

## **Mental Health & Wellbeing Resources for Independent Dental Practitioners and their Teams - BDA Scotland and Scottish Government**

Scotland's Mental Health Strategy takes a health promoting and preventative approach, with a guiding ambition to prevent and treat mental health problems with the same commitment, passion and drive as we do with physical health problems.

We are acutely aware of the growing impact the Coronavirus pandemic is having on our professional and personal lives. From the point of view of dentistry, the Chief Dental Officer clearly recognises the importance of supporting mental health and wellbeing, for clinical dentists, and for all members of the dental teams.

This compilation – developed jointly by BDA Scotland and the Scottish Government – highlights guidance and support resources available for you to draw on for help, as and when you may need it.

### **1. Scottish Government / NHS Scotland services**

#### **Scottish Government National Wellbeing Hub:**

The national digital wellbeing hub enables staff, carers, and volunteers working in Health and Social Care and their families to access relevant support when they need it and provides a range of self-care and wellbeing resources designed to aid resilience as the whole workforce responds to the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.promis.scot/>.

You can also call the National Wellbeing Helpline on 0800 111 4191.

#### **NHS Inform:**

[NHS Inform](#) is Scotland's national health information service. It is a good source of information on general health including [mental health problems and disorders](#). The website offers advice and self-help guidance and support.

#### **NHS24 Living Life:**

The Living Life service offers support to people in Scotland through guided self-help and cognitive behavioural therapy. You can access the service by referring yourself for an assessment by phoning 0800 328 9655 or visit [NHS 24 - Living Life](#)

#### **NHS Board Occupational Health Services:**

In June 2018, Scottish Government issued a letter advising NHS Boards of the introduction of a NHS Occupational Health and Guidance service for GDPs, members of the dental team and other practice staff. The BDA/Scottish Dental Practice Committee had campaigned to have this service introduced.

The service is delivered through NHS Boards in conjunction with [SALUS](#), an NHS based provider of Occupational Health, Safety and Return to Work Services across the public and private sectors. At present as these services are very busy, triage and prioritisation of referrals is needed in some areas.

Individual NHS Boards may have other local wellbeing services and online resources, which may be accessed.

## **NHS Education for Scotland (NES):**

Project Lift is a Scottish Government / NES leadership initiative that aims to support anyone engaged with the health and social care landscape including community, voluntary and partnership organisations. Following the digital coaching pilot which was accessed by dentists, they have developed 'Coaching for Wellbeing' which is a free, digitally delivered offer of 2 hours coaching to anyone looking for a confidential space with a qualified coach to help you look after yourselves in this situation. Your coach will guide you through a process that will start by helping you make sense of what is happening to you right now, and to clarify what you want to focus on and the difference you intend to make for yourself through coaching. Due to the very positive feedback this has received from individuals across locations, roles and leadership stages, this has been extended into 2021. The coaching takes place at times that fit with your situation and over a platform agreed between you and your coach ie Zoom, Skype, FaceTime. <https://www.knowyoumore.com/wellbeingcoaching/>

Dental Teams may also access NES Mental Health and Wellbeing Support through Turas Learn. Resources to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff members – including sections on managing stress, coping and resilience - are available on [TURAS Learn](#) and are free to access and share.

Project Lift is also running free Community Events for anyone within the wider health and social care landscape for those who want to connect into a conversation in a safe, enjoyable and supported environment. [Past events](#) have included, Change, Influence, and Collaboration and future events will run on a regular basis. All welcome.

Another resource that could be considered relates to mental health improvement and prevention of self-harm and suicide. It contains some useful learning points: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/33738/mental-health-improvement-and-prevention-of-self-harm-and-suicide/skilled-level-resource>

## **2. BDA resources**

### **BDA Benevolent Fund**

The [BDA Benevolent Fund](#) is a charity that helps UK dental students, dentists and their dependents in financial need. The website offers signposts to organisations where dentists can find the help they need.

### **BDA Health Assured**

[BDA Health Assured](#) is a member assistance programme. Through Health Assured members are supported by a comprehensive service known as an 'Employee Assistance Programme' (EAP); all members can access it regardless of employment status. An EAP is a confidential benefit designed to help you deal with personal and professional problems that could be affecting your home life or work life, health and general wellbeing. BDA members can access a helpline 24/7, 365 days a year.

### **Dental Health Support Trust**

[The Dental Health Support Trust](#) is a charity run by dentists, for dentists. They combine their experiences to make life better for colleagues with mental health concerns and addiction issues. Although based in London, they are very active in

Scotland. DHST will also cover the whole dental team, which is very important when a workplace is in crisis or at risk.

### **3. Other resources**

#### **Healthier Scotland**

A number of other organisations can provide help and support if you're experiencing emotional upset, stress or mental health problems. It's important your kind to yourself and learn to recognise when you start to struggle with your emotions, feel low or need time to [clear your head](#). This website offers tips and ideas and signposts you to other organisations which can offer help and support.

#### **AMH - Scottish Association for Mental Health**

[SAMH](#) is Scotland's national mental health charity working in over 60 communities with adults and young people, providing mental health social care support services in primary care, schools and further education, among others. They have created a national programme along with the Mental Health Foundation called [See Me](#)

#### **British Doctors and Dentists Group**

The British Doctors and Dentists Group <http://www.bddg.org> is a mutual/self-help group of doctors and dentists from all levels of the professions who are recovering from, or wish to recover from addiction to alcohol, drugs and other addictions. They have regular local meetings throughout the UK, including Scotland, where they focus on sharing journeys, difficulties both personally and professionally and what has helped in recovery. They aim to provide a safe, confidential space with professionals who understand the context in which doctors and dentists work.

A Wellbeing resource for the whole Dental Team across the UK has been produced by a collaborative group and is a UK-wide resource. It is mobile, tablet and PC friendly and is available to download and print in black and white and colour from <https://www.supportfordentalteams.org/>

#### **Mental Health Foundation**

[The Mental Health Foundation website](#) is a good source of information for general mental health awareness and information. Support is also available through [MIND](#)

#### **Breathing Space**

[Breathing Space](#) is a website and a free, confidential phone service for anyone in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. They provide a safe and supportive space by listening and offering advice, information and signposting. Call free on 0800 838 587- check the website for opening hours.

#### **Samaritans**

Samaritans operate a free, confidential phone service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for anyone who needs someone to talk to about anything or is worried about someone. They listen non-judgmentally. Call free on 116 123 or [Samaritans](#). They have introduced a [self help app](#) which helps to track how you're feeling, as well as recommendations for things you can do to help you cope, feel better and stay safe in a crisis.

### **NHS England's Moodzone**

NHS England's Moodzone can help you cope with emotions, stress, anxiety or depression. It offers practical advice, interactive tools, videos and audio guides to help you feel mentally and emotionally better. Read their [five steps to mental wellbeing](#).

### **SPRING - Social Prescribing**

The goal of [SPRING Social Prescribing](#) is to support and encourage the culture shift from the medical model to the social model of health. There is increased recognition that the social model of health can reduce the pressure on NHS services including GPs.

The project is a partnership between numerous health organisations and is the largest co-ordinated project of its kind. A network of 30 community-led health organisations will come together to deliver social prescribing services in communities across Northern Ireland and Scotland.

### **Penumbra**

One of Scotland's largest mental health charities supporting adults and young people, [Penumbra](#) have developed a [guide on dealing with coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

### **The Open University**

The OU has developed some [free resources on improving our wellbeing](#) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic