

Frequently asked questions

These are provided for guidance and should be read in conjunction with the Policy

1. General Definitions

1.1 What is Mental Health?

Mental health refers to how we think, feel, and behave. It is common to all of us and can be described as a state in which we are able to cope with the 'normal' stresses of everyday life, while being able to work productively, interact well with colleagues and customers and generally make a valuable contribution at work.

Mental health is not a fixed state of being. It is a continuum, ranging from having good mental health to poor mental health, and from having no diagnosis to a diagnosis of severe mental ill-health. A person will vary in their position along this continuum at different points in their life.

A person in good mental health will feel in control of their emotions, have good cognitive functioning and positive interactions with people around them. This state allows a person to perform well at work, in their studies, and in family and other social relationships, but this may not necessarily always be recognised in their behaviour.

1.2 What is mental ill-health?

Mental ill-health covers any conditions that affect a persons' state of mind.

A mental health condition or impairment can be considered an unseen disability if it has / is likely to have a long-term (more than 12 months) and significant effect on your ability to complete normal day-to-day activities, such as using a computer, getting dressed for work, working set shift patterns, or interacting with people. Reasonable/workplace adjustments can be temporary or long term, and they can be anything that will help you to cope with whatever situation you are facing and help you to maintain your job. The [Tailored Adjustment Agreement](#) is there to support you and your manager with your particular condition and needs.

Mental ill-health can manifest in different ways. Some people may suffer with no physical side effects, while others may experience physical symptoms (e.g. increased blood pressure, lethargy, changes in eating habits). Common mental ill-health conditions could include:

- Anxiety
- Mood disorders, e.g. depression
- Stress

Less common mental ill-health conditions include:

- Personality disorders
- Eating disorders
- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar disorder

1.3 How can I found out about signs and symptoms I should be looking for?

The policy contains useful information on the service available to you as doe the Health and Wellbeing Policy. Have a look at the [Wellbeing Hub](#) on Link, where there is some useful information to help you. You may also want to look at the [EAP Service](#) for additional support. In some cases it may be appropriate to report through our Safeguarding leads, and therefore you may want to look at the Safeguarding Policy (POL [182/4](#)).

1.4 What responsibilities does NHSBT have for my mental health and wellbeing?

NHSBT has a responsibility to ensure that your workplace does not cause harm to your mental health. This means not doing anything which will make worse any existing mental health conditions or causing any conditions to start. It also means that we will support you with a new or existing mental health condition to stay at or return to the workplace, as we recognise the benefits of being at work can bring.

1.5 What responsibilities does my manager have for my mental health and wellbeing?

Managers have a responsibility to be aware of the signs and symptoms of the common mental health conditions and to recognise when you or someone else in their team might be struggling. Once aware of your mental health condition, managers have a responsibility to make workplace adjustments to support you during this time, to maintain open channels of communication with you and to signpost you to sources of support.

1.6 What responsibility do I have for my own mental health?

As an employee of NHSBT, it is your responsibility to take care of your mental health, to enable you to complete your work to the best standard possible. This means getting to know when you might need support and taking steps to access this help, attending any therapy sessions or appointments, and taking any medication as required, and speaking to your manager about any adjustments which might be required at work.

You are also responsible for supporting fellow colleagues in their awareness of this policy and in accessing help if they need it.

A mental health condition can be considered a disability if it has / is likely to have a long-term (more than 12 months) effect on your ability to complete normal day-to-day activities. If this is the case, you are protected by current legislation, your manager must make reasonable adjustments for you, and you must not be disadvantaged or discriminated against compared to non-disabled colleagues.

2.. Policy Approval and Review

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