



# KNOW WHERE TO GO



***Mental illness can  
happen to anybody.  
It doesn't matter  
who you are.***



## One in four people


in Scotland experience a mental health problem every year. This means that, at some point, you or someone you know will need to get help for poor mental health, whether that's talking to someone you trust, getting information online or going to your GP.



But one in five adults in Scotland don't know where to go to get help. What's more, 25% of people who experience mental health problems wait more than a year to seek help after first developing concerns about their mental health.

SAMH's *Know Where to Go* campaign is working to ensure that people in Scotland get the help they need for their mental health when they need it.

This guide can provide you or someone you know with the information and tools needed to get help for poor mental health.



***I was able to resume  
my life and now  
have the ability to  
deal with my illness.***

### **What's the problem?**

Getting prompt, effective help for your mental health can be challenging.

- 🌀 People may be afraid or ashamed of admitting they have problems with their mental health.
- 🌀 People may feel that no one will understand their problems or that nothing can be done to help.
- 🌀 People may have a bad experience seeking help for their mental health and be reluctant to open up again.
- 🌀 Everyone is different, so even when help is available, it might not be suitable for the person needing help or their problem.
- 🌀 Waiting times for help and treatment are often too long, leaving people without the help they need when they need it.



***The shame stops you  
from saying something  
so you bottle it up***



## What needs to happen?

Getting help for your mental health can be a challenge, but the reality is that a range of help is available. With the right help, people can and do recover from their mental health problems.

SAMH's *Know Where to Go* campaign is working to ensure that everyone in Scotland gets the help they need when they have problems with their mental health.

## One in five adults in Scotland don't know where to go to get help for their mental health.

We need to inform everyone in Scotland about mental health and where they can go to get help.

## 25% of people wait more than a year before seeking help for their mental health.

The sooner you get help for your mental health, the better. The longer a person waits to get help, the more serious their condition can become and the longer and more complex their recovery will be.

## Getting the help you need can be difficult

75% of people say they would go to their GP to get help for their mental health. However, people can struggle to talk to their GP about their mental health problems and may need a variety of types of help to support their mental health.

We need to ensure that people know how to talk to their GPs about their mental health and that other forms of help are available to everyone.

## Waiting times can be too long

Waiting times for psychological therapies and other treatments can be too long in some areas. People can be left waiting months for treatment or may be put off seeking help because of the long wait.

We need to make sure that the Scottish Government's new waiting times target for psychological therapies is met and that waiting times for all of mental health treatments are reduced.





***They should treat mental  
health as an emergency.  
Don't leave people to  
sit for weeks or months.***

## Action

Just by reading this guide, you're helping SAMH ensure that people in Scotland get the help they need for their mental health when they need it, but you can do more.

## Support the campaign online

There are lots of ways you can get involved in the campaign online:

- Receive regular campaign updates by signing up for the SAMH e-Newsletter at **[www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk)**
- Follow us on Twitter at **@SAMHtweets** and let us know where you would go for help using **#knowwheretogo**
- Use your phone or webcam to record your own two minute campaign video, telling us about your experiences of getting help for your mental health. Simply upload the video to YouTube and tag it with the keyword **knowwheretogo**

## Share the Guide

Pick up more copies of *Know Where to Go: Your Guide* and pass them on to friends and family. If you'd like more copies, you can order them or download one from our website.

## Set up your own *Know Where to Go* Information Centre

If you'd like to set up your own *Know Where to Go Information Centre*, you can order a pack of materials from our website, including copies of *Know Where to Go: Your Guide*, and campaign posters.

You could set up a *Know Where to Go Information Centre* in your school, your workplace, your library or your local gym. It's up to you!





[www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk)

Your Guide is available in  
large print. Contact:  
[info@samh.org.uk](mailto:info@samh.org.uk)

SAMH is the Scottish Association  
for Mental Health.

Scottish Charity No. SC-008897,  
SAMH is a company limited by guarantee  
registered in Scotland No 82340.

