

Mental health: Managing our wellbeing



What will we cover today?

What do we mean by mental health?

How is our mental health affected as a result of COVID-19?

What we can do to look after ourselves and our colleagues

Why are we doing these sessions?

Early stages – reacting to the crisis:

- Fear
- High levels of activity
- Lots of information

Second stage – responding to the crisis:

- Managing the situation
- Inertia
- ‘Coronavirus fatigue’

Lockdown easing:

- Returning to uncertainties
- Increase in fear
- Confusion about messaging

Taking control of the things we can:

- Planning for the future
- Feeling supported

What do we mean by mental health?

World Health Organisation:

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".

Covid-19: Stress points

- A new threat
- A lack of expertise to refer to
- Lockdown
 - Separation from families
 - Financial pressures
 - Housing pressures
- Loss
- Specific concerns – ethnicity, gender, age, disability
- Media coverage
- Confusing or incomplete information from Govt.

How our bodies respond to stress

- Depression or anxiety.
- Anger, irritability, or restlessness.
- Feeling overwhelmed, unmotivated, or unfocused.
- A change in eating habits
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much.
- Racing thoughts or constant worry.
- Problems with your memory or concentration.
- Difficulty making decisions.



What we can do to promote wellbeing

- Diet
- Sleep
- Exercise
- Connections
- Asking for support
- Revising our expectations
- Creating a supportive environment for others

Key messages

- Mental health is a desired state for all of us, a balance point. It is not fixed
- Covid-19 has created new levels of stress we haven't had to deal with before so aim to control the things you can control, and get support for those you can't control.
- We don't need to be mental health specialists to look after ourselves
- We don't need to be mental health specialists to support others