

Supporting our members through their mental health issues

Mental health

Mental health is just as important as physical health and, just as we would seek out help for a concern about our body, it's important to address any concerns affecting our mind.

Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year.¹ When our mental health is compromised, it starts affecting everyday life. If we stop enjoying things we usually love, feel sad and don't know why, it's important to talk to someone. The simple act of sharing how we're feeling can help us feel less alone and, in turn help build and manage our mental resilience.

The impact of mental health issues

Stress

48%

of employees admit long-term absences were caused by stress.²

Anxiety

60%

of employees are experiencing symptoms of anxiety.³

Depression

56%

of employees are experiencing symptoms of depression.³

Helping a member manage a little better each day

Stress

Some stress can be good, but people have different ways of reacting to stress, so the feeling of being under pressure that might be motivating to one person can weigh heavily on another.

Pressure turns into stress when one feels unable to cope. While stress itself is not an illness, the consequences of long term stress can take a toll on the body and impact a job and relationships.

Anxiety

Anxiety (feeling tense, nervous or fearful) is related to the normal 'flight or fight' biological reaction humans have when they feel threatened.

We all feel anxious in certain situations - like taking an exam or moving house - but for some people these feelings can become overwhelming and life altering.

Depression

AXA Health's psychological health expert, Dr. Mark Winwood, describes depression as "a constant feeling of sadness, and is very different from temporarily feeling low." It is extremely common, but talking about depression has been challenging and taboo, especially for men.

In recent years, mental health charities and main stream media have joined forces with health professionals to get people talking about mental health. This helps improve communities by making it more acceptable for those suffering from mental illnesses to seek help, learn to cope, and get on the road to recovery.

¹ NHS England, 2023

² Statista - Stress in the UK, 2022

³ Champion Health - Mental health statistics, 2023

Signs a member may be struggling with their mental health

While everybody deals with mental health difficulties differently, there are some key signs to look out for that may indicate a member may be struggling with their mental health.

Absence

While a certain level of absence is unavoidable in any business, if a member is regularly taking long periods of time off work, it can be a sign that things aren't quite right and may warrant further investigation.

Avoidance

This can manifest in a number of different ways. It could be avoidance of additional work responsibilities, or new work projects. Or it could be avoidance of social situations, particularly if the member is usually the life and soul of the party.

Negativity

Consistent negativity and sarcasm may be a sign that a member is struggling with their mental health, particularly if they're usually upbeat and positive.

Low productivity

If a member's productivity has taken a hit, or the quality of their work has dropped compared to what they would normally produce, then this may indicate that they are struggling. Other signs could be making frequent errors in their work, or even missing more deadlines than they normally would.

Heightened emotions

A member may suddenly have angry outbursts in the middle of the office, or is unusually upset when projects don't quite go to plan or they have a difficult conversation with a client.

Mood changes

Mood changes can be a big indicator that a member may be struggling with their mental health. They may become quiet and withdrawn from the rest of the team when they would usually be involved in all the conversations.

Fatigue

A member may seem more tired than they usually would be, or are relying more on coffee to get them through the day.



PHC's mental health services

When you decide it's the right time for you to take the next steps, we're here for you. We offer a range of mental health and support services that may be available to you as part of your healthcare cover with PHC. Find out more about what these services entail and how to access them.

Mental health assessments and support service

If you are suffering from stress, anxiety, or depression and aren't sure where to turn, we provide quick access to support and treatment for mental health conditions via our clinically led, telephone-based service, without the need for a GP referral.

This service is available to members aged 18 and over and only if Mental Health is a core benefit on your plan.

How to access

Call the PHC claims line on **0800 068 7111** or email **claims@thephc.co.uk**.

They'll check you're covered and advise you of the next steps to get in touch with the Mental health assessments and support service team.

Counselling and support service

If you're facing challenges that seem too much to cope with, our Counselling and support service, including Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), gives you an expert to talk to over the phone or online, 24/7. You can get confidential guidance and support as well as access to short-term counselling (where clinically appropriate). With everything you need in one place, get the right support to move forward on your wellbeing journey, anytime, anywhere.

This service is available to members aged 16 and over.

How to access

To speak to somebody

Call PHC's dedicated Counselling and support service on **0800 316 1213**. Please state that you are a PHC member when you call.

To access the online portal

Visit **axabesupported.co.uk** and register by entering your email address, followed by selecting a password. Once you have registered you will be asked to add your first name, surname and access code, Phc. Please note the access code is case sensitive.

If you have previously registered for the site, your login details will remain the same. If you have forgotten your password, select the forgotten password link.

For more information about PHC healthcare cover or if you'd like to know more about the support that PHC can provide, please contact your PHC Relationship Manager or email us at **sales@thephc.co.uk**.



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