to use the contacts listed in this resource if you or someone you know is unwell. Often seeking help is difficult but is the first step in recovery. This document aims to help you or someone you know to make this first step.

‘Talking about mental health problems should be as easy as talking about physical health problems – you wouldn’t be ashamed or scared to tell someone you were ill would you? Being open about mental health goes a long way to breaking down the stigma. It’s time to talk, it’s ‘Time to Change’

Davina McCall – Time To Change Website

There are many strategies that you can put in place to help maintain good mental health and to reduce stress levels. Some helpful hints to support mental wellbeing are:

- Talking about your feelings to someone you trust
- Exercising for around 30 minutes a day
- Eating well – a healthy well balanced diet
- Drinking sensibly and avoiding addictive substances
- Keeping in touch with friends
- Taking occasional breaks to relax
- Doing something you are good at to boost your self esteem
- Accepting who you are
- Giving something back to your community
- Working – it gives you a routine, company and a sense of purpose
- Talking to your GP who can refer you to counselling, psychiatric services, self harm and suicide prevention services as necessary.



Tips on how to relax

- Deep breathing – taking 3-5 minutes, this involves breathing in and out slowly and in a regular rhythm to calm you down
- Deep muscle relaxation – taking around 20 minutes this includes stretching different muscles in turn and then relaxing them to release tension from the body and relax your mind.

Techniques for both of these methods can be found on the NHS Choices website: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/ways-relieve-stress.aspx>

If you have limited time you could try:

- Squeezing a stress ball
- Doing something creative
- Writing down how you feel
- Going for a walk
- Listening to some relaxing music
- Talking it over with a friend over a hot beverage.



What to look out for if you are worried about your own or someone else's mental health

You may notice a change in personality and behaviour and below are a few examples of signs to look out for, however each person with a mental health condition will present uniquely and therefore may show different signs.

- Low mood and fatigue (which may be indicated by changes in usual behaviour eg. in performance, in interactions with others or in presentation)
- Deterioration in personal hygiene/ appearance – signs of self neglect
- Increased restlessness, irritability or aggressive language
- Any visible signs of self harm – contact emergency services if in immediate danger or Samaritans on 028 9066 4422
- 'Odd' behaviour – excessive routines, withdrawn and in 'a world of their own', eg. laughing/ talking to themselves.

TYPES OF TREATMENT AVAILABLE FOR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

Psychological therapies

These are talking therapies, when you work with a therapist to try to better understand your current difficulties and to find ways of coping with them. They include Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). An online CBT program for depression called 'Beating The Blues' can also be accessed through referral from GPs.

Medication

These are drugs that may be prescribed to treat a number of mental health issues by altering the brain chemistry. There can be a number of side effects to these which should be taken into consideration.

Specialist services

These include different types of therapy including social work, community psychiatric nurses, occupational therapy, art therapy, drama therapy and music therapy, aimed to improve mental health and sense of well being, which can be accessed through the local mental health team.

INTERNAL SUPPORT IN THE TRUST

Occupational health

The Trust provides a comprehensive occupational health service. The aim of the service is to address the impact of work on health and of health on work.

The occupational health service is available to provide all employees with confidential and impartial advice and support on issues such as workplace health, rehabilitation after ill health and health monitoring. The service has a multi-disciplinary team including medical, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and clinical psychology staff. All employees can self-refer or request a referral through their line manager.

Tel: 028 9504 0401

Email address: occupationalhealth@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Staffcare

Each of us, at some stage in our lives, will experience challenges in our work or personal life. Staffcare provides free confidential counselling and support for the staff of Belfast HSC Trust. You can call the Staffcare Careline at any time, day or night, and speak with a counsellor.

Staffcare can offer you immediate telephone counselling support, or arrange for you to meet face to face with a counsellor in a

convenient and anonymous setting. They offer a short-term (up to 4 sessions), future-focused approach to counselling.

Tel: 0800 7313674

The [Here 4 U Guide](#) provides information on support services for staff to improve their health and wellbeing.

The [Guidance for managers on supporting the mental health & wellbeing of their staff](#) leaflet provides information for managers on how to support their staff with mental health issues.

Mental health improvement

The health improvement department also works with Trust staff in providing training programmes specifically aimed at improving mental health. These include:

- Developing Personal Resilience training course which can be accessed through TAS
- Mental Health First Aid training programme
- Top tips for looking after yourself
- Living life to the full
- safeTALK – suicide alertness for everyone
- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training).

Contact details: Health improvement, Glen Villa, KHCP

Tel. 028 9056 5421 health.improvement@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Clinical psychology

The clinical psychology service within the Belfast Trust offers on going support services to staff across the Trust. In addition to the specialist occupational health psychology services, all clinical psychologists working within specialist teams or clinical services are

available to help staff manage the stresses and challenges of their everyday work.

