

### Frequently asked questions

These are provided for guidance or quick reference guide only, so always refer to 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.

One in four of us will experience a mental health issue in any given year. One in five and one in six working age adults is depressed, anxious or experiencing stress-related problems at any one time. Throughout the course of your life it is highly likely that you will either develop mental ill-health yourself or have close contact with someone who does.

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 find out about signs and symptoms I should be looking for?

Have a look at our [Wellbeing Pages](#) on People First, where there is some useful information to help you.

### 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 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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