

Bolder Healthier Community Champions

Mental Health Webinar

Birmingham Public Health 2022



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Mental Health in Winter - a time to be alert!



Everyone has down days, but when someone is feeling low, or have been feeling worried for weeks or even months, it could be a sign of mental health issues.

In winter we often see people struggle more than in summer. Some of this can be because of SAD or seasonal affective disorder which [affects more than 2 million people in Britain](#). But also the festive season can be a lonely or difficult time for people without social networks and the end of year often is a time for reflection which isn't always positive.

People may be in more debt due to spending during the festive season, and sometimes there is a longer wait until the next pay day. This year there is the added pressure of the costs of heating.

So plenty of reasons to be a bit more alert about mental health at this time of year.

What are mental health problems?



[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

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PAGE 3



What do we mean by mental health?

- Everybody has mental health and it's important that we take care of it. Just like our physical health.
- Our mental health affects how we think, feel and act in our daily lives.
- Our mental health can go through periods of ups and downs

Poor Mental Health

Can make it difficult to cope with our daily lives and feel just as bad as physical illness



Affects around 1 in 4 people every year



Can include anxiety, depression, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder

How many people are affected by mental health?

In the West Midlands, 17.7% of people over 16 are estimated to have a common mental health disorder (2017)

- 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in England [\[1\]](#).
- 1 in 6 people report experiencing a common mental health problem (like anxiety and depression) in any given week in England [\[2\]](#).

Suicidal thoughts and self-harm aren't mental health diagnoses. But they are related to mental health. Over the course of someone's lifetime [\[2\]](#):

- 1 in 5 people have [suicidal thoughts](#)
- 1 in 14 people [self-harm](#)
- 1 in 15 people attempt suicide.

What can impact our mental health?

Loneliness

Loneliness has worsened during the Covid-19 pandemic and can be particularly difficult during the winter months. 7.2% of people in a 2021 study felt lonely all or most of the time.

Bereavement

Covid-19 has led to a disproportionate amount of bereavement.

Grieving can be emotionally overwhelming and impact our mental health.

Life challenges

Challenges in our every day life can often affect our mental health, including the loss of a job or relationship, work stress, housing situation, or financial problems.

Physical health

Poor physical health, whether temporary or a long-term condition, often impacts how we feel. Getting the right amount of sleep can have huge benefits for our mental health.

Our environment

Family, relationships and friendships can impact how we feel, and so can the world around us; for example the weather, national concerns or global issues.

Social media

People who use over 2 hours of social media a day are more likely to report poor mental health.

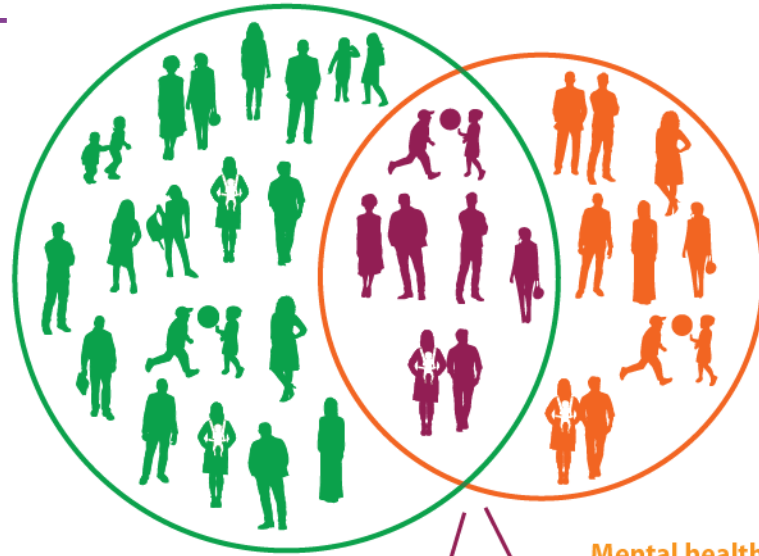
Use of social media is linked to anxiety, low self-esteem and feeling self-conscious.