Clinical psychologists offer a range of support services including: training and supervision in how to deal with complex emotionally or behaviourally challenging work; team de-briefing exercises following traumatic cases or bereavement; individual consultations, where staff find it useful to discuss their reactions and emotions on a one to one basis.

Any manager, clinician or staff member may approach the Department to access support services provided by the clinical psychologists.

Head of Clinical Psychology Service: Tel: 028 9063 6608

INTERNAL SUPPORT IN THE TRUST

The internal support listed below while not directly dealing with those with stress or a mental health condition will provide support to those dealing with an issue which directly impacts on mental health.

Chaplaincy

Whether people have a religious faith or none, they might want to talk with a member of the chaplaincy team. The chaplains offer spiritual, religious and pastoral help and support to all who need and request it (patients/family/staff).

Chaplains are part of the wider healthcare team. The service they offer is confidential and non-judgmental and is available to everyone, irrespective of faith or background. Chaplains regularly visit the hospital wards. At other times contact your local switchboard who will have the chaplaincy contact details. The acute sites have chaplains on-call 24/7.

Most sites also have facilities for prayer and reflection. For further information contact a chaplain known to you or the Trust lead chaplain:

Lead chaplain, 1st Floor, East Wing, RVH
Tel. 028 9063 2045 Mob. 07919 892477

Carer support services

For information and advice for staff who have a caring role for an adult or child who is ill, frail or disabled. Contact:

Carers co-ordinator

Glen Villa, Knockbracken Health Care Park

Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8BH

Tel. 028 9056 4937

or

Carers co-ordinator

Grove Well-being centre, 120 York Road, Belfast, BT15 3HF

Tel. 028 9063 6800

Human resources

The HR department offers a wide range of services for staff. Further information is available on the HR policies section of the Trust intranet/HUB.

Work/Life Balance, Special Leave and Flexible Working Policies -

These are designed to provide staff with a range of flexible working arrangements to enable them to balance both home and work commitments and improve their working lives. Policies include: Compressed Hours; Part-time Working; Flexitime; Job Sharing; Home Working; Term-time; Flexible Retirement and Employment Break policies.

Contact: Improving Working Lives section

HR Tel. 028 9004 8554

Refer to HR policies on the HUB

Domestic Abuse Support Scheme

The [Domestic Violence and Abuse Workplace Policy](#) outlines the Trust's commitment to providing a harmonious and supportive working environment for staff affected by domestic violence/abuse. This policy has been developed to provide support and practical information for employees of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust who are experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse/violence. Contact Tel. 028 9504 8667 or Tel. 028 9056 5369

Macmillan Support & Information Centre at Belfast City Hospital

This Trust facility provides information and support, free of charge, to people affected by cancer. Friends of the Cancer Centre fund an activity programme at the centre to support health and wellbeing through exercise and relaxation. Some classes are open to the carers of oncology and haematology patients, including Inner Peace Meditation, Tai Chi and Meditation & Visualisation.

To book a place on these free classes and for further information please contact Macmillan Support & Information Centre, BCH, 77-81 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 7AB
Tel. 028 9069 9201, BCH ext 5210
Email: cancer.info@belfasttrust.hscni.net

NICaN: NI Cancer Network www.cancerni.net

NICaN have developed a patient information resource "Cancer services for patients, carers, families and friends" (also known as the Signposting Handbook) which contains information on services available from charities/voluntary sector including hospices. This resource is available from the Macmillan Support & Information Centre. The NICaN website includes a comprehensive section of information about cancer and a services database which includes

further information on individual HPSS services and teams.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT & SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Emergency Helplines

There are many services which can be accessed externally to the Trust. A number of these services are listed below however it should be remembered that this is not an exhaustive list.

Lifeline – Lifeline provides people in crisis or distress free and immediate access to expert assessment, counselling and support. Lifeline also welcomes calls from friends and carers seeking help for loved ones and professionals making third party referrals.

Tel. 0808 808 8000

Website: www.lifelinehelpline.info

Samaritans – Samaritans is available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

Tel. 028 9066 4422 Helpline: 08457 90 90 90

Website: <http://www.samaritans.org>

GENERAL MENTAL HEALTH

Mindwise: provides information on mental illness, living with mental illness and provide community services to those who have mental health conditions.

Tel. 028 9040 2323

Email: info@mindwisenv.org

NIAMH (Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health):

NIAMH includes:

- Beacon which provides support services to people with experience of mental illness through supported housing, day support and advocacy services
- Compass which provides an evidence base upon which NIAMH's services are based through undertaking innovative research in topics such as suicide, mental health service evaluation and mental health needs assessment.

Address: 80 University Street, Belfast BT7 1HE

Tel. 028 9032 8474

Praxis: Praxis is a charity which operates to provide support for those suffering from mental ill health along with a brain injury or learning disability.

