

Dedicated mental health support for all NHS doctors and dentists

All NHS doctors and dentists in England now have access to a comprehensive mental health service, Health Secretary Matt Hancock has announced today.

More than 180,000 doctors and dentists can get confidential advice and support, in person or over the phone, if they've faced a stressful incident at work or feel they are struggling with their mental health.

Staff can access support 24/7 through a dedicated phoneline and a crisis text service available through the night. The service is currently staffed by 200 experts whose training is tailored to understand the specific circumstances of clinical life.

When a patient emails or phones the service, they are given a link to the app where they can book appointments with a clinician of their choice. After being assessed, the patient can continue to be seen by their lead clinician who can:

- prescribe medication
- support them while off work
- follow up as appropriate

They will also have access to a range of individual and group therapies.

Feedback from those who piloted the service has been very positive:

- 88% said the service had a positive impact on their wellbeing
- 85% said it had a positive impact on their ability to work or train

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Our incredible NHS would be nothing without our outstanding, devoted staff. Many of them face incredibly challenging, and often distressing, situations on a daily basis and we owe it to staff to provide the mental and physical health support they need to deliver consistently high-quality care for patients.

There is a lot of work taking place across the country to improve the offer to staff and dedicated support to all doctors and dentists in the country is a key part of this. I'm determined to provide those who care for us the full backing they deserve and open doors to specialist services to turn to whenever they need help.

Dr Clare Gerada, Medical Director of NHS Practitioner Health, said:

I am immensely pleased and proud that the work we have done over the last decade has demonstrated the value of a service like NHS Practitioner Health. This means that any doctor or dentist in England can access free, confidential NHS mental health support and treatment and get the help they need.

No doctor or dentist need shy away from seeking help. They can be assured of the same levels of confidentiality we would afford members of the public who access care, and the stigma and barriers to seeking help through mainstream NHS services have been removed.

To sign up, call 0300 0303 300 or email prac.health@nhs.net.

The line is open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday 8am to 2pm.

Text NHSPH to 85258 for the out-of-hours crisis text service.