



# **Our Strategy 2021-25**



# Contents

- 4** Foreword
- 6** Who we are
- 7** Our values
- 8** Our Vision, mission and objectives
- 9** Delivering our objectives
- 10** *We'll increase knowledge and understanding for everyone in the UK on how to protect and maintain their mental health*
- 12** *We'll deliver programmes that support people with complex mental health needs*
- 16** *We'll adapt so that we continue to meet people's mental health needs and takes advantage of innovation and technology*
- 20** *We'll grow at pace so that we can better support everyone with their mental health*
- 22** References



# Foreword

Picture our country with everyone living fulfilled, healthier lives. Their best lives. A country with genuinely equal and open access to support for our mental health.

Our experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic have shone a very bright spotlight on just how far we must go to make this vision a reality. It has also helped us map a clear route to achieving it by encouraging and supporting everyone to play their part. This is why Mental Health UK exists.

**There are approximately 7.5 million people in the UK living with a diagnosed mental illness.<sup>1</sup>**

**It is estimated that one in four of us experience a mental health problem every year.<sup>2</sup>**

For many people who were already living with a mental health problem, the pandemic has exacerbated their condition. While many more in society have found themselves experiencing a mental health condition for the first time.

We're in no doubt about the immense impact of Covid-19 on people affected by poor mental health, the extent of which only became clearer as the pandemic unfolded. With the physical virus being front of mind, those affected by a mental health problem were often not centre stage.

**An estimated 8.58 million adults in England alone will require mental health support for problems including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety.<sup>3</sup>**

**Young people are also hidden victims of the pandemic – with 1.5 million children**

**forecasted to need support for their mental health as a direct consequence of the crisis.<sup>4</sup>**

**With our NHS services and staff having withstood great pressure during the crisis as well as for a prolonged period of time before the virus reached our shores, it comes as no surprise that over 200,000 NHS workers may need treatment for post-traumatic distress, high psychological distress and burnout.<sup>5</sup>**

It is our challenge now, to support everyone with their mental health - whether it's through keeping well or recovering as we emerge out from this crisis.

For many, the sooner we can find some certainty in the things that matter the most to our daily wellbeing, such as money, physical health, social contact, and sense of purpose, the better we will be able to manage our mental health. And this is not just true of our time through the pandemic, it applies to any time – when we have better capacity to take care of ourselves, we are more likely to stay well.

For some, however, the picture looks quite different.

**Rates of mental illness for people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds can be greater than for white people as a result of the overlay of multiple inequalities, discrimination and stigma.<sup>6</sup>**

**More white people receive treatment for mental health issues and have better outcomes than their counterparts from BAME backgrounds.<sup>7</sup>**



During the pandemic, people's ability to get the right treatment and support they need at the right time has altered dramatically and for some, their road to recovery has been put back by years.

Helping the UK recover from this mental health crisis and prosper is not something we can achieve alone. We need to collaborate and work together with organisations who want to make change. Funders, fundraisers, staff and volunteers are integral to the delivery of our mission.

This strategy is not just for us at Mental Health UK, it's for everyone. We are asking every individual, family, employee and employer to play their part in supporting not just to recover, but also to prosper. To enable everyone to have the tools they need to live their best possible life.

The time is now, to consider what you could do and what you could achieve. If you don't know where to start, we can help you to help us, for everyone's mental health.

**While we at Mental Health UK illustrate the need and how to respond, we are asking you:**

**What is the world you want to see?**

**What is the difference you want to make?**

**What is your unique contribution?**

# Who we are

Mental Health UK brings together the heritage and experience of four charities from across the country who have been supporting people with their mental health for nearly 50 years.

Working UK-wide, we deliver both national and local services that enable and empower people to understand and manage their mental health in a person-centred and empathetic way.

With our local service delivery and national expertise in supporting people whose lives are affected by mental health problems, we have been able to mark a significant footprint in the areas that deeply challenge our mental health and stability.

We provide support and services for some of the biggest societal challenges that pose a threat to people's mental health, including:

- Money problems
- Navigating through the system to get the right support
- Understanding mental health
- Loneliness and isolation
- Resilience in young people

At Mental Health UK we won't stop until everyone has the tools they need to live their best possible life.

