

Wellness Resource

Life is full of ups and downs. That is normal. It is when we are going through a hard time, or just having to work too hard, that we need to have an awareness about self-care and when we need to reach out for help. Now, more than ever, we need to take care of our ourselves, each other, our families, our teams and our patients.

Knowing when to reach out is one thing. It is another knowing who to turn to and how to make contact. This document hopefully helps you do just that.

Reaching out for help is not a sign of weakness. It is OK not to be OK. You are reaching out in a safe and confidential space. Many people worry that by reaching out they will be “referred to the GDC”. **That is not the case**, and it is only in extremely rare circumstances does your regulator need to know.

We know levels of anxiety and stress in the profession are high right now, and many people are working hard to try and relieve the cause of those stresses. But it is also you as an individual who is important to us. Whether you have been working throughout the pandemic, or you are returning to work from furlough or shielding, you are equally valued and needed.

Whilst these and other resources are excellent, sometimes there is no substitute for simply talking to someone you trust. So, pick up the phone, arrange an online call over a cup of tea or take that (socially distanced) walk in the park with a friend or family member. It gives a space to discuss anxieties in a safe confidential space and can help you refocus and prioritise your goals. These acts alone go a long way towards helping as well as giving an opportunity to experience the reparative qualities of mother nature.

And keep those antennae out for those around you, family and patients, who may be suffering, and be ready to offer them support and signposting to help.

Have you thought of having a Mental Health Lead in your workplace? Someone who can build prevention into the clinic or laboratory, keep the antennae out for someone who needs help, knows how to ask if someone is OK and if they aren't, can safely signpost whilst working within safe boundaries. These competencies can be gained in a 3-stage training framework.

1. **Stress Awareness and Management Training.** Is available [here](#) for **all GDC registrants** on the BDA CPD hub in two one-hour modules. You do not need to be a BDA member and it is open to all registrants, not just dentists.
An online stress control class is also available locally through the link below:
<https://ni.stresscontrol.org/>
2. **Mental Health First Aid Training.** This competency-based training gives you the skills needed to be a safe Mental Health First Aider in a workplace.

This training is available to members of the dental team and is available through the following contacts.

Trust	Contact Name	Organisation	Contact Details
Northern	Orlagh Brady	Northern Health & Social Care Trust	orlagh.brady@northerntrust.hscni.net
Southern	Mairead Casey	Southern Health & Social Care Trust	Mairead.Casey@southerntrust.hscni.net
	Dymphna Walsh Colin Loughran	PIPs Newry & Mourne Action Mental Health	Dympna@PIPSNewryAndMourne.org cloughran@amh.org.uk
Western	General Enquiries	Western Health & Social Care Trust	Health.improvement@westerntrust.hscni.net
Belfast	Mary McKnight	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	marya.mcknight@belfasttrust.hscni.net
	Carole Coupe	AWARE NI	carole@aware-ni.org
South Eastern	Alison Doake	South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust	Alison.doake@setrust.hscni.net

3. **Suicide Prevention Training.** The PHA in connection with Fresh Minds Education are delighted to be able to offer Suicide Prevention Awareness training to all adults in NI in 2021, book your place by pasting the link below into your browser:
https://freshmindseducation.com/pha-link_life

Resources

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For an overview of resources available to the whole dental team go to
www.supportfordentalteams.org

This resource is mobile, tablet and PC friendly and is freely available to download and print in black and white and colour. Download it today, share with your line manager and/or practice manager and leave a copy in your staff room.

- **Inspire NI** have put in place a [GDS Assistance Programme](#), a one-stop-shop for wellbeing and mental health support specifically designed to meet the needs of GDPs in Northern Ireland. It includes a 24-hour confidential support helpline and off-site face-to-face counselling, as well as a range of digital tools and resources to support your wellbeing.

Information on how to get started on the **Inspire** hub, including details of the GDS pin can be accessed at:

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/Inspire%20Support%20Hub%20Getting%20Started%20Info%20Card.pdf>

Alternatively you can call **Inspire** free and confidentially: **0800 389 5362**

- **Occupational Health** is available to all dentists in Northern Ireland and DCPs in the salaried services as well as GDPs.
- **BDA members**, including student members, have access to an Employee Assistance Programme managed by [Health Assured](#) and available 24/7. This includes a 24-hour helpline and face-to-face counselling as well as a range of CBT self-help modules, informative factsheets and invaluable advice videos from leading qualified counsellors.

- **Health Assured** is also available to [FGDP](#) and [BADN](#) members.
- **Dentists Health Support Trust** if you are worried about your own or a colleague's mental health, drug or alcohol use can be accessed [here](#) for professional and confidential support and advice.
- **NI Doctors and Dentists Group**, for dentists who are concerned they may have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, contact Dr John Burton drjburton@btinternet.com on 02879633265 or 07710741169, where you will find confidential professional help and support.
- **Postgraduate Trainee Support**, we know our students and trainees are experiencing anxieties on how COVID-19 has impacted on their progression. Universities and Deaneries have responsibility for trainee welfare and relevant resources are available to all postgraduate trainees [here](#).
- **BDA Benevolent Fund** The furlough scheme is coming to an end and this is likely to impact on the financial circumstances of many families in NI. If you are experiencing financial difficulty the [BDA Benevolent Fund](#) may be able to help. **The Fund is open to all dentists, dental students (not just BDA members)** and their dependents living in the UK. They also offer free access to useful resources on debt management, focusing on tailoring prevention strategies and solutions to various stages of a dentist's career.

For other members of the dental team, the BSDHT also has a Benevolent Fund <http://www.bsdht.org.uk/Resources/bsdht-benevolent-fund>.

- **The Citizens Advice Bureau** <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/northern-ireland/> offers excellent advice and resources on debt management.
- **Lifeline** Suicide and suicide attempts can have a lasting effect on individuals, families and communities. For those who we know who are feeling overwhelmed and anxious and experiencing thoughts of self-harm, it is important to reach out and seek professional help. Lifeline 0808 808 8000 <https://www.lifelinehelpline.info> is a free 24/7 support service based here in NI.
- **Family Support NI** For those suffering bereavement, there is help available for you and your loved ones through the family support NI government [website](#).