

New Every Mind Matters campaign

A new survey, commissioned by Public Health England (PHE) at the start of the current government restrictions, reveals the impact coronavirus (COVID-19) has had on adults' mental wellbeing across the country.

The research found that almost half (49%) felt that the pandemic has impacted negatively on their mental health and wellbeing (53% of women and 45% of men). Of those surveyed, significant proportions of the population said they had been experiencing more anxiety (46%), stress (44%), sleep problems (34%) and low mood (46%) over the course of the pandemic. The following were the most common reasons people thought the lockdown had negatively impacted their mental health:

- 56% missing friends and family; and loneliness 33%
- 53% uncertainty about the future; with financial and employment worries 27%
- 53% worried about family's safety and health

However, at the same time 3 in 5 (60%) of those asked say they feel hopeful about the future. Many adults (75%) reported that they are planning to take or have taken steps to look after their mental wellbeing, with exercising regularly (32%) eating well (29%) and talking more to family and friends (28%) being the main actions.

To support people during this time, PHE has launched a nationwide Better Health – Every Mind Matters campaign to support people to take action to look after their mental health and wellbeing and help support others such as family and friends. The campaign encourages people to get a free [NHS-approved Mind Plan](#) from the [Every Mind Matters website](#). By answering 5 simple questions, adults will get a personalised action plan with practical tips to help them deal with stress and anxiety, boost their mood, sleep better and feel more in control. Over 2.6 million Mind Plans have been created since it launched in October 2019.

The [Every Mind Matters COVID-19 hub](#) also includes practical tips and support on how adults can deal with uncertainty, how to cope with money and job worries and how to look after both their own and their family's mental wellbeing while staying at home.

The campaign is supported by a coalition of leading mental health charities, including Mind, Samaritans, Young Minds and Rethink.

Clare Perkins, Director of the Mental Health Programme at PHE said:

While the experience of the pandemic has been different for everyone, there's no doubt it has caused unprecedented challenges, and, not surprisingly, many of us are now experiencing poorer mental wellbeing.

Stress, anxiety and worry are very natural feelings in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak, and looking after our mental wellbeing has never been more important. The good news is that our Every Mind Matters COVID-19 resources have lots of excellent practical tips and advice, and I'd encourage you to get a free NHS Mind Plan, which will give you simple steps to help you navigate these challenging times.

Minister for Mental Health, Nadine Dorries, said:

It is understandable that many of us will be feeling fed up, worried and anxious about the weeks ahead. For most, these feelings will subside as we draw on our own resilience, adapt to new circumstances and take comfort from the hope of better days ahead. However, there are simple steps we can all be taking to improve our mental wellbeing.

Every Mind Matters' mental health resources include tailored advice, as well as practical tips on sleep and self-care. It enables you to create your own 'Mind Plan' by answering 5 simple questions to receive tips and practical advice tailored to you.

Whoever you are and whatever your situation, you are not alone and if you are struggling, there is support out there so I urge you to reach out and ask for help.

Dr. Max Pemberton, who is supporting the campaign, comments:

With all the changes going on in our lives, it can create a stressful time which will affect us all to some extent – but there are ways we can manage this uncertainty; reducing stress and helping us to cope better. Better Health – Every Mind Matters is there to support us and can equip us with the tips and advice to improve our mental wellbeing especially while we're at home. Advice including reframing your thoughts, focusing on the short term and finding a new rhythm, in the form of a new routine, is a powerful way to deal with uncertainty. You must remember that throughout all this, you are not alone – speak to your family and friends and we can continue to stay in good mental wellbeing throughout this lockdown.

The research also revealed differences in the negative mental health impacts the pandemic is having on younger people. Those aged 18 to 34 are more likely to report that COVID-19 has caused them more stress (51%) and made them feel more lonely (43%).

To support this age group, the campaign has sought the support of celebrities including footballer Wayne Bridge, Bridgerton actress Phoebe Dynevor,

presenter Vick Hope and Celebs Go Dating receptionist Tom Read Wilson. The supporters all recognise the importance of helping people improve their mental wellbeing during these uncertain times and have spoken openly about their own personal experiences of mental health and the steps they are taking to look after their own wellbeing.

Better Health – Every Mind Matters also offers information and videos to help young people look after their own mental health and provides dedicated support to help parents and guardians look after the mental wellbeing of the children and young people they care for.

For those who are struggling with anxiety or depression, NHS talking therapies are here to help. NHS mental health services have been open throughout the pandemic and continue to stay open during this lockdown. Speak to your GP for a referral, or you can self-refer via [nhs.uk/talk](https://www.nhs.uk/talk). NHS mental health staff can provide care via phone or online from the comfort of your home. Face to face appointments can also be arranged in many areas. These services are free, and a confidential way to get effective help.

If you or a loved one face a mental health crisis, you can find your local NHS 24/7 helpline on [nhs.uk/urgentmentalhealth](https://www.nhs.uk/urgentmentalhealth).

For further information about the campaign or to set up interviews with case studies or PHE spokespeople, please contact: