



Shield Services Group Mental Health Awareness Support Document

Experts in Providing
Specialist Services
Nationwide



We all have mental health and just like our physical health, it needs looking after. One in four of us will experience a mental health issue in any given year. The human cost of poor mental health is incalculable.



What is Mental Health?

There are different ways of defining the term mental health. Some definitions emphasise positive psychological wellbeing, whereas others see it as the absence of mental health issues or mental illness.

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as:

“Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

What is Mental Ill Health

A mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thinking, emotions and behaviour and disrupts the person's ability to work or carry out other daily activities and engage in satisfying personal relationships.

Some people have only one episode of mental illness in their lifetime, while others have multiple episodes and periods of wellness in between. Only a small minority have ongoing mental health issues.

There are different types of mental illnesses, some of which are common, such as depression and anxiety disorders, and some which are not common, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. However, mental illnesses, as with any health difficulty, cause disability which is sometimes severe. This is not always well understood by people who have never experienced mental illness.

How Common are Mental illnesses

Mental illnesses are common across the world. There is a trend in developed countries, such as the UK, for anxiety to be the most common, followed by mood disorders like depression and then substance abuse disorders. Furthermore, women usually experience more anxiety and mood disorders than men, while men have more substance use disorders.

The Impact of Mental Health Issues

People who experience mental health issues may face what seem to be insurmountable difficulties and problems that can exacerbate their illness. This may be partly due to the nature of such difficulties but is made worse by low levels of support, understanding and acceptance of mental ill-health in society. Although many people with severe mental health issues say they would like to work, studies consistently show that people with long-term mental health issues in England have the lowest rates of employment for any group of disabled people.

Treatment and Support

There are many different types of treatment and support that can help people with mental health issues and mental illness along their recovery journey. There is no 'one size fits all' approach for helping those with mental ill health, as each person is different.

We are Here for You!

We are here to help any of our colleagues who may be experiencing mental health challenges and have several ways in which we can help provide support. Keep reading to find out more.

Mental health issues can lead us to the point where it feels as though there is nothing that can be done to help, and that the situation is Hopeless. We have a number of initiatives that can help anyone suffering from mental ill health.

HOPELESS

Mates in Mind

Mates in Mind Charity was formed in collaboration with the British Safety Council and the Health in Construction Leadership Group to support construction organisations in our industry. The charity is partnered with other leading charities/organisations such as Mind, Samaritans, The Construction Industry Helpline and Mental Health First Aid England.

Construction Industry Helpline

This helpline is available for all construction workers and their families. The helpline can support with many issues such as debt management matters, legal issues, financial help and mental wellbeing.

The helpline is available 24 hours a day, **0345 606 1956**

www.constructionindustryhelpline.com

The National Counselling Society

Find a counsellor through the website, a free assessment and 8 sessions for a fixed price of £30 per session available to Mates in Mind Supporters nationalcounsellingsociety.org/find-counsellor

Frank

Recreational drugs are widely available in our society and it can be a simple step to use them to provide short-term relief from daily pressures, but they are never a solution.

If you feel concerned that you are developing an unhealthy relationship with drugs, including alcohol, Frank is available to provide you with support via **0300 123 6 600** or talktofrank.com

Mental Health Foundation

If you are looking for support on ways to look after or improve your mental health, some great resources can be found at

mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health

Bereavement Counselling

As a part of your Canada Life, Group Life Assurance with Shield, you or a direct member of your family are entitled to bereavement counselling. Bereavement counselling gives people time and space to talk about their feelings following a bereavement. It provides unlimited access to a 24/7 helpline and up to four sessions with a qualified counsellor.

Call **0800 912 0826** any time of day or night.

Mental Health First Aider

Joanne Robb from our HR team is a qualified Mental Health First Aider and is available to provide you with assistance in the first instance. Joanne will provide confidential support to colleagues who are struggling with mental health challenges and can make arrangements for those affected to receive private support from established third party organisations.

“Dealing with people has been a significant part of my career, but becoming a Mental Health First Aider has provided me with opportunities to engage with colleagues on a new level. The chance to help people make an initial engagement with regards to helping their mental health is hugely rewarding, and something which I take great satisfaction from, especially as the topic of mental health is personal to me.”



If you would like to have a confidential conversation with Joanne, she can be contacted via **07786 915 766** or via email - joannerobb@shieldservicesgroup.com

shieldservicesgroup.com

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