The task ahead of us is quite clear. And this is our response.

**"She kept me informed of all the stages. I wasn't passed from one to the other, so it gave me confidence that it would get dealt with properly. They did a wonderful job for me."**

– Mental Health and Money Advice service user





# Our values

Our values underpin everything we do as a charity and how we do it. They aren't just words in a document, they're the character, integrity and essence behind our charity, and they're what excites people about being a part of Mental Health UK.

- **Collaborative:** we'll foster partnerships to help everyone in society to understand and manage their mental health
- **Supportive:** we'll provide everyone with the tools they need live their best possible lives
- **Empowering:** we'll want to increase peoples' resilience and ability to navigate life's challenges which pose a threat to our mental health
- **Practical:** we're tackling the biggest societal challenges of our time by being solutions-focused
- **Inclusive:** everyone has a role to play in helping us achieve our vision, and we won't turn anyone away
- **Expert:** knowledge is power, but we'll use our near 50 years' worth of sector experience to usher in awareness and understanding around mental health



# Our vision



Together, we'll better understand and manage our mental health

# Our mission



We won't stop until everyone has the tools they need to live their best possible life

# Our objectives



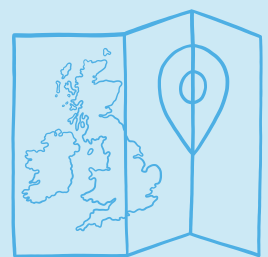
We'll increase knowledge and understanding on how to protect and maintain mental health for everyone in the UK



We'll deliver programmes that support people with complex mental health needs



We'll adapt so that we continue to meet people's mental health needs and take advantage of innovation and technology



We'll grow at pace so that we can better support everyone with their mental health



# Delivering our objectives



# We'll increase knowledge and understanding for everyone in the UK on how to protect and maintain their mental health

## The challenge:

We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health, and prior to the Covid-19 pandemic it was estimated that one in four of us would experience a mental health problem every year.

**Data and evidence available to us at this moment in time forecasts a significant rise in poor mental health of up to 8.5 million adults, owing to the pandemic.<sup>8</sup>**

This is a considerable rise which is already putting a lot of pressure on the health and social care system and is indicative of a struggling population.

**2.6 million adults across Great Britain report that they feel lonely "often" or "always".<sup>9</sup>**

**Almost half (46%) of people in problem debt also have a mental health problem.<sup>10</sup> 1 in 5 have been negatively impacted financially and mentally by coronavirus.<sup>11</sup>**

**75% of mental illnesses start before a person's 18th birthday.<sup>12</sup>**

**80% of small business owners report experiencing common symptoms of poor mental health.<sup>13</sup>**

At Mental Health UK, we believe that everyone should have the information, education and support they need to live their best possible life. There are a wide range of drivers that can exacerbate or lead to poor mental health too such as a person's housing, employment, money worries. Our approach is to both support the individual whilst addressing these issues too. We have a long way to go to achieve this, but we believe it is attainable.

## Together, with your support, we will:

Increase awareness and concern of issues associated with mental health  
See more visitors to our information, advice and support hubs and finding the information helpful

Through our training and development:

- Improve knowledge and understanding of mental health
- Increase the likelihood to challenge stigma
- See consistently high application of knowledge and skills gained following training

Partner with more organisations to increase the reach of all our work and in particular address the drivers that can lead to poor mental health.





## The world we want to see

People across the UK:

- Have increased awareness of mental health conditions and how to protect and maintain mental health
- Have improved access to high quality, evidence-based advice, information and support on mental health conditions and how to protect and maintain mental health
- Work and learn in mentally healthy environments where stigma is reduced and people are supported and encouraged to protect and maintain mental health
- Employers, teachers and leaders are driving mentally healthy environments where stigma is reduced, drivers of poor mental health are addressed and participants are supported and encouraged to protect and maintain mental health

# We'll deliver programmes that support people with complex mental health needs

## The challenge:

Recent research<sup>14</sup> suggests that a lack of wider community support for people living with mental illness can leave them not knowing where to turn. This lack of support can lead to social isolation, and problems with physical health, money, employment, and housing.

