

June  
2021

# mental health awareness



## Uncertainty as The Country Opens

The return to normal life has been welcome for many of us. However, uncertainty over potential complications to the government's COVID roadmap may have some of us returning to the state of anxiety that has defined the last year. In times like these, it is important to accept what we can and cannot change.

We remain fully equipped to deal with all the challenges of the return to normality, as well as the mental health effects of the pandemic in general. We are aware that this is a particularly tough time, and our counsellors, 24/7 helpline and online resources are, as always, here to help.

Steven Stanbury Managing Director – Wellbeing Solutions



## Managing Return-to-Work Anxiety

For some of us the prospect of gradually returning to work will be a welcome break from the isolation of working from home. But for many, the prospect of reintegrating into a post-COVID workplace after over a year of home-working can be incredibly stressful.

Like all issues surrounding mental health, there is a spectrum of "return to work anxiety." It's vital to recognise that your co-workers may feel very differently to you. Many may be struggling with the return to normality.

In times like these, open communication and dialogue is incredibly important. If you are struggling with the return to work, know that the support is there. And if you know someone at work who is clearly anxious, make them aware that there is expert help, via your EAP, always on hand to help manage this stressful transition.

## What's going on this month?



### 7th – 13th June | Carers week

A week dedicated to raising awareness of the contributions that carers make to families and communities throughout the UK.

carersweek.org



### 14th - 20th June | Men's Health Week

A week to raise awareness of the physical and mental health issues that disproportionately affect men, with a focus on actively encouraging men to take be proactive about the issues they face.



### 21st June | International Father's Mental Health Day

A day to highlight the issues that new dads face and to encourage a whole-family, inclusive approach to post-partum depression.

## Supporting Carers

This month is Carers Week. If you are a carer or know someone who is, know that you are not alone and are supported:

- ✓ Talk to someone if you are feeling low or having a particularly stressful day.
- ✓ Take some me-time when possible and do something that makes you happy.
- ✓ Practice acceptance; some things you cannot change, keep in mind that you are doing the best you can.
- ✓ Lastly, keep in mind that support is always available!



## Men, COVID and Mental Health

14th of June marks the beginning of Men's Health Week, swiftly followed by International Father's Mental Health Day, and it is a time to reflect on the fact that there are some issues that disproportionately affect men. As we enter a post-pandemic world and workplace, it is worth taking the time to consider and break down the stigma associated with men's mental health.

Official statistics have shown that men are twice as likely to die from COVID, and one in eight men have a common mental health problem such as depression, anxiety, panic disorder or OCD. While there is no single reason for this, but rather a confluence of various social and biological factors, a large contributor to this disproportionate number has to do with the societal pressure that men face.

The traditional view of men as strong and dominant breadwinners creates a certain stigma that makes it incredibly difficult for men to open up about their feelings – for fear of being branded weak or 'unmanly'. In fact, some research has suggested that this stigma means that men do not even recognise the mental health issues they may be experiencing, depriving them of the vocabulary to truly express themselves.

That is why it is incredibly important that we establish open and communicative places in which men can express themselves without fear of judgment. If the challenges of the pandemic continue to negatively impact your mental health, remember that we are ready and able to offer advice through our 24/7 helpline and new online resources.

## Handling Misinformation

There is a lot of uncertainty at the minute surrounding the UK's post-COVID recovery plan, and misinformation from untrustworthy sources certainly does not help. Here are some tips to sorting the facts from the fiction:

- ✓ Stick to trustworthy sources such as the CDC and local health authorities.
- ✓ Limit how often you check for updates, constantly scanning for news will inevitably lead to some untrustworthy sources.
- ✓ Stay away from media if you are getting overwhelmed, information overload is the last thing you want.
- ✓ Be careful what you share, make sure your sources are accurate before sending information to anyone else.

## employee assistance

Your Employee Assistance Helpline provides you and your family with counselling and advice, covering a variety of personal or workplace issues.

Whatever our age, background or role in life, we all have problems from time to time. Talking to a counsellor or advisor about a problem can help us find a way forward.

This service is paid for by your employer and is provided by an independent company, Wellbeing Solutions Management. There is no cost to you and all calls are confidential.

**24/7 freephone: 0800 328 1437**

Visit: [employeeassistance.org.uk](https://employeeassistance.org.uk)



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