Registered Office:

Brunswick House, 51 Wilson Street  
Glasgow G1 1UZ



**KNOW  
WHERE  
TO GO**

## In the same way that

everyone has physical health, we all have mental health. A person's mental health can get better or worse over time and in response to events in your life.



When someone is experiencing poor mental health, it can be difficult to recognise it or put into words how it feels. People are often afraid to talk about their mental health for fear of being judged or discriminated against.

It is vital that people experiencing poor mental health get help sooner rather than later. To make this possible, we all need to know how to recognise and talk about poor mental health, whether it's our own or that of someone we know.

## What are Mental Health Problems?

We can all experience poor mental health. Sometimes poor mental health can become more serious and develop into a diagnosable mental health problem.

Mental health problems can include anxiety, stress or panic attacks and can be affected by life events. For example, your mental health might be affected by the end of a relationship, bereavement, drugs or alcohol, childbirth or physical illness.

Many people experience mental health problems but never get a formal diagnosis.

## What Does It Feel Like?

Everyone's experience of mental health problems is different, but there are some common signs. By being aware of these, we can respond better to our own mental health and help other people when they are having problems.

Any changes in someone's usual behaviour may indicate a change in their mental health.

Here are a few common signs: but remember, experiencing one or more of the following does not mean that you have a mental health problem.

### Common Signs

- ☛ Withdrawing from other people, including friends
- ☛ Feelings or expressions of hopelessness
- ☛ Feelings or expressions of intense sadness, despair or emotional numbness
- ☛ A lack of energy that makes everyday tasks seem difficult or impossible
- ☛ Feelings or expressions of self-hatred
- ☛ Feelings or expressions of guilt
- ☛ Insomnia

Less commonly, some people might hear or see things that are not apparent to other people.

People might also have unlikely beliefs, for example that their food has been tampered with or their phone has been tapped.

People might sometimes believe that external forces are trying to control their thoughts and actions.

### Talking About It

If you have concerns about your mental health, it helps to talk to someone about it. However, many people find it difficult or stressful to talk about mental health. When someone talks about their mental health problem, it can be difficult to know how to respond.

### How to Talk About It

**If you have concerns about your mental health, it is important to talk to someone you trust, whether that's a friend, a family member, a doctor or a confidential helpline.**

If you find it hard to express in words, it might help to write down how you're feeling first or keep a diary of your feelings.

If you don't find the response helpful, it's important to try talking to someone else or looking elsewhere for help. Don't give up!



***If you have concerns about your mental health, it is important to talk to someone you trust...***

## How to Listen

If you are concerned about a person's mental health, don't be afraid to ask them how they're feeling. When someone talks to you about their mental health problem, encourage them.

If they find it difficult to talk about, be patient and try not to be dismissive of their experiences, no matter how difficult they are for you to understand. Try to avoid using "Yes or No" questions.

There may also be times when the person doesn't want to talk, and you should respect this. Let them know when you will be available to talk to later.

Sometimes people who are very distressed may say hurtful things that they don't mean. Try not to take it personally.

## How to Help

***If you think a person needs more help than you can offer, you can point them to other sources of help.***

If a person's mental health problem makes it difficult for them to do even minor tasks, try encouraging them to do one or two activities each day, like going for a walk or washing the dishes. Be positive about the things they can do and help them to do the things they can't.

Supporting the mental health of others can affect your own mental health. Remember to look after yourself, too!



## *In an Emergency*

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If you do not think you can help and you think a person needs professional help for their problem, it is important to:

- 🔹 Remain calm
- 🔹 Listen to what the person is saying
- 🔹 If the person cannot seek professional help themselves, contact another source of help for them
- 🔹 Remember that the help you can offer, though important, is limited. Many people need a combination of different types of help for their mental health problem
- 🔹 In urgent cases, call the person's GP, take them to Accident & Emergency or call 999



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for Scotland's mental health



## Introduction

***If you're worried about your mental health, there is lots of help available. This section of Your Guide can help you find the support you are looking for.***

## Taking control of your own mental health

can help you on the road to recovery. Most people find that if they are involved in decisions about their support, they get the help that is best suited to them. You can choose to access different sources of support at different times.