Of the people surveyed for the report:

**Less than a third (30%) said they were offered help finding suitable housing or tenancy support.**

**Only 23% were offered support finding a job or staying in work, while not all those who wanted to find a volunteering placement (38%) ended up receiving support to do so (27%).**

**50% said they were not involved in community wellbeing projects, for example gardening, arts and crafts or social clubs – mostly because they did not know what projects were available in their area (61%).**

**70% of people who had received mental health support for over four years reported wanting support finding a job or staying in work, but only 35% received this support.**

We need to work differently with people affected by poor mental health and support them with the totality of their needs. By doing so we know that we increase the chances of a person staying well, developing the confidence to manage their care and recovery, and we significantly decrease their likelihood of needing further crisis support.

## Together, with your support, we will:

Develop and deliver services both nationally and locally that support individuals with complex mental health needs with their:

- Housing
- Employment
- Physical health
- Money
- Social connections

Grow our 'navigation services' to give wraparound support to people and help them to find their way through the health and social care systems to manage their own recovery.







## The world we want to see

People living with mental health problems across the UK are:

- Offered suitable housing and supported to live independently
- Supported to find, enter and retain employment or volunteering opportunities
- Supported to manage and maintain their physical health and wellbeing
- Supported to better understand and manage their money
- Have connected with others, in-person and online, in a safe, secure and supportive environment



## Example:

In 2017 we launched Mental Health and Money Advice Service. With the generous support of Lloyds Banking Group and their employee fundraising efforts, the service is the first of its kind in the UK to combine support for both mental health and financial problems.

The service is here for anyone living with a mental illness who is struggling with their money, as well as anyone whose financial problems are affecting their mental health. We estimate this to represent four million people.

Our Mental Health and Money Advice Service helps people:

- Feel able to manage their finances
- Break the link between financial and mental health problems
- Not feel ashamed about their financial situation
- Have improved wellbeing and stress levels.

Within its first three years, the service had successfully supported over 3,000 people with one-to-one dedicated support, achieving a collective financial gain of over £7 million. In addition, the website has helped a further million people with information to manage their own mental health.



## Mike's story:

In the UK, it is estimated that 50% of people in debt also experience a mental health problem. And one in five people experiencing a mental health problem also experiences money issues.

Mental Health and Money Advice exists to help people better understand, manage, and improve their financial and mental health. Delivered by Support in Mind Scotland, Mental Health and Money Advice Scotland helped Mike to deal with his spiralling debt. He shares insight into the impact it has had on his life:

"I would describe depression as a demon that haunts you all the time. It's always following you. I'm quite a gregarious, outspoken individual. I was often the butt end of bullying and antagonism. I was drinking from 14 right up until I was 40.

I needed some structure in order to help me through the mess that I was in with my bills.

There's an organization called Mental Health and Money Advice. I literally phoned them up. I had my creditors on the phone all the time phoning me up 24 hours a day "where's our money, where's our money, where's our money?" But with the help of Mental Health and Money Advice, you're able to just stop that because the evidence you give to them, they pass on to the creditors and that gives you a bit of a breathing space.

After the first phone call, it took a weight off my shoulders. If you didn't have charities out there like Mental Health UK, we would be in a very difficult place.

Now I'm in a good place, it's not perfect but this is where I am, and I like it. So, don't stop me now!"



## Zoey's story:

Navigators in Grimsby, like Teresa, can make a tangible difference to people's lives. Zoey\*, a patient in Grimsby who was referred to Teresa, was so grateful for the help she received through the service, which equipped her with the resources she needed for a better life outcome. Navigators are well placed to help mentally vulnerable people get support with housing, staying connected and having control over their finances, and they also provide friendship as described by Zoey below.

"I was referred to the Community Mental Health Navigator by my GP and I was seen very quickly which was amazing as I thought I would have to wait a long time to be referred. The CMHN had all the time in the world to listen to my problems. I was in a position where I had to leave my house as soon as possible and find suitable accommodation immediately. The stress of this situation made my mental illness worse and I was worried about becoming more and more fragile. I was also a shielding patient so I felt powerless in trying to address these issues by myself. All I can say is, Teresa was an absolute lifeline.

