

Housing and mental
health: are we doing
enough?

What will we cover today?

What do we mean by mental health?

What does housing have to do with mental health?

What should we be doing?

Are there additional considerations during and post lockdown as a result of COVID-19?

What do we mean by mental health?

World Health Organization:

Mental health is "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, 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".



HDN

YOUR NETWORK
TO DIVERSITY

Understanding the mental health continuum



People have also tried to explain the difference between mental health and mental health conditions by talking about a range or a continuum where mental health is at one end, represented by feeling good and functioning well, through to severe symptoms of mental health conditions at the other. Mental health is not fixed or in a static state, and we can move back and forth along this scale at different times during our lives.

At the **green** end of the continuum, people are well; showing resilience and high levels of wellbeing. Moving into the **yellow** area, people may start to have difficulty coping. In the **orange** area, people have more difficulty coping and symptoms may increase in severity and frequency. At the **red** end of the continuum, people are likely to be experiencing severe symptoms and may be at risk of self-harm or suicide.

Housing and Mental Health

Housing is a basic human need. It is very difficult to focus on anything else if you do not have a home, or your home is part of the problem



HDN

YOUR NETWORK
TO DIVERSITY



What about the impact of COVID-19?

Early stages – reacting to the crisis:

- Fear
- High levels of activity
- Lots of information

Current picture – responding to the crisis:

- Managing the situation
- Inertia
- ‘Coronavirus fatigue’

Taking control of the things we can:

- Tolerance, patience, accommodating others
- Planning for the future

Key messages

- Mental health is a desired state for all of us, a balance point. It is not fixed
- We don't need to be mental health specialists to treat people respectfully and compassionately
- Compliance is the bare minimum, not the goal
- COVID-19 has exposed inequalities but it also creates an opportunity for insight and openness