You may also want to use a combination of support services.

Remember, if you're having trouble finding what you're looking for, you can contact SAMH's Information Service.



## **Information on the web**

The internet can be a good place to find information about mental health conditions. You can browse the web in privacy, at home or at a public library, at a time that suits you.

It's worth remembering that information on websites isn't always accurate. The following sites are all reliable and feature well-researched information about mental health problems:

**SAMH** [www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk) Publishes a range of guides relating to mental health problems. You can download the guides by following the Our Publications link.

**NHS Inform – Mental Health and Wellbeing Zone**  
[www.nhsinform.co.uk/mentalhealth](http://www.nhsinform.co.uk/mentalhealth) Provides quality-assured information on different aspects of mental health and wellbeing.

**NHS Health Scotland** [www.healthscotland.com](http://www.healthscotland.com)

Publishes a wide range of downloadable and printed guides, including 'Talking about stress' and 'Talking about depression'.

### **Royal College of Psychiatrists**

[www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinformation.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinformation.aspx). Readable, user-friendly and accurate information about mental health problems.

### **Moodjuice**

[www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk)

Provides short, online questionnaires combined with information sheets on topics including anxiety, sleep problems and panic.

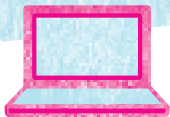
### **Scottish Recovery Network**

[www.scottishrecovery.net](http://www.scottishrecovery.net) Includes real-life stories about recovery journeys. Publications are available to download, such as 'Routes to Recovery'.

### **Young Minds**

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Provides a voice for young people on mental health.



## ***Self-help courses online***

Some websites feature interactive courses and questionnaires to help you understand and recover from mental health problems. These can include working through a structured course in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which can help you consider how your thinking patterns contribute to the way you feel. You can work through the courses at your own pace and in the privacy of your own home.

## **Moodjuice**

[www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk)

Provides online questionnaires designed to help understand and tackle issues such as anxiety, sleep problems and panic.

## **MoodGYM**

[moodgym.anu.edu.au](http://moodgym.anu.edu.au)

A free self-help computer programme which teaches CBT skills to anyone who is vulnerable to depression and anxiety.

## **Living Life to the Full**

[www.llttf.com](http://www.llttf.com)

This website features an online life-skills course for tackling issues like low self-esteem and disturbed sleep patterns. The service is free but there is a charge for some support materials.

## **STEPS Self-Help Resources**

[glasgowsteps.com/self-help](http://glasgowsteps.com/self-help)

A website with useful self-help resources on a wide range of different conditions and situations, including sound recordings and personal stories.



## ***Self-help books and bibliotherapy***

Self-help books can be a good source of information and support. Many public libraries run 'bibliotherapy' programmes. These gather together relevant self-help books that you can borrow from your local library.

You can read self-help books at a time and place that suits you. Books are also a good way of accessing support discreetly if you'd prefer not to talk to others about how you are feeling.



## **Contacting your GP or primary care team**

If you are worried about your mental health, making an appointment to see your GP (general practitioner or family doctor) is a good place to start. GPs know how common mental health problems are and should be sympathetic to how you are feeling.

They will tell you about the treatments options that are available, which may include being offered counselling or being prescribed medication. If you would like more time to discuss your mental health with your doctor, you can ask to have a double appointment.

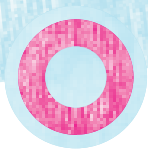


If you're not currently registered with a GP, you can phone NHS inform on 0800 22 44 88 to find details of surgeries in your area. Alternatively, NHS 24's home page ([www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)) includes a 'Find your local services' link.