Address: Praxis Care, 25-31 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 7AA

Tel. 028 9023 4555

Email: info@praxiscare.org.uk

ADDICTIONS

Alcoholics Anonymous: Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

Helpline phone: 028 9043 4848 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm; Sat / Sun 9am – 10pm)

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

FASA: FASA provide a specialist service for people with substance abuse, suicide and self harm within Northern Ireland.

Helpline phone: 028 90 80 30 40

Email: info@fasaonline.org

AddictionNI: Addiction NI provides support and treatment to people affected by alcohol or drug addiction.

Tel. 028 9066 4434

ANXIETY/ PHOBIAS/ OCD

Anxiety UK: Anxiety UK is a charity that gives advice to those suffering from anxiety related disorders including phobias and OCD.

Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

No Panic: No Panic is a voluntary charity which helps people who suffer from panic attacks, phobias, obsessive compulsive disorders and other related anxiety disorders including those people who are trying to give up tranquillisers.

Tel. 0800 138 8889

Email: <http://www.nopanic.org.uk/>

OCD Action: Provide support and information to anybody affected by OCD, works to raise awareness of the disorder among the public and frontline healthcare workers and strives to secure a better deal for people with OCD.

Tel. 0845 390 6232 / 020 7253 2664

Email: support@ocdaction.org.uk

Northern Ireland Agoraphobia and Anxiety Society (NIAAS): provides counselling, advice and support for people who suffer from phobias, panic attacks and anxieties.

Tel. 028 9072 7150

BEREAVEMENT

Cruse: is committed to breaking the stigma around grief and ensuring that everyone, no matter how old or young, can access the highest quality support following a bereavement. Not only does Cruse provide a telephone helpline and the useful information you will find on this website, but their trained volunteers provide face-to-face support and practical advice in branches across Northern Ireland.

Tel. 028 9023 2695

Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

BEREAVEMENT BY SUICIDE

PIPS Programmes: is a not-for-profit social enterprise which has developed suicide prevention and awareness training; their training is aimed at ordinary members of the community and gives practical skills based training in suicide prevention

Tel. 028 9028 7836

Email: info@pipsprogrammes.com

BIPOLAR DISORDER

Royal College of Psychiatrists: This website provides information about the condition of bipolar disorder and treatment methods.

Website: <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/expertadvice/problems/bipolardisorder.aspx>

CARERS FOR THOSE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM

Carers NI: is a charity set up to help the millions of people who care for family or friends. They provide information and advice about caring alongside practical and emotional support for carers.

Tel. 028 9043 9843

Email: <http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland>

Cause: Provides practical and emotional support to relatives and carers of people with serious mental illness.

Helpline Phone: 0845 603 0291

Email: info@cause.org.uk

Crossroads Caring for Carers: has provided respite care for carers, who provide care for an elderly, frail, ill or disabled friend or relative. Crossroads aim to meet the needs of carers by providing them with a much-needed break while providing peace of mind that their loved one is well taken care of by a Crossroads care attendant.

Tel. 028 9181 4455

Email: mail@crossroadscare.co.uk

DEPRESSION

Aware Defeat Depression: Aware Defeat Depression offers help and support for people experiencing depression and bipolar disorder, as well as their carers, family and friends. They run a network of 20 self help support groups across the country. Aware also operates a telephone helpline service and an email help service.

Tel. 028 9035 7820 Helpline: 08451 20 29 61 (9am – 1pm Mon – Fri)

Email: help@aware-ni.org

Website: <http://www.aware-ni.org.uk>

EATING DISORDERS

BEAT: Beating Eating Disorders: Beat is an organisation set up for those with eating disorders. There is a helpline open Monday to Friday, 10.30am to 8.30pm and Saturdays 1.00 pm – 4.30pm.

Phone: 0845 634 1414

Email: help@b-eat.co.uk

Eating Disorders Association NI: is run by a group of dedicated volunteers who have either experienced an eating disorder themselves or have helped a loved one through it. Having this experience they can offer the sufferer or the carer some friendly advice and can listen with understanding and empathy.

Tel. 028 9023 5959

Email: edani@btconnect.com

SUPPORT GROUPS FOR THOSE LIVING WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

LAMP (Life after mental health problems): Mental health service user group covering any issue that is affecting their mental health well being.

QUB - provide advocacy to clients who are in distress and their carers through LAMP.

Tel. 028 9024 2982

Email: lampgroup@hotmail.com

PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

Royal College of Psychiatrists: This website provides information about the condition of PTSD and treatment methods.

Website: <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfo/problems/ptsd/posttraumaticstressdisorder.aspx>

If you or someone you know is suffering from a stress or mental health condition you should be encouraged to speak to someone about it. There are a wide variety of services listed in this booklet which can be accessed both internally and externally and the Belfast Trust would encourage you to take this first step on the road to recovery. In order to have a good overall health and sense of well being you must maintain a good mental as well as physical health.

