

Mental health problems. Continuing Professional Development Resource

This document outlines two ways in which you can build the skills you have developed using this resource into your Continuing Professional Development; as an individual, or as a team.

- How to include learnings from the mental health resource in your Peer Discussion
- Ideas for team activities ('huddles') to practice and embed learnings

Skills Development – Peer Discussion Guide

What is a Peer Discussion?

A Peer Discussion is an open and honest conversation with a peer that encourages you to reflect on recent learnings or practices. This is a structured part of your continuing professional development (CPD).

As part of your planned 'Peer Discussion', you might want to include this Mental Health Resource as an example of the learning you have undertaken this year.

This document is intended to provide a suggested structure for this discussion, offering you the opportunity to reflect on what you have learnt, how your practice may have changed as a result, and how you might support your service users to improve their mental health and get the support they need.

We've highlighted here topics and questions that will help you to reflect on the Mental Health Resource, you may find these helpful to structure your discussion:

Explain the prevalence and burden of mental health disorders to patients and the healthcare system (who is affected, common mental health disorders to look out for, links between non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health)

- Do you feel more knowledgeable about mental health disorders?
- Are you able to describe the impact mental health problems can have on a person's life?
- What have you learnt about the links between non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health?



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Recognise and discuss the critical role of community pharmacy in supporting patients/ service users with their mental health

- Are you able to identify patients/ service users at risk of mental health problems or deteriorating mental health?
- How can community pharmacists help to reduce the stigma associated with mental health problems?
- Have you identified any toolkits, questionnaires or resources that can be used to support patients/ service users?
- Are you aware of the local services available to help support patients/ service users?
- Can you suggest any additional activities that you could initiate in store to better support your patients/ service users at risk of mental health problems or deteriorating mental health?

Discuss the role of community pharmacists in supporting adherence to medicines among patients with mental health disorders

- Are there any tools and techniques you can use to support adherence in patients with mental health disorders?
- How can you encourage patients with mental health disorders to talk about any issues they may be having with their medication?

Explore how learning about mental health can support pharmacists and their pharmacy colleagues with their own mental health

What learning can be applied to supporting pharmacists with their own mental health to reduce the rate of burnout?

How can you help reduce the stigma associated with mental health and work-related-burnout to support pharmacy colleagues?

How can you help pharmacy colleagues to access support for mental health and reduce burnout?

Make sure to write down any key points from your discussion and list any goals that you have agreed to work towards. Making a commitment can help with this, such as:

- In one week I will...
- In one month I will...
- In three months I will...
- I know I have been successful when...



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Huddle Guide / Team Role-play Ideas

What is a Huddle?

A Huddle is a technique used in various healthcare environments that simply means a quick, regular meeting with all staff to update on progress, raise any issues, share useful information and celebrate staff success!

The aim of a Huddle is to:

- Promote effective, consistent team communication
- Oversee and prioritize workloads
- Provide a supportive space for learning & development
- Ensure the safety of all team members

A Huddle can be useful after training/peer discussions as a way to share feedback, highlight team improvements, and flag areas to focus on.

Huddle structure

- Meet for around 5-15 mins
- Designate a Huddle leader (can rotate or be permanent)
- Go over any questions or concerns
- Discuss the mental health resource – share any insights gained and goals for future
- Share experiences of supporting patients/ service users with their mental health
- End with a positive message and celebrate any successes that the team has had!

Ideas for Huddle activities:

1. Take a temperature check

Many service users aren't aware that community pharmacy can support them with their mental health.¹ Take a temperature check with service users about their awareness of services and how they might view accessing them, report back to your team during the huddle.

- Were your service users aware that community pharmacy could support them with their mental health?
- Were they aware of the full range of ways pharmacy can help?
- How can you raise awareness with service users of the support you offer?
- How can you identify and engage service users who may benefit from your support for mental health?

Some conversation starters are:

- Patients with long term conditions
- Signs of deteriorating mental health
- Patients prescribed medication for common mental health disorders



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2. Challenging stigma around mental health

Mental health is associated with high levels of social stigma that can prevent people from speaking up and accessing the help they need.¹ As a team think of three ways community pharmacy can help to reduce stigma, some hints are below:

- Think about your everyday interactions with service users
- How can knowing the facts help?
- Think about the impact of language and choice of words
- How can educating others play a role?
- Can you think of any positive stories of people with mental health problems that challenge pre-conceptions?

3. Role play healthy living advice

Patients with long term conditions and mental health problems are often demotivated with low self-esteem which can make giving advice on healthy living challenging.² Finding the best way to start a conversation and deliver advice effectively can take some practice.

- Find a partner and practice a role-play scenario with one of you taking on the role of a patient with a long term condition and signs of deteriorating mental health.
- Practise a conversation, thinking about how you can start the conversation and direct it to healthy living. During the conversation give one piece of practical advice to the patient, try and make this specific and achievable.
- When you have completed your conversation, swap roles with your partner
- As the patient, feel free to show any signs of deteriorating mental health you may have observed in the past or examples from the resource

4. Prioritising medicines information

Patients often struggle to take in all the information provided on medicine packaging, so prioritising key information can help with adherence.

- Select one medication pack relevant to a common mental health disorder (for example an anti-psychotic or anti-depressant medicine) and bring to a team meeting
- Make recommendations for the top three pieces of information that should be communicated to patients, discuss and agree as a team



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References:

1. Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2018) <https://bit.ly/2VCAJBC> (Last Accessed April 2021)
2. MIND. <https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/2942/mental-health-problems-introduction-2017.pdf> (Last Accessed April 2021)

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5. Be good to yourself and your team!

The rate of work-related-burnout among pharmacists is a real issue and all too often healthcare professionals ignore their own health.³ As a team you can support each other to make positive changes for your own mental health and reduce the risk of burnout! Use your huddle meeting to temperature check stress levels, share personal goals, track progress and brainstorm ideas for improving your own mental health.

- Be vigilant for signs of burnout in yourself and team, using a stress screener can help raise awareness and gauge stress levels
- NHS mental health and wellbeing pages include a Mood Self Assessment screener, suitable for people 16 years and above <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>
- Set healthy living goals to make one positive change, make sure they are specific, actionable, realistic and that you can track progress
- Focus on the positive, ask your team to each tell you about something positive that has happened in the pharmacy this week
- Do a vacation check, taking time away from work is an important way of reducing stress, building resilience and recharging energy levels. Is everyone in your team using their vacation time and taking regular time off?
- Check in as a team to see how you are taking action to incorporate one or more of the Five Ways to Wellbeing

Resources

Mental Health Foundation. <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

MIND. <https://www.mind.org.uk>

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Mental health and behavioural conditions. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/conditions-and-diseases/mental-health-and-behavioural-conditions>

NHS England. Valuing mental health equally with physical health or “Parity of Esteem”. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/blog/parity-of-esteem/>



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References:

3. Cogora. Primary Concerns 2018: The State of Primary Care. https://www.cogora.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Cogora_State_of_Primary_Care_Report_LR.pdf (last accessed April 2021)

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