Physical health and mental health – both are important!

Mental health and physical health are closely connected. People living with a physical health problem are twice as likely to have poor mental health, and this can have a detrimental effect on their physical condition.

And many people living with mental health difficulties struggle with their physical health. In fact, people living with a severe mental illness have a life expectancy that's 15-20 years shorter than those without.

So it's important that people working to support physical health don't forget about mental health, and similarly mental health professionals need to support physical health as well in those they support.



Long term conditions:
30% of population of England
(approx. 15.4m people)

Mental health problems:
20% of the population of England
(approx. 10.2m people)

30% of people with a long-term condition have a mental health problem
(approx. 4.6m people)

46% of people with a mental health problem have a long-term condition
(approx. 4.6m people)

[From Long-term conditions](#) and mental health: the cost of co-morbidities
[Centre for Mental Health](#) © Centre for Mental Health, 2015



[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

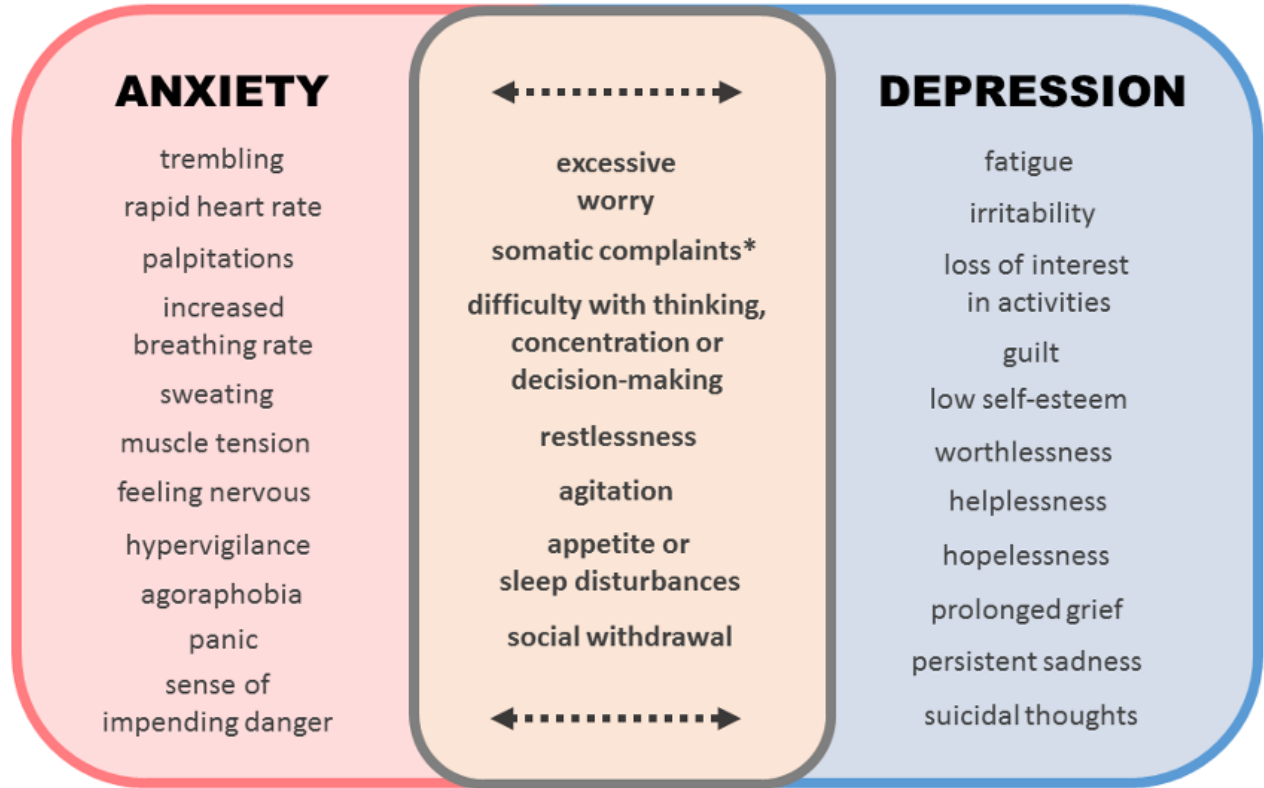
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PAGE 8



