



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Staying mentally well this winter

Wellbeing and Mental Health Support Plan for COVID-19



easy
read

Contents

Page



Introduction

3



The NHS

4



Helping everyone to look after their wellbeing

5



Wellbeing and work

9



Support in communities

12



Mental health services

17



Supporting health and social care workers

21



Some tips to improve your mental health and wellbeing

24



For more information

26

Introduction



The Government has written plans to help people in England this winter during the **COVID-19** outbreak.



COVID-19 is a new illness that is spreading around the world. It can affect your lungs and breathing.



This information explains our plans to help people who are having difficulty with their:

- mental health
- **wellbeing.**



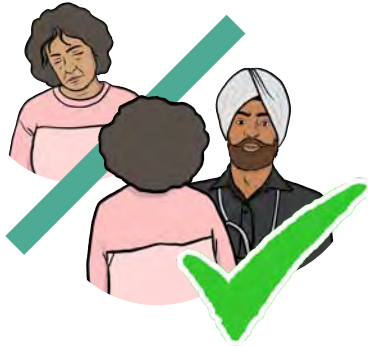
Wellbeing means feeling happy and healthy in your body and mind.

The NHS



Next year, we will give the NHS around an extra £500 million towards mental health services.

This extra money will help the NHS to:



- reduce waiting times, so that mental health services are available to people when they need them

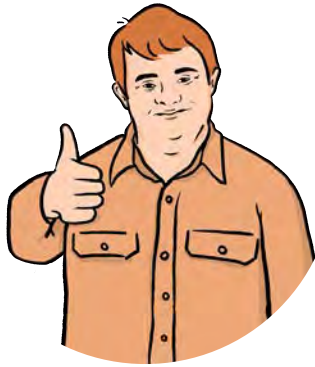


- support more people with their mental health



- train staff and bring in new staff to work in mental health care.

Helping everyone to look after their wellbeing



Good mental health and wellbeing is important for everyone, so that we can make the most of our lives.



There are many different things that can affect the way you feel.



We want you to be able to:

- look after your mental health and wellbeing



- get the support you need if you are having difficulties.



The winter

The winter can affect people's mood and wellbeing because there are fewer hours of daylight.



COVID-19

We have all had to do things differently because of COVID-19.



We have all had to stay at home and away from other people.



People have been apart from their friends and families.



All of these things have been difficult to cope with.

What the Government has been doing



Government departments, health services, councils and volunteer organisations have been working together across the country to help people affected by COVID-19.



We have:

- provided guidance to help people manage their feelings and low mood



- updated Public Health England's information about mental wellbeing



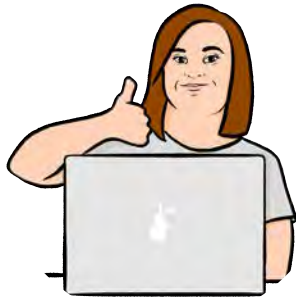
- produced new information for children and young people.



What we will do this winter

We will:

- update our guidance with new tips for keeping yourself well
- let more people know about **Every Mind Matters**



Every Mind Matters is an NHS website with helpful information and advice about mental health and wellbeing.



You can go to the website here:
www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/



- train and support staff in schools and colleges so they can help children and young people who are having problems with their mental health and wellbeing



- provide support for students who are having problems with their mental health and wellbeing.

Wellbeing and work



The Government has produced information that will help bosses to support their staff.

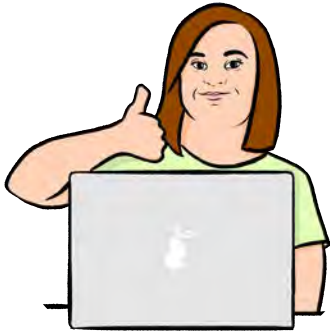


Talking toolkits

A **Talking Toolkit** helps bosses to talk with their staff about stress at work and find ways to deal with it.



You can find out more at:
**[www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/
talking toolkit](http://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/talking-toolkit)**



Mental Health at Work

The Mental Health at Work website has information and advice to help keep people healthy in your place of work.



You can find out more at:
www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk



Working from home

We have 7 simple tips to help you stay healthy if you are working from home.



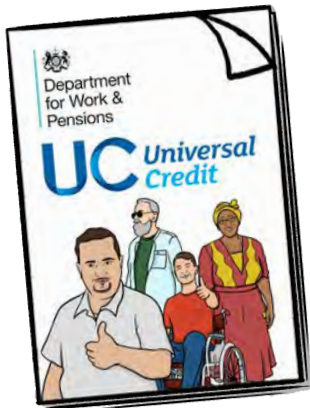
You can find more at: www.nhs.uk/working-from-home



Difficulties with money

If you have lost your job, might lose your job or feel worried about money:

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coping-money-worries-and-job-uncertainty-during-covid-19/



Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a benefit which helps you to afford the things you need to live.

This year we have increased Universal Credit by £20 a week.

Disabled people

We have stopped face-to-face **assessments** for sickness and disability benefits during the COVID-19 outbreak.



An **assessment** is a way to find out if someone needs help and support.

Support in communities



Volunteering with a local charity or community group is a great way to help other people.



It also helps your own mental health and wellbeing.