Not only did she secure me appropriate accommodation quickly, she called me every week to check on my wellbeing and even visited me a couple of times once I had settled in and to make sure my accommodation was suitable. On the day of moving into my new house I broke my shoulder, I couldn't have asked any more of Teresa who went to great lengths to find practical ways of helping me. It was this that turned things around for me as well as her sense of humour and endless positivity!"



Working in partnership with Johnson & Johnson we have been able to increase our capacity and recruit four Navigators across the country to help people like Zoey. Often, we find people who need help for their mental health currently aren't accessing the support and reassurance that they require in their local community. Typically, it's not clinical support they need but support for managing their money, ensuring they have a safe place to live and that they remain socially connected.

Our Mental Health Navigators are now working on a one-to-one basis with people who are struggling in their local community. They not only signpost them to the help they need but are safely by their side to support them with the next steps.

By supporting a person's needs holistically, we are aiming to improve their quality of life, help them better manage their mental health and move support upstream and into the community. This in turn will reduce pressure on acute clinical services and help people navigate what is often a complex patchwork of support.

***\*Names and identifying features have been removed to protect identities***

# We'll adapt so that we continue to meet people's mental health needs and take advantage of innovation and technology

## The challenge:

2020 was a year of significant upheaval and change. To prevent the spread of Covid-19, the country underwent a prolonged period of drastic social distancing measures and society has changed irrevocably. This dramatically brought to the forefront many inequalities that marginalised groups in society faced long before the pandemic, and which would be exacerbated by it. The Black Lives Matter movement increased awareness and understanding of systemic bias, discrimination and racism, in particular.

Through this time we learned a lot about ourselves individually and our society that will shape how we deliver this strategy in two areas:

- Technology presents us with opportunities which we will now challenge ourselves to take better advantage of
- The overlap of societal issues has become very clear and we need to work hard to ensure we address this through the design, promotion and access to our services

2020 saw much of our support move online which provided some efficiency but its clear that remoteness and reduced face-to-face human contact came at a cost to the mental health of many across the UK.

Research conducted by Rethink Mental Illness<sup>15</sup> early in the first lockdown suggested that for people surveyed with a mental illness:

Over three-quarters (79%) of people said that their mental health had got worse or much worse as a result of the pandemic and the measures to contain it.

42% said their mental health was worse because they were getting less support from mental health services.

When asked to consider how support from mental health services had changed overall during the pandemic, 58% said that support had worsened overall.

Further into the pandemic, figures from the ONS<sup>16</sup> also stated that one in five adults were likely to be experiencing some form of depression, up significantly from one in ten in the previous year.

As the nation's workforce was implored through law to work from home where possible to limit the spread of the virus, bedrooms became meeting rooms and kitchen tables became workstations.

We investigated the way lockdown has drastically affected our work-life balance in the months which followed. Our survey with YouGov<sup>17</sup> revealed that:

Over half (51%) of people felt that they were more prone to extreme levels of stress this year compared to the same time in the previous year.

One in five people (20%) working full-time felt unable to manage pressure and stress at work.





Through a joint study with the lender iwoca<sup>18</sup>, we also explored how the disruption and uncertainty of the pandemic was impacting on the mental health of employers in the community. Four in five small business owners we spoke to were experiencing symptoms of poor mental health. Significantly, since the pandemic, 35% have experienced panic attacks, while half experienced symptoms of depression.

It is our ambition to ensure that care and support is equal and open to all, but many methods for doing this have been undermined by the pandemic. For some recovery will have been set back months if not years by change and inconsistencies in care, shattering confidence.

The pandemic has already exposed some hidden cracks in the health and social care system and we must now tackle these and adapt quickly.

We must continue to innovate and take advantage of what we have learned and developed through the pandemic but in a way that brings back the stability and consistency people need to ensure they can stay well and out of crisis.