A doctor will sometimes decide to refer you on for help from a specialist, who may be part of your local community mental health team.

You should make clear when speaking with the doctor both how you are feeling and what kinds of treatment you would like them to consider for you, such as:

- 🌀 Talking therapies
- 🌀 Community support options
- 🌀 Medications



## **Mindfulness**

Mindfulness means developing the skill of focusing more on what is happening here and now, as a way of controlling anxious thoughts or negative feelings. Mindfulness is a technique that has been practised for thousands of years. It is recognised by many psychologists as having the potential to reduce stress and help people change their behaviour.

Some aspects of mindfulness are closely linked to the principles behind cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). You can take a mindfulness course online ask at your local library for information about local groups.

## **Be Mindful**

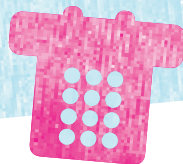
[www.bemindful.co.uk](http://www.bemindful.co.uk)

Hosted by the Mental Health Foundation, this website provides background information, along with details of local courses.

## **Be Mindful Online**

[www.bemindfulonline.com](http://www.bemindfulonline.com)

This website provides a computer-based training programme in mindfulness for a fee.



## **NHS 24**

A phone service providing medical advice when your GP practice is closed

Open every day, 24 hours a day

Calls are charged at the standard rate

**08454 24 24 24**

## **Childline**

A phone service providing information and support to children and young people

Open every day, 24 hours a day

Calls are free and confidential

**0800 11 11**

or talk online at

**[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**

## **Helplines and information services**

Talking to someone over the phone can be a good alternative to internet or face-to-face support. Many people prefer to discuss how they are feeling with someone who can give them advice and information based on their particular circumstances. Telephone support is ideal for this, and often allows you to stay anonymous if you'd prefer.

## **SAMH National Information Service**

A phone service providing information on sources of support for your mental health.  
Calls are free and confidential

**0800 917 34 66**

## **Living Life**

A phone service based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy  
Open Monday to Friday, 1pm to 9pm  
Calls are free and confidential

**0800 328 9655**

## **Breathing Space**

A phone service for anyone experiencing low mood or depression  
Open Monday to Thursday, 6pm to 2am & Friday to Monday, 6pm to 6am  
Calls are free and confidential

**0800 83 85 87**

## **The Samaritans**

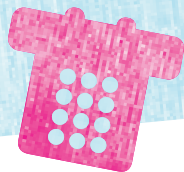
A phone service providing confidential, emotional support for anyone experiencing feelings of distress or despair  
Open every day, 24 hours a day  
Calls are confidential and are charged at the standard rate

**08457 90 90 90**

## **NHS Inform**

A phone service providing information on health conditions and NHS services  
Open every day, 8am to 10pm  
Calls are free

**0800 22 44 88**





## ***Finding local services***

If you've already done some research into the issues that are concerning you, you may decide that you'd like some face-to-face support, either on a one-to-one basis or in a group.

There are a wide range of different sources of help across Scotland, including;

- ♥ Support groups where you can talk to people going through similar experiences
- ♥ Befriending schemes
- ♥ Life skills courses to help you gain confidence
- ♥ Outreach support to provide you assistance with day to day tasks while you are unwell

/continued overleaf

- 📞 ‘Personalised’ services are being offered in some local authority areas which means you have greater control over the kind of help you receive

Many of the organisations listed in this guide provide local services across Scotland. To find out whether the service you are interested in is available in your area:

- 📞 phone or email the organisation directly and ask for their help
- 🗣️ talk to your GP
- 🗣️ talk to a social worker or community psychiatric nurse
- 📞 you can also phone SAMH’s National Information Service (0800 917 34 66) or email [info@samh.org.uk](mailto:info@samh.org.uk)



## ***In an emergency***

**If you are having thoughts of suicide and are in immediate danger, dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.**

Calls to 999 are free and you can ask to stay on the line while you wait for help to arrive.