There is some overlap of symptoms between anxiety and depression, these are the most common mental health conditions.

(*) Somatic complaints:
unexplained physical complaints such as headache, stomach ache, chronic pain.



Signs of anxiety and depression

Anxiety

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried or afraid about a situation.

It's our bodies' natural response to things we perceive as dangerous and threatening.

Physical signs of anxiety

Physical symptoms may include fast breathing and heartrate, a tight chest, muscle aches, headache, nausea, dizziness and sweating.

Emotional signs of anxiety

People may experience frequent, uncontrollable worrying and feelings of dread. They may feel tense, restless, irritable or 'spaced out' and disconnected.

Depression

Depression is a low mood that can last a long time or keep returning, affecting your everyday life.

Physical signs of depression

People may feel low and easily upset, or tired and lethargic. They might feel even more sensitive than usual to criticism or external circumstances.

Emotional signs of depression

Depression often feels like a huge weight on top of you that stops you from moving, that follows you around everywhere you go.

Talking about anxiety



[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

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PAGE 11



Bolder Healthier Community Champions – Looking after yourself



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Looking after your mental health

Top tips to improve your mental wellbeing

- Write (or type) your thoughts and feelings in a journal or diary
- Plan some recovery time to follow an upcoming difficult period
- Even if you're having trouble sleeping, you can still rest your body and mind
- Talk to your peers, family or friends about how you're feeling
- Keep active, enjoy the outdoors and eat regularly



Keep a diary to avoid 'bottling things up'



Plan ahead for difficult times



Relax & rest even if you can't sleep



Talk to someone



Take care of your physical health

What to do in a crisis

- If urgent mental health help is needed you can ring **0121 262 3555** or **0800 915 9292** for advice and support.
- This line is **available 24 hours, 7 days a week** and can be used whether you are known to our services or not.
- You can also email help@birminghammind.org or get in contact the webchat service [Helpline - Birmingham Mind](#)
- If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Coping during a crisis

The mental health charity Mind has information on [ways to help yourself cope during a crisis](#). This includes calming exercises and a tool to get you through the next few hours.

Bolder Healthier Community Champions



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What is the role of Bolder Healthier Champions?

Talk about the impact that mental health is having on people in your community

Connect people to support through web pages and services

Feedback to us where more help is needed so we can continue to improve the support for citizens

Talk about the impact that mental health is having on people in your community

Bolder Healthier Champions **should not:**

- Provide anything other than approved information
- Receive personal information from people

Talk to members of your community

Is a single dad aware of what specialist support may be available?

Is an older neighbour living alone and struggling with feelings of loneliness?

Is a neighbour struggling with a relationship break-up and needs a friendly chat?

Is a mum at the school gate having difficulty finding time for outside interests?

Speaking about the impact of mental health on everybody helps to raise awareness and reduce shame and stigma

Do you know an unpaid carer who could find themselves feeling isolated as a result of their caring role?

Are childcare costs impacting a parent's decision around changing their employment situation?

Do rising rent costs may mean someone may be feeling insecure about their housing situation?

Are financial troubles causing chronic stress and anxiety for a colleague?

How can you provide brief support in everyday interactions?

- Provide a **brief intervention**
- Use open questions with the **Ask, Assist, Act** model

Use an example: For non-urgent mental health support

Ask

How are you?

How are you feeling at the moment?