## **Together, with your support, we will:**

- Look at the wider societal issues blocking access to care such as digital exclusion.
- Pilot and roll out both new services and new delivery approaches for existing services. This will include:
  - Increasing the capacity and sustainability of our online peer support service, Clic.
  - Investing in, testing and rolling out new technology solutions to maintain social contact with care workers, such as online therapy sessions.
  - Investing in our services to ensure they are covid-secure and moving at speed so that face-to-face support can return.
- Better understand the barriers to accessing care and support and in particular for families and carers, people in rural communities, people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and young people.



## Susan's story:

When the pandemic hit and lockdown engulfed the UK in March 2020, no-one knew what was to come or to what extent it would isolate and cut off communities. Many of our service users are considered vulnerable and have had to shield at home with little to no social contact from friends or family over the past year.

While the digital world is skyrocketing, many people including the elderly and people affected by mental illness, are excluded either through lack of equipment or technical know-how. That's why, together with Lloyds Banking Group, we launched our Digital Inclusion Programme to help people in this bracket get online during the pandemic and reconnect with their loved ones. We were so pleased we distributed 100 tablets to those who needed them most. You can read Susan's story below:

74-year-old Susan\* is the carer for her grandson, who lives at home with her and has autism. She is part of a large family and during lockdown was unable to maintain contact with her new grandchildren and great grandchildren and see how they were growing up.

That was until, thanks to the support of our partners at Lloyds Banking Group, we were able to send Susan a tablet to make sure she had what she needed to keep in touch. Using her new device, she was able to train and interact on the Digital Inclusion programme and her grandson has been helping her practise navigating it too. She has greatly enjoyed the tablet and the realm of opportunities it offers.

This has been equally as beneficial to her grandson, who has sadly experience depression since lockdown started and is unable to leave home. He has also been shielding on behalf of his grandma which has made home life all the more difficult and pressurised. They recently Facetimed other members of the family for the first time and Susan's feedback was that it was "priceless". Clare\*, her Mental Health Recovery Worker, told us: "the other side of things is it's good for my mental health too as I know Susan is now connected and I don't worry about her being isolated anymore".

*\*Names and identifying features have been removed to protect identities*







# We'll grow at pace so that we can better support everyone with their mental health

## The challenge:

One thing that is very clear to us is that we need more resource in the sector now to provide the right level of care and support to everyone, so that they can live their best possible life.

At the height of the pandemic, Mental Health UK was part of a vanguard advocating for change, co-signing a letter to the Prime Minister calling on government to take a combined leadership approach and work with us to support the nation's mental health and wellbeing through the pandemic and its aftermath.

Charities in the sector employ around 865,000 workers and we call upon millions of hours of volunteer time each year but it is simply not enough.

Nearly a quarter of people who have tried to access mental health support in the last two weeks have failed to get help due to factors such as cancelled appointments, difficulty getting through to their GP or Community Mental Health Team, being turned away by crisis services and issues accessing digital alternatives.

More than 7,000 times a day, people struggling to cope are receiving emotional support from Samaritans.

Already, a third of UK adults are worried about their finances, and one fifth of people identified as unemployed reported suicidal thoughts in the last two weeks.<sup>19</sup>

It takes time to recruit, train and deploy a new skilled workforce to support and care for people when they are unwell. So, while we do this, we must also think about how we increase the resource available and get more people 'up-stream', preventing crisis effectively.

## Together, with your support, we will:

- Build our capacity in order to better support everyone with their mental health
- Drive efficiencies for our staff and for the sector by continuing to work collaboratively across our four founding charities and share our learning across the sector.