Alternatively, you can phone the Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90. Their lines are open 24 hours a day.

If someone you know is in immediate danger of seriously harming themselves or endangering someone else, contact social services or phone NHS 24 on 0845 24 24 24. Call 999 if you cannot get through anywhere else.





## ***Talking to people you trust***

Mental health problems are more common than most of us realise. Building a network of people you can trust and share things with can help protect your mental health. Not everyone wants to talk to other people about their mental health, but many people find talking about how they feel helpful.

A person you trust, such as a friend, family member, colleague or community leader, may be able to provide a listening ear. See Part 2 of the Know Where to Go: Your Guide for more information on talking to people about your mental health.



## ***Lifestyle***

We all experience ups and downs in our lives and sometimes we know we would feel better if we could change something about ourselves. This may be wanting to lose weight, get fit or find a job. There are many sources of support that can provide advice on making positive lifestyle changes.

### **SAMH's Get Active™**

promotes the role of physical activity in good mental health. Visit [www.samh.org.uk](http://www.samh.org.uk) to find out more.

## **SAMH's Tools for Living™**

helps people develop the skills they need to get back into or stay in work, as well as making lifestyle changes like getting fit or managing your money.

For more information phone 0141 530 1090 or 0131 653 6761, or email [toolsforliving@samh.org.uk](mailto:toolsforliving@samh.org.uk).

## **Being more active**

[www.activescotland.org.uk](http://www.activescotland.org.uk)

## **Sensible drinking**

[www.drinksmaarter.org](http://www.drinksmaarter.org)

## **Healthy eating**

[www.takelifeon.co.uk/eat-healthier](http://www.takelifeon.co.uk/eat-healthier)

## **Drug use**

[www.knowthescore.info](http://www.knowthescore.info)



## Counselling

If you're comfortable talking about the issues that are causing you distress, counselling may be a good option. It is a talking therapy that helps people to deal with specific issues that are troubling them. Counsellors are professionally trained and will have specific experience of discussing mental health problems in a structured, therapeutic and confidential way.

Your GP may be able to refer you to counselling, or you can arrange and purchase counselling yourself. There may be free self-referral counselling options in your area. For more information speak to a health professional or contact the SAMH Information Service.

## **British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP)**

[www.bacp.org.uk](http://www.bacp.org.uk)

A professional body for counselling and psychotherapy in the UK

## **Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland (COSCA)**

[www.cosca.org.uk](http://www.cosca.org.uk)

A professional body for counselling and psychotherapy in Scotland

## **Counselling Directory**

[www.counselling-directory.org.uk](http://www.counselling-directory.org.uk)

Provides details of counsellors in your area

**KNOW  
WHERE  
TO GO**

***In order to get help for your mental health when you need it, it is vital to understand your rights and entitlements.***

For more information on your rights, you can contact the Scottish Human Rights Commission at [www.scottishhumanrights.com](http://www.scottishhumanrights.com) or the Mental Welfare Commission at [www.mwscot.org.uk](http://www.mwscot.org.uk)

## DAY TO DAY

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### PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS HAVE THE RIGHT

- to live in their community
- to participate and be included in their community
- to participate in cultural life
- to not suffer exploitation, violence and abuse
- to access community services to support living and inclusion in their community
- to independent advocacy



## WHEN GETTING CARE OR TREATMENT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:

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- to the highest attainable standard of health
- to receive healthcare that is relevant to your needs
- to take part in decisions about your healthcare and get the support you need to do so
- to say how you would like to be treated if you become unwell and are unable to express your views clearly in the future
- to choose someone to support you in any proceedings under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- to challenge compulsory treatment orders
- to request an assessment of your care needs. Health Boards and Local Authorities have a duty to respond to a request for assessment within 14 days
- to raise concerns or complaints about healthcare services



***It is illegal for someone to  
discriminate against or harass  
you because you have a mental  
health problem when you are  
accessing health services and  
social services***

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