What's been happening for you recently?

Assist

You mentioned you are feeling low, do you know why you feel like that?

Would you like some more information on services that may help you?

Act

- **Mind** The charity for better mental health' has an extensive range of self help resources available.
- The **NHS** has a range of self-help tools available.
- Birmingham City Council **Wellbeing resources** and support gives access to **Mental Health Services**.
- Their GP may be able to support them in various ways.

How can you provide brief support in everyday interactions?

- Provide a **brief intervention**
- Use open questions with the **Ask, Assist, Act** model

Use an example: For a neighbour who's looking tired

Ask

How are you?
Are you sleeping okay?
Are you feeling tired?

Assist


Do you know why you're not sleeping well?
Are you getting enough rest?
Would you like any information about mindfulness?

Act


Suggest [practical tips](#) to help sleeping.
Encourage them to try something that they find relaxing or learn some new relaxation techniques.
Explain that whilst mindfulness can be taught in person, there are a range of free and paid apps and [resources](#)

Case study part 1

Suky is a Bolder Healthier Community Champion and lives on a cul-de-sac of bungalows; a lot of her neighbours are elderly and she knows the gentleman next door recently lost his wife.




"Hi John, I'm sorry to hear about Mary. If you ever need some company, I'm usually in most mornings. Just pop round for a chat."




"Thanks Suky, that's very kind of you. My family can only visit me on weekends so it'd be nice to see a friendly face during the week."

Case study part 2

Suky is a Bolder Healthier Community Champion and has extended an open invitation for her neighbour John, a recent widower, to pop round for a chat. One morning John calls round and Suky welcomes him in and offers him a cup of tea.



“Hi Suky, thanks for inviting me round. I’ve been feeling really lonely since Mary passed. The house seems so quiet without her.”



“Thanks for popping in John, I’m so sorry for your loss. If you’d like, I can suggest some websites that could help. I think I’ve got a phone number that might be useful too.”

Sharing experiences of depression



[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

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PAGE 23



Want to learn more?

- Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust's [Recovery College for All](#) offers a range of sessions, which are open to service users, their carers and families, members of the Trust and staff.
- [Mental Health First Aid England](#) offers a variety of training courses which teaches people how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue.
- [NHS Health Education England](#) has a selection of mental health education and training opportunities and information. This enables health and care professionals to have an awareness of mental health needs and how they may affect their patients and service users.
- [elfh](#) is a Health Education England programme in partnership with the NHS and professional bodies providing e-learning to educate and train the health and care workforce.

Connect people to support through web pages and services

What do if you need some help

- [Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust](#) provide clinical mental health services and have a 24hr helpline 01212623555 or 08009159292
- [Birmingham Mind](#) provide a wide range of local support for people experiencing and affected by mental health issues.
- [Samaritans](#) have a free to call service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year if you want to talk to someone in confidence call on 116 123
- [The Waiting Room](#) is a local website and app which has a lot of local support groups and community sector provision not just for mental health.

What to do in a crisis

- If urgent mental health help is needed you can ring **0121 262 3555** or **0800 915 9292** for advice and support from Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.
- This line is **available 24 hours, 7 days a week** and can be used whether you are known to our services or not.
- You can also email help@birminghammind.org or get in contact the webchat service [Helpline - Birmingham Mind](#)
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Coping during a crisis

The mental health charity Mind has information on [ways to help yourself cope during a crisis](#). This includes calming exercises and a tool to get you through the next few hours.

