**Support Sheet for Patients**

Coronavirus brings with it many worries that can make stress, low mood and loneliness more likely. We know that staying at home for a prolonged period of time can be difficult, frustrating and lonely for some people and that you may feel low. You may want to stay in touch with family and friends over the phone, on social media by Skype or Facetime if you can.

* Research shows that we feel better when we do activities that we either enjoy, feel a sense of achievement about or which help us feel connected to others.
* Research into treating depression shows us that a day that includes a good balance of these three types of activities is one that will lead us to have a better mood so try to make sure that you have a mix of these three things despite being at home.
* Planning your day or even your week ahead to make sure you include these three elements can really help with this. You could make a ‘to do’ list for the day or a timetable for the week. If you use post it notes you could move things around if you need to.
* Look at what’s planned in and check for a mix of things that include enjoyment, achievement and connection. If you’re missing one element in the day try to build that in later in the evening. You may find it helpful to structure your day to manage worry or boredom with activities such as cooking, reading, online learning, watching films, and some physical exercise.
* If there are times when it is hard to act according to your plans it is worth stopping and thinking about what might be getting in the way. It could be feelings associated with becoming physically unwell, in which case it might be necessary to step things down a little and do something similar but less effortful.
* It might also be that thoughts about the pointlessness of the activity might be making it hard to get started. Where this is the case often starting to do the activity for just 5 or 10 minutes can help to get you going.

Keeping safe and well during self-isolation

In these difficult times many of us will be feeling anxious and frustrated. This is a difficult period for everyone but it can be particularly overwhelming for those who already struggle maintaining their mental health and wellbeing. The usual coping strategies we use to keep us from feeling mentally unwell may not be available to us during self-isolation. Please find below some suggestions to distract yourself, maintain your physical and mental health and to keep you as safe as possible.

Distractions

• Take an online course

The Open University offer free online courses. There are lots to choose from and are aimed at various levels of academic ability. YouTube offer a wide range of bitesize courses. These can be found by the Khan Academy, Crash Course and various TedTalks.

• Download apps like Brain Train to keep your mind active and to keep you busy

• Stream a wide variety of TV shows and films for free with BBC IPlayer, ITV hub, 4od and Channel 5 player. Take this time to watch all the TV shows and films you have always wanted to watch but never had the time.

• Audible are currently streaming 100’s of books for free. Download the app onto your device or phone and listen to books you always wanted to read. Kindle also offer a wide variety of free books once you download the app onto your device or phone.

• Do all the household projects you have been meaning to do but never had the chance.

• Learn a new skill like knitting, crocheting or a new language by watching YouTube tutorials

Managing your mental health and wellbeing

• STAY CONNECTED. Although you may not be able to visit your friends and family, use technology to keep you connected. Phone, SKYPE, WhatsApp, Facetime and social media will keep you in contact with others

• Many of you will be very worried about Covid 19 and will be watching the news and reading social media throughout the day. It may be advisable to limit the amount of time you do this if it causes anxiety. Limit yourself to watching the news at a set time each day if this helps

• The internet has a large variety of self-help and psychological therapies free to use. These include Mindfulness and CBT courses. (See below). E.g. Headspace app

• Stay healthy, following the advice above to try to maintain your physical health as this will have an impact on your mental health and wellbeing

• Use the telephone numbers listed below if you are struggling with your mental health and feel you need to talk to somebody. However please be aware that there will be a significant increase on the volume of calls these organisations will be receiving during this period.

Staying healthy

• Keep to a regular routine. If you are able to, get yourself up, washed and dressed everyday

• Try to eat well and stay hydrated.