Government support

We have given extra money to:



- local charities and community groups so they can help more people who need support



- mental health charities



- local groups of people with mental health conditions.



NHS Volunteer Responders

NHS Volunteer Responders support people who have to stay indoors because of COVID-19. They help with things like:

- shopping
- collecting medicines.



Local councils

The Government has given local councils extra money to help people who could be very ill if they catch COVID-19.



Carers

Unpaid carers are doing important work during the COVID-19 outbreak.



We are making sure that carers get support for the extra work they do during this time.



Loneliness

We are giving extra money to charities so they can help people who are lonely.



Vulnerable children and young people

Vulnerable means you need some support to stay safe and well.



We are giving extra money to charities who are supporting the most vulnerable children and young people.



We are also giving money towards extra help for **foster families**.

Foster families look after children who can't live with their own parents.



We are giving money to help families who have **adopted** a vulnerable child.

Adopted means a child becomes part of a new family when they can't be brought up by their own family.



Early years

We are giving extra money to help young children who don't get much support. The money will help them learn how to read and understand words.



Schools

We are helping teachers who are having difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing.

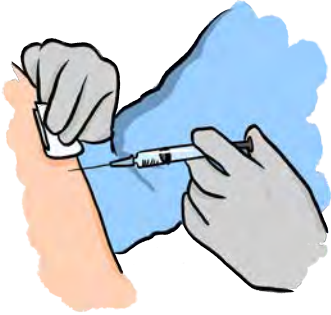


We are helping schools stay open so that children can catch up after missing lessons.



The physical health of people with a mental health condition

We are asking local doctors to check that people with a mental health condition are staying healthy with:



- a regular health check
- a flu **vaccine**. A **vaccine** is a jab that helps to stop you getting an illness



- a review of their care plan.



Social care

Social care is support you need to look after yourself.



We are looking at our advice and information for people who get a social care service.

Mental health services



Mental health services have stayed open during the COVID-19 outbreak.



Many services have had to change the way they work during the COVID-19 outbreak.



Many **talking therapies** appointments are now online.

Talking therapy is where you meet with a health professional and talk about your issues.



We are making sure you can still see someone face-to-face in a way that keeps everyone safe from COVID-19.



Services are checking on people with a mental health condition who are also likely to be very ill if they catch COVID-19.



Help Us Help You

Help Us Help You is a NHS campaign that encourages people to ask for help if they are having difficulties with their mental health.



Long COVID

Long COVID is where people still have health problems for a long time after they have stopped being ill with COVID-19.



We are looking at ways to help people with long COVID who have problems with their mental health and wellbeing.



Patient beds

We will help mental health services to support more patients who need to stay overnight, so that they can stay until it is safe for them to leave.

PPE



PPE stands for personal protective equipment. It is the face coverings, aprons, gloves and other things that people wear to keep safe from COVID-19.



We are making sure that mental health services are getting enough PPE.



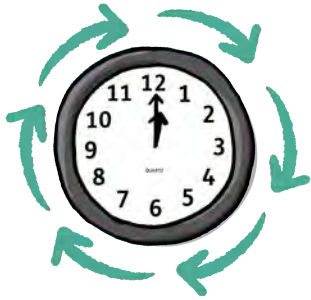
Testing

We are making sure that our staff get a test for COVID-19 when they need one.



Emergencies

All mental health trusts have set up an emergency telephone line for people who need urgent help with a mental health problem.



The telephone lines are open every day, all day and night.



You can find out more at:
www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline



We can now help more people who are in an emergency.



The accident and emergency departments (A&E) in hospitals have more mental health staff.

Supporting health and social care workers



NHS staff

We are giving a lot of support to our health staff.

This includes:



- a private telephone line for staff who need to talk but don't want to give their name



- a helpline for people when someone they know has died



- a way for staff to meet and share problems online.

We are also:



- setting up mental health and wellbeing **hubs** for NHS health staff. A **hub** is a service that covers a wide area



- improving work places for NHS staff in a way that helps their mental health and wellbeing



- asking every NHS organisation to check on the mental health and wellbeing of their staff.

Social care staff



We have worked with different charities to set up **Our Frontline**.

Our Frontline is a service to get help quickly to social care staff and others if they are finding it very difficult to cope.



You have to text the message 'FRONTLINE' to 85258 to start a conversation.



Hospice UK has set up a helpline for social care staff if someone they know has died.



We have written guidance for people working in adult social care. This includes ways to stay healthy during the COVID-19 outbreak.

We have set up a new website and app called **CARE**.



CARE has lots of information and advice for care workers. You can find out more at:

www.workforce.adultsocialcare.uk

Some tips to improve your mental health and wellbeing



Go to a green space

Spending some time in green space in daylight improves your wellbeing and helps you to feel good about yourself.



Make a mind plan

A **mind plan** is a guide for you to look after your own mental health and wellbeing.



You can make your own mind plan by answering a few easy questions on this NHS website: www.nhs.uk/your-mind-plan-quiz

Get some psychological first aid training



Psychological first aid is the help you give to someone who is finding it very difficult to cope with their mental health.



The training will teach you how to help someone who is in difficulty.



You can find out more at:
www.futurelearn.com

For more information



If you need more information please go to:

www.gov.uk/dhsc