Over Christmas 2020, we asked our Clic users how the platform helped their mental health. By providing a safe non-judgmental space for people to chat freely to their peers online anytime, we are making sure that people affected by a mental health problem are listened to and supported. This is what our Clic user, Rose, told us:

“The site allows me to say how I feel. Sometimes you find it difficult to speak to family as they want to help but the condition can be upsetting for them too. Also you can speak to people with similar circumstances which is reassuring. It is also nice to offer help and advice to others. I was recommended a book for example. It can make a difference having people acknowledge how you feel even if there is no advice. Everyone onsite is very friendly including the Clic volunteers”

– Rose, Clic user

When the pandemic hit, Mental Health UK rapidly expanded Clic from a service in Wales to cover the whole of the UK. This expansion has helped thousands of people feel less lonely and find the information, support and company that can be hard to come by. One of our Clic volunteers shares her insight into what it’s like being a moderator for the service:

“These quick chats can make a huge difference to people who are feeling isolated and struggling –just having someone listen and respond to them can brighten up their day. I’ve also personally benefitted from the experience. It’s made me even more appreciative of my own circumstances and that in itself has given my own mental health a boost. I can honestly say being involved in Clic has given me a sense of achievement and satisfaction.”

– volunteer Clic moderator

# References

- 1 McManus et. Al. (2016) Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey; Available at [digital.nhs.uk](https://digital.nhs.uk)
- 2 Mental Health Taskforce NE. The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health February 2016; Available at [england.nhs.uk](https://england.nhs.uk)
- 3 Centre for Mental Health. Covid-19 and the nation's mental health: Forecasting needs and risks in the UK. October 2020; Available at [centreformentalhealth.org.uk](https://centreformentalhealth.org.uk)
- 4 Centre for Mental Health. Covid-19 and the nation's mental health: Forecasting needs and risks in the UK. October 2020; Available at [centreformentalhealth.org.uk](https://centreformentalhealth.org.uk)
- 5 Centre for Mental Health. Covid-19 and the nation's mental health: Forecasting needs and risks in the UK. October 2020; Available at [centreformentalhealth.org.uk](https://centreformentalhealth.org.uk)
- 6 Rethink Mental Illness. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) mental health. August 2020; Available at [rethink.org.uk](https://rethink.org.uk)
- 7 Cabinet Office. Race Disparity Audit Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures website. October 2017 (revised March 2018); Available at [gov.uk](https://gov.uk)
- 8 Centre for Mental Health. Covid-19 and the nation's mental health: Forecasting needs and risks in the UK. October 2020; Available at [centreformentalhealth.org.uk](https://centreformentalhealth.org.uk)
- 9 Office for National Statistics Coronavirus and Loneliness, Great Britain: 3 April to 3 May 2020; Available at [ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk)
- 10 Money and Mental Health Policy Institute. Mental health problems and financial difficulty. 2019; Available at [moneyandmentalhealth.org](https://moneyandmentalhealth.org)
- 11 Mental Health UK and YouGov. Survey on the financial impact of the coronavirus pandemic. November 2020; Available at [mentalhealth-uk.org](https://mentalhealth-uk.org)
- 12 Kessler RC et al. Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSMIV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey. June 2005; Available at [archpsyc.jamanetwork.com](https://archpsyc.jamanetwork.com)
- 13 Mental Health UK and Iwoca. Survey of small business owners. January 2021; Available at [mentalhealth-uk.org](https://mentalhealth-uk.org)
- 14 Rethink Mental Illness. Building Communities that Care. July 2019; Available at [rethink.org](https://rethink.org)
- 15 Rethink Mental Illness. Survey on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic April 2020; Available at [rethink.org](https://rethink.org)
- 16 Office for National Statistics Coronavirus and depression in adults, Great Britain. June 2020; Available at [ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk)
- 17 Mental Health UK and YouGov. Burnout survey. October 2020; Available at [mentalhealth-uk.org](https://mentalhealth-uk.org)
- 18 Mental Health UK and Iwoca. Survey of small business owners. January 2021; Available at [mentalhealth-uk.org](https://mentalhealth-uk.org)
- 19 Various. A new social contract for a mentally healthier society. June 2020; Available at [rethink.org](https://rethink.org)



Essential Psychiatry

EDITED BY NICHOLAS D. B. ROSE

SECOND EDITION

Dr Kate Middleton and Sara Garvie

Essential Psychiatry

EDITED BY NICHOLAS D. B. ROSE

SECOND EDITION



BLACKWELL SCIENCE



Watson & Woolf Human Rights Act 100th Anniversary

Cardiovascular Risk Associated with Schizophrenia and its Treatment

Stahl

DUNITZ

Psychopharmacology of Antipsychotics

