

## Mental Health & Wellbeing

### Understanding Mental Health

We all have mental health, like we all have physical health. Both change throughout our lives. Our mind, like our body, from time-to-time can become unwell.

Mental health has to do with different aspects of our lives including

- How we feel about ourselves.
- How we feel about others.
- How we are able to meet the demands of life.

The World Health Organisation states “Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder”. It is defined as “a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own abilities, 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.”

Good mental health is essentially about how

you look after yourself physically and mentally. Mental health is a spectrum, or a continuum, that applies to everyone. It is all to do with daily living. There are days when you can feel at either end of the spectrum. The ideal is to try to keep yourself somewhere in the middle.

### Well-being:

At the ‘healthy’ end of the continuum individuals are experiencing well-being, a state of good mental and emotional health. At this point people may also experience stress but are managing it well as an aspect of everyday life.

However, where problems become more serious or prolonged, coping may become progressively more difficult and can lead to poor mental health necessitating some form of appropriate support.

### Emotional Problems or Concerns:

Discomfort has risen to a level of distress leading to the beginning of difficulty in coping which can result in possible insomnia, lack of concentration or loss of appetite. If the distress levels increase, it is advisable for a person to seek appropriate professional help as the person at this point of the continuum may be vulnerable to depression or general anxiety.

Where can I find out more about mental health and wellbeing?

Minding Your Head website

[www.mindingyourhead.info](http://www.mindingyourhead.info)

Mental Health Foundation website

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)

There is a wide range of voluntary sector groups and organisations that offer support and information on a range of specific problems – please refer to the appendix at the back of this resource for a full list of services in your local health trust area.

