

HOT TOPICS – MAY 2021

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

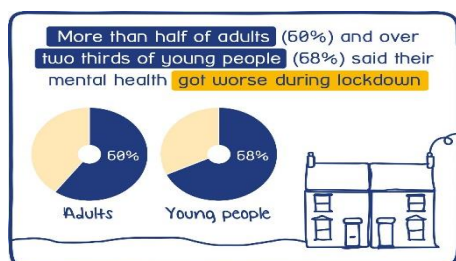
Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

[This month we look at **mental health**. If you are affected by any of the issues that you have researched or that you discuss in this Hot Topic, please speak to someone. In the workplace this can include your PDC, your HEI sergeant or your lecturer. There is also a link at the bottom of this document that provides details of mental health charities]

Did you know ...?

Mental Health Awareness Week runs from 10th – 16th May 2021 and this year's theme is 'Nature'. Access to nature is crucial for people's mental wellbeing and as many people are struggling with the effects of the Corona virus pandemic, those that already live with mental health issues are facing extra challenges.

In April 2020, the mental health charity MIND carried out some research to find out what impact coronavirus and the first national lockdown were having on people's mental health. Below is the outcome:



We all have mental health but not everybody lives with good mental health. Think about some of the mental health problems people have that you may encounter as a police officer. These may include anxiety, depression, bipolar, dementia, schizophrenia, stress and Acute Behavioural Disturbance (ABD).



This link to the mental health charity **Mind** web site provides information about types of mental health problems, click the link below for more details:

[Types of mental health problems | Mind](#)

Due to the nature of response policing, you have little control over your day-to-day activities. There will typically be periods of high demand and dealing with challenging people and situations and exposure to traumatic scenes or events. Therefore, you may be the first to respond to urgent situations involving people with mental health problems, and have to make quick decisions to assess the situation as well as the needs of the individuals involved, ensuring your safety, their safety and that of the general public.

According to statistics published by MIND:

1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in England

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection to certain groups of people from being treated unfairly and discriminated against. Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly because they have a certain characteristic. **Disability** is one of the protected characteristics under the Act. You don't have to have a particular mental health condition to get protection under the Equality Act. What you need to show is that your mental health problem is a **disability**.

Disability is defined as *physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*.

REMEMBER: NOT ALL IMPAIRMENTS ARE READILY IDENTIFIABLE. MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS MAY NOT BE SO IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS!

The public sector equality duty means that most public authorities, like the police service, should:

- remove or minimise any disadvantages you might have because of your mental health problem
- take steps to meet the needs of people with mental health problems that are different from the needs of people who don't
- take steps to encourage people with mental health problems to get involved in public life or any activity in which their participation is disproportionately low.

What does mental health mean to you?

Bearing in mind that 'nature' is the theme for Mental Health Awareness Week, how do you think using green spaces can benefit mental health

As you should now be aware, there are many different types of mental health problems. Bearing in mind your responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, think of at least one positive thing that you can do to support someone who presents with a mental health problem

USEFUL LINKS

[Mental Health Foundation - Mental Health Foundation](#)

[College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice - Mental health \(college.police.uk\)](#)

[College of Policing 'Dealing with mental health during the coronavirus pandemic - Dealing with mental health during the coronavirus pandemic | College of Policing](#)

[NHS list of charity help lines - Get help from a mental health charity helpline - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Mind - Home | Mind](#)