• Try to exercise where it is appropriate and where you feel able to (remember to do only what you feel is appropriate to your own physical capabilities). There are lots of exercises you can do through YouTube videos at home, for example: The Body Coach, Joe Wicks on YouTube, Yoga and Pilates. All of these can be done in a small space and you don’t need any equipment

• Try to keep to regular sleep patterns and not sleep for long periods during the day. Whilst it’s tempting to have a lie in when you’re at home, evidence suggests sticking to a clear sleep routine is more helpful

**Advice and Support**

**Bereavement Services:**

**Greater Manchester Bereavement Service** – For bereavement support or advice, call the Greater Manchester Bereavement Service on 0161 983 0902 or visit [www.greater-manchester-bereavement-service.org.uk](http://www.greater-manchester-bereavement-service.org.uk)

**Greater Manchester Suicide Bereavement Information Service:** A confidential information service for people bereaved or affected by suicide. The impact of bereavement through suicide is devastating – for family – for friends – for the community. The Suicide Bereavement Information Service has been set up to help answer your questions – whether it is seeking advice on immediate issues that need addressing or making you aware of ongoing support services.

Please contact: **0161 983 0700**. Alternatively contact via email on: SB.IS@nhs.net

Our telephone line is open Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm excluding Bank holiday.

This confidential service is for people living in: Bolton – Bury – Manchester – Oldham – Rochdale – Salford – Stockport – Tameside – Trafford – Wigan

**Information & Resources For Support After Suicide:**

Support After Suicide: <https://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/support-guides/help-is-at-hand/>

Shining a Light on Suicide: <http://www.shiningalightonsuicide.org.uk/>

**Mental Health Support Services:**

**GMMH free 24 hour Helpline** for Manchester Mental Health service users and carers call 0800 953 0285

**Community Mental Health Team** If someone is already open to the CMHT they can contact the teams on either: 0161 358 1390 (North & West Trafford) or 0161 357 1340 (South Trafford) between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm.

There is also a crisis line for people open to mental health services which is available 24 hours a day by phoning 01204 483 071.

**Trafford Psychological Therapies Services** offer talking therapy (counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or psychology) for anyone over the age of 16 years old, who has a Trafford GP and may be struggling with a common mental health problem (Anxiety, Low Mood, Worry, Stress, Sleep, Phobia, OCD, Trauma, etc.) Access is via GP referral or self-referral via: <https://www.gmmh.nhs.uk/tpt/> or by calling Trafford Psychological Therapies on: 0161 357 1350.

**Primary Care Mental Health Wellbeing Service** offer more specialist input please call 0161 271 0919 or email; pcmhw.admin@gmmh.nhs.uk. The service is open between 09:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday. There is a voice message facility for outside of office hours.

**Men’s Support Group** in Trafford aims to support the wellbeing of men who are struggling. The group meet weekly to talk about things that are affecting them, provide support and teach strategies to deal with issues faced. No referral necessary. Old Trafford Wellbeing Centre, 54-56 Seymour Grove, Manchester, M16 0LN. Contact 0789 497 1434 hello@drectionsformen.org.uk currently meeting on Zoom: Monday 18:30, Thursday 15:30 and Sunday 12:30.

**BlueSci Wellbeing Support Line:** **0161 912 2177** Local wellbeing support line between 10:00 – 14:00.

**Digital Support Offer:**

**Shout** offer support in a crisis through a 24/7 text messaging service. Just need to **Text GM to 85258**. It’s confidential and anonymous with no registration required.

**Living Life to the Full** offers online courses for people affected by low mood, anxiety or depression using cognitive behavioural therapy concepts. Materials have been designed to boost individual’s ability to live well by improving feelings and beating stress. Available online and totally free of charge for Greater Manchester residents. Instant access to self-help support: **hub.gmhsc.org.uk/mental-health/living-life-to-the-full**

**SilverCloud** provide online programmes for adults (aged 16 years+) to help ease levels of stress, sleep better or to build resilience. They are self-help, confidential and secure. Instant access to self-help support: GM.silvercloudhealth.com/signup

**Wellbeing Advice & National Helplines:**

Information about local mental health and wellbeing services here <https://hub.gmhsc.org.uk/mental-health/in-your-area/>

NHS Every mind Matters: www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

Samaritans: **116 123** (free 24-hour helpline) if people are feeling stressed/anxious.

Mind: **0300 123 3393** Self-help support to cope with anxiety and stress ([www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk))

No Panic: **0844967 4848** Anxiety support/self-help relaxation techniques ([www.nopanic.or.uk](http://www.nopanic.or.uk))