Mental Health – A Brief Introduction
Defining Mental Health

“Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. In this positive sense, mental health is the foundation for individual well-being and the effective functioning of a community.”

(World Health Organisation)
The mental health continuum

- No absolutes

Maximum mental wellbeing

A person with a diagnosis of a serious illness but who copes well and has positive mental health

A person with no illness or disorder and positive mental health

Severe diagnosis

A person with a diagnosis of a serious illness and who has poor mental health

A person with no diagnosable illness or disorder but who has poor mental health

Minimal mental wellbeing

No diagnosis

- The continuum...
Common mental health diagnoses

- Depression (includes postnatal depression, SAD)
- Anxiety Disorders (GAD, OCD, phobias, panic disorder)
- Psychosis (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder)
Stress!!

• Not a mental health diagnosis

• Socially acceptable to talk about stress but not mental health

A condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that “demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilise”

(Stress Management Society 2015)
Stress Vulnerability
5 Areas: a simple model to understand problems

- Situation
- Thoughts
- Emotions
- Physical symptoms
- Behaviours
Depression

- **THOUGHTS / IMAGES**
  - I am no good to anyone anymore
  - I am a failure
  - I will never get any better
  - I am just a burden
  - Life's not worth living

- **FEELINGS / MOODS**
  - Depressed
  - Guilty
  - Irritable
  - Anxious

- **PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS**
  - No energy, Tired all the time
  - No appetite or eating too much
  - No interest in sex, Poor sleep
  - Poor memory and concentration

- **BEHAVIOURS**
  - Avoiding people
  - Staying indoors or in bed
  - Seeking reassurance from family or others
  - Avoiding physical exercise
  - Using drugs or alcohol

**THE ‘OUTSIDE WORLD’ – LIFE SITUATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS**
- Death of a family member or friend.
- Problems with housing or neighbours.
- Money worries. Losing your job. Relationship problems or break up.
Anxiety

THE ‘OUTSIDE WORLD’ – LIFE SITUATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS
Money worries, Relationship or family problems
Trouble with housing or neighbours
Stress at home or work

THOUGHTS / IMAGES
‘I’m making a fool of myself’
‘I’m having a heart attack’
‘I’m going mad’
‘Everyone can cope except me’

FEELINGS / MOODS
Sad, Guilty, Irritable, Lonely, Worried

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS
Not sleeping, Tense, shaky
Racing heart, restless
Aches and pains, tired

BEHAVIOURS
Stop doing things you enjoy,
Avoid people,
Drinking more alcohol than usual,
Too busy to relax,
Checking things,
Obsessional cleaning
Prevalence of psychiatric disorders by sex in England (2014) (in % of population)

Men's mental health

- 5,688 completed suicides in 2016, 76% male v 24% female (ONS 2017)
- Suicide rate was highest in middle-aged men = 40-44 (ONS 2017)
- Less likely to access psychological therapies than women, 36% of referrals to IAPT are men (IAPT 2015)
- More likely to become alcohol + drug dependent (NHS Digital 2015)
- Majority of men would take time off work to get medical help for physical symptoms, 19% said they would do the same for anxiety + 15% for feeling low (Men’s Health Forum 2016)
- Less likely to seek medical support and disclose than females (Mental Health Foundation 2016)
- Lower access to the social support of friends, relatives and community (Pevalin & Rose 2003)
Figure 1: Male suicides in each major occupational group, deaths registered in England, 2011 to 2015

SOC major occupation group

1. Managers, directors and senior officials
2. Professional occupations
3. Associate professional and technical occupations
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations
5. Skilled trades occupations
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations
7. Sales and customer service occupations
8. Process, plant and machine operatives
9. Elementary occupations

Standardised mortality ratio (SMR)

Above national average in terms of suicide risk
Responding to distress

1. Consider risks
2. Have a conversation
3. Non-judgemental listening
4. Giving information
Medical Emergencies

• Overdose/poisoning
• Suicidal
• Serious injury requiring medical attention

The safety of the person is paramount

Urgent Medical Care i.e. A+E, 999, crisis line, administer first aid
Non-judgemental listening

Acceptance/respect
• Active listening
• Giving positive attention
• Not interrupting / talking over the person
• Respect Feelings, experience values

Genuineness
• Talking + sharing feelings about self appropriately
• Not being defensive
• Responding naturally

Empathy
• Reflecting back
• Sharing related experiences
• Body language reflecting other persons feelings
• Showing warmth
Self-help and wellbeing

New Economics Foundation - http://www.neweconomics.org
Professional resources

Statutory services

Primary Care -
  • GP
  • Improving Access to Psychological Therapies – IAPT

Secondary Care (Specialist psychiatric services)
  • Community mental health teams (CMHTs)
  • Crisis intervention
  • Counselling/psychotherapy/CBT
  • Early intervention services
  • A+E (Urgent Care)

Voluntary / 3rd sector
  • Specific groups (may be user-led, self-help)
  • Peer support groups
  • Community groups
  • Voluntary sector organisations
  • Samaritans 116 123, jo@samaritans.org
Leeds specific

Mindwell - https://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/

IAPT – 0113 843 4388
https://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/iapt/home/

Mental Health SPA - 0300 300 1485
Leeds Crisis Assessment Service (CAS) - 0300 300 1485
https://www.leedsandyorkpft.nhs.uk/contact-us/urgent-help/

Forward Leeds (drugs + alcohol) - 0113 887 2477

Leeds bereavement forum - 0113 225 3975 http://lbforum.org.uk

Leeds Suicide Bereavement Service - 0113 3055803 http://leedssbs.org.uk/
Samaritans - 116 123
Male specific

CALM - https://www.thecalmzone.net/

Movember Foundation - https://uk.movember.com/

Men's Health Forum - https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/
Training

Mental Health First Aid = teaches people how to identify, understand and help someone who may be experiencing a mental health issue

½ day suicide alertness training that prepares anyone 15+ to become a suicide alert helper

2 day interactive workshop in suicide first aid. Teaches participants to recognize when someone may have thoughts of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety
Summary

• We all have mental health

• There is a stigma about mental ill health

• We can see that people are in distress by noticing their behaviour and presentation

• Non judgemental listening is a useful way to show empathy with people who are distressed