COVID-19 mental health campaign launches

- Data shows over 4 in 5 adults are worried about the effect that coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on their life right now, with more than half saying it affected their wellbeing and nearly half reporting high levels of anxiety

- Public Health England's Every Mind Matters website includes new NHS expert tips and advice on looking after mental wellbeing and supporting your family and loved ones during this time

- Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have narrated a powerful new film in support of the campaign and to encourage people to look after their mental and physical wellbeing

- Every Mind Matters campaign will be supported through social media, digital, national TV and partner support activity, helping to reach the audiences most at-risk of poor mental health

Public Health England's (PHE) Every Mind Matters platform has launched new advice focused on looking after people's mental wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It has been updated after new data shows more than 4 in 5 (84.2%) Brits are worried about the effect that coronavirus is having on their life, with over half (53.1%) saying it was affecting their wellbeing and nearly half (46.9%) reporting high levels of anxiety. See ONS Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 16 April 2020, for details.

With many feeling worried, anxious or isolated during these challenging times, Every Mind Matters highlights that there are lots of things we can do to look after our mental wellbeing and help others to prevent these concerns from becoming more serious.

The range of new resources, designed specifically to help manage our mental wellbeing during coronavirus, include a tailored COVID-19 Mind Plan, COVID-19 specific content for individuals and their loved ones, and support for specific mental wellbeing issues such as anxiety, stress, low mood and trouble sleeping. The website signposts people to activities such as mindful breathing exercises, help reframing unhelpful thoughts and muscle relaxation.

To help get this vital message out there, The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are supporting Every Mind Matters and have narrated a new short film set to be broadcast across national TV channels from Monday 20 April.

Everyone in the country has been affected by COVID-19 in some way, be it through staying at home and being separated from friends and family, uncertainty about work or education or knowing someone with the virus. The film portrays a range of people whose lives have been affected by COVID-19. It aims to reassure people that support is available and encourages everyone to take care of their mental wellbeing at this difficult time.

Alongside the new COVID-19 mental health support, Every Mind Matters encourages people to complete a personal 'Mind Plan', a quick and free interactive tool offering tailored mental wellbeing advice. More than 1.9 million Mind Plans have been completed since the launch in October.

The NHS-endorsed content has been developed in partnership with clinicians, academics and leading mental health charities and social enterprises including Mind, Mental Health Foundation, Samaritans, Rethink, Mental Health First Aid England, the Royal Foundation, the Centre for Mental Health, Time to Change, NSUN and What Works Wellbeing. It offers authoritative, evidence-based and practical support to the general public, as well as people with specific mental health concerns.

The NHS's Top 5 Tips for maintaining mental wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak

You can view these and more tips on Every Mind Matters.

1. Talk about your worries: it is normal to feel worried, scared or helpless about the current situation. Maintain contact with friends and family via phone and video calls to share how you are feeling.
2. Keep a regular routine and set goals: you may need to set a new routine for now. Try writing a plan for your day with the things you can still do at home, such as watching a film, reading a book or completing a puzzle. Setting goals and achieving them gives a sense of control and purpose. Maintaining good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how you feel mentally and physically too, so it's important to get enough (the Every Mind Matters sleep page provides practical advice).
3. Manage your media and information intake: if 24-hour news and constant social media updates are making you worried, try to limit the time you spend watching, reading or listening to coverage of the outbreak to once or twice a day.
4. Do things you enjoy and try something new: focusing on your favourite hobby, learning something new or simply taking time to relax indoors should give you some relief from anxious thoughts and feelings and can help boost your mood. Look online for free tutorials and courses.
5. Look after your body: our physical health has a big impact on how we feel. At times like these it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour that end up making you feel worse. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water and exercise regularly. You can leave your house, alone or with members of your household, for one form of exercise a day – like a walk, run or bike ride. But make sure you keep a safe 2-metre distance from others.

Professor Paul Cosford, Emeritus Medical Director at Public Health England,

said:

> During the coronavirus outbreak, it is natural for all of us to feel worried or anxious, but there are things we can all do to help ourselves and others, to prevent these feelings from becoming more serious. Every Mind Matters offers NHS-endorsed guidance on the simple things we can do to maintain good mental wellbeing.

Matt Hancock, Health and Social Care Secretary, said:

> We have asked people to make unprecedented changes to their day-to-day lives as part of our national effort to respond to this global pandemic. Staying at home and not seeing friends and loved ones can take its toll and it is completely understandable to feel overwhelmed or anxious.
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> It’s vital that we all look after our mental health in these challenging times, so today we are launching new guidance on the NHS Every Mind Matters website, which is tailored to help people deal with this outbreak through practical tips and advice.
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> Whether it’s through exercise, keeping to a routine or trying something new – there is so much we can do to keep our minds healthy and prevent issues becoming more serious – and I’d encourage everyone to take advantage of this brilliant resource.

Nadine Dorries, Minister for Mental Health, said:

> I know how scary a time this must be for many. We are all feeling something over coronavirus – anxiety, fear of the unknown or even just frustration at not being in control. It’s easy to forget that this is an unprecedented situation that is both physically and mentally draining.
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> The new guidance that has been launched on the NHS Every Mind Matters website has been adapted, providing top tips for maintaining our mental wellbeing. We must all remember during these challenging times that while we are practicing social distancing for the physical health of ourselves and others, there is help out there to make sure we are taking care of ourselves mentally.

Claire Murdoch, National Director for Mental Health at NHS England and Improvement, said:

> At a time when as a country we face significant uncertainty, which can be worrying and stressful, it has never been more important to keep well and look after our mental health.

> While we stay indoors to protect our loved ones and save lives, we must also think about ourselves and how we can protect our mental wellbeing, which is why I am pleased Every Mind Matters reflects current pressures and am encouraging everyone who needs it to visit the website, which includes advice on dealing with stress and anxiety.

The campaign is backed by NHS psychiatrist Dr Max Pemberton who has shared his top tips for supporting mental wellbeing at this current time, including advice on managing your sleep and trying to stay positive.

For more information, search 'Every Mind Matters' online or visit www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters to create your personalised Mind Plan.

Download additional imagery and quotes.

About Every Mind Matters

Every Mind Matters provides simple NHS-approved tips and advice to start taking better care of your mental health. If you are still struggling after several weeks and it is affecting your daily life, please contact NHS 111 online.

You can access free easy 10-minute work outs from Public Health England or try other exercise videos at home on the NHS Fitness Studio. Sport England also has tips for keeping active at home.

The Every Mind Matters sleep page provides practical advice on how to improve your sleep.

Visit the NHS mental health and wellbeing advice website for self-assessment, audio guides and practical tools, if you are experiencing stress, feelings of anxiety or low mood.

If you already have a mental health problem, you can access comprehensive guidance provided by Mind.