Helplines

<p>Alcohol Change UK focuses entirely on reducing alcohol harm, working across the whole range of serious alcohol harms, from mental and physical to societal and economic.</p>	<p>Beat is the UK's eating disorder charity. Founded in 1989 as the Eating Disorders Association, their mission is to end the pain and suffering caused by eating disorders.</p>	<p>Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) stands together with everyone who's struggling with life, no matter who they are, where they're from or what they're going through.</p>
<p>Hearing Voices Network supports people who hear voices, see visions or have other unusual sensory perceptions - and all those who support them.</p>	<p>Mental Health Foundation finds solutions for individuals, those at risk and for society, in order to improve everyone's mental wellbeing.</p>	<p>Mind provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem & campaigns to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding</p>
<p>National Self Harm Network is a forum to support individuals who self harm to reduce emotional distress.</p>	<p>Rethink Mental Illness offers practical help on a wide range of topics such as community care, welfare benefits and carers rights.</p>	<p>Samaritans are available day or night, for anyone who's struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure.</p>

Connect to specific support for loneliness and bereavement

Loneliness

National Services:

- Age UK offer a [telephone befriending service](#)

Local Services:

- [Birmingham Mind's directory](#) helps to find peer support groups where you live such as [Birmingham Mind](#)

Loneliness support



Bereavement

National Services:

- [Cruse Bereavement Support](#)
- [Good Grief Trust](#)
- [At a Loss](#)

Local Services:

- [Beyond the Horizon](#)
- [Cruse Birmingham](#) 0121 687 8010

Bereavement support



Connect to specific support for life challenges

Personal challenges

Health [The NHS website](#)

Youth [Forward Thinking Birmingham](#)

Relationships [Relate](#)

Pregnancy [NHS - Pregnancy](#)

Parenthood [Foundation Years](#)

Separation & Divorce [Gingerbread](#)

Retirement [Age UK](#)

Personal challenges
support



Practical challenges

Money [Money Saving Expert](#)

Debt [StepChange](#)

Housing [Shelter England](#)

Workplace disputes [ACAS](#)

Unemployment [Advicenow](#)

Redundancy [www.gov.uk](#)

Legal issues [Citizens Advice](#)

Practical challenges
support



Connect to specific support for physical health

Activity resources

There are lots of [things you can do to keep physically active](#) besides exercise.

[The Active Wellbeing Society](#) run free, accessible peer support groups and activities across Birmingham including:

- Walk and Talk sessions
- Cycling groups
- Gardening groups

Activity support



Sleep resources

If you're not getting 7 hours sleep, try moving more or reducing caffeine intake and screen time close to bedtime to help improve your sleep

For further self-help tips to sleep better visit the NHS's [self-help tips to fight tiredness](#) and [practical tips](#) to help sleeping

Sleep support



Connect to support for our environment and social media

Our environment

Birmingham City Council has lots of helpful information to support its residents:

[Weather disruptions affecting schools and services](#)

[Roadworks and closures](#)

[Cost of living support](#)

[Climate emergency](#)

Our environment
support



Social media

Social Media Tips


- Unfollow or mute accounts
- Delete social media apps
- Limit your time online
- Think before you post
- [The Emoji Scale](#)

Social media support




Case study 2

Anton is a Bolder Healthier Community Champion and meets his friend Awaale while at the shops. She seems a bit rushed and doesn't look like her usual cheerful self so Anton asks what's wrong.



"Thanks for asking, Anton. Ever since I increased my hours at work I feel tired all the time. Even when I do get a day off all I want to do is sleep!"



"That sounds tough, Awaale. A change in routine is bound to take some getting used to. The NHS has some really useful tips for getting a good night's sleep; why don't you have a look at their website?"

Feedback to us where more help is needed so we can continue to improve the support for citizens

Email the Bolder Healthier team on:
BolderHealthierChampions@birmingham.gov.uk

Thank you for being a Bolder Healthier Champion!



We look forward to working together to improve the wellbeing of everyone in Birmingham.

By volunteering to receive the latest health information, you can use these messages to help you support yourself, your family, your friends and your wider community with:

- **Monthly themed webinars**
- **Tailored resource packs**
- **Health awareness training**

If you know someone else who might like to get involved, they can read more about the programme at [Bolder Healthier Champions](#)



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Thank you for your time!



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