

# Employee wellbeing.

## How to spot the signs of common mental health problems

---

It's easy to miss some early warning signs of mental illness. To support our colleagues here are some helpful indicators and common signs to look out for, to help to care for the wellbeing of others. If we are more aware, we may be able to assist and support our colleagues who might be facing mental health problems.

There are 5 common signs that you should look out for:

- Long-lasting sadness or irritability
- Extremely high and low moods
- Excessive fear, worry, or anxiety
- Social withdrawal
- Dramatic changes in eating or sleeping habits

Remember, if you spot one of these signs, it doesn't always mean someone has a mental health issue. It could signal an underlying health problem or something else entirely.

However, different mental health issues have their own unique symptoms. Look out for common issues in the workplace, and the warning signs of mental illnesses.



---

# Common mental health problems

**There are several mental health conditions you will more commonly see in the workplace, although they may not directly affect an individual's performance.**

These mental health problems are called common because, combined, they affect more people than other mental health problems (up to 15% of people at any one time in the UK.)

Some people may have more than one mental health problem (such as depression and anxiety). Here is a list of the more commonly found issues in the workplace:

- **Depression**
- **Generalised anxiety disorder**
- **Panic disorder**
- **Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)**
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**

## Symptoms of depression

This is usually feelings of flatness or lowness, a lack of engagement with things they previously were engaged with and a loss of enjoyment of their hobbies. There will often be a change in appetite and they will be more irritable.

## Symptoms of OCD

Those affected have obsessive thoughts that are difficult to get rid of. They manifest as strong feelings that the person must carry out or repeat certain physical acts or mental processes This can be fears of germs/dirt, worrying about the safety of things and obsession over the order/layout of things.

## Symptoms of panic disorder

Similar to generalised anxiety but the symptoms manifest far more so in physical ways. Unexpected and recurring panic attacks are common, and worrying about having another panic attack. One symptom of a panic attack is an increased heart rate.

## Symptoms of generalised anxiety disorder

As a person with this condition will have constant worrying. Due to this, they are often on edge and irritable, restless or tired because of being tense all day. Because they focus their mind on worrying, it is often hard for those with anxiety to concentrate on a topic or task.

## Symptoms of PTSD

This is a disorder that comes about after a traumatic event in someone's life. There may be a feeling of reliving the event through flashbacks or nightmares. There can also be physical reactions, such as shaking and sweating.

Let's all be a little more aware of how to spot the signs of a colleague who may need support. Remember we have our employee assistants programme that be accessed at anytime, by employees and their families.  
**<https://employeeassistance.org.uk>**  
**or call: 0800 3281437**