



Wellbeing Assessment Guide

Introduction

What affects one person's mental wellbeing won't necessarily affect others in the same way. Key life events, such as loss (including infertility and miscarriage) or bereavement, issues at work, financial worries, starting a new job, college or university and relationship problems can all impact on our mental wellbeing. Sometimes there is no clear reason why we feel the way we do and sometimes, when it comes to the way we feel emotionally, it can be hard to recognise or admit that we're not feeling good.

We all have issues that affect our mental health in one way or another, but that doesn't mean we need to struggle. There are steps you can take to improve and maintain your mental wellbeing and these can be seen [here](#).

This guide has been created as a starting point for a routine discussion with the prospective adopter(s) about mental health and wellbeing. It is designed to assist prospective adopters to take stock of their mental, as well as physical wellbeing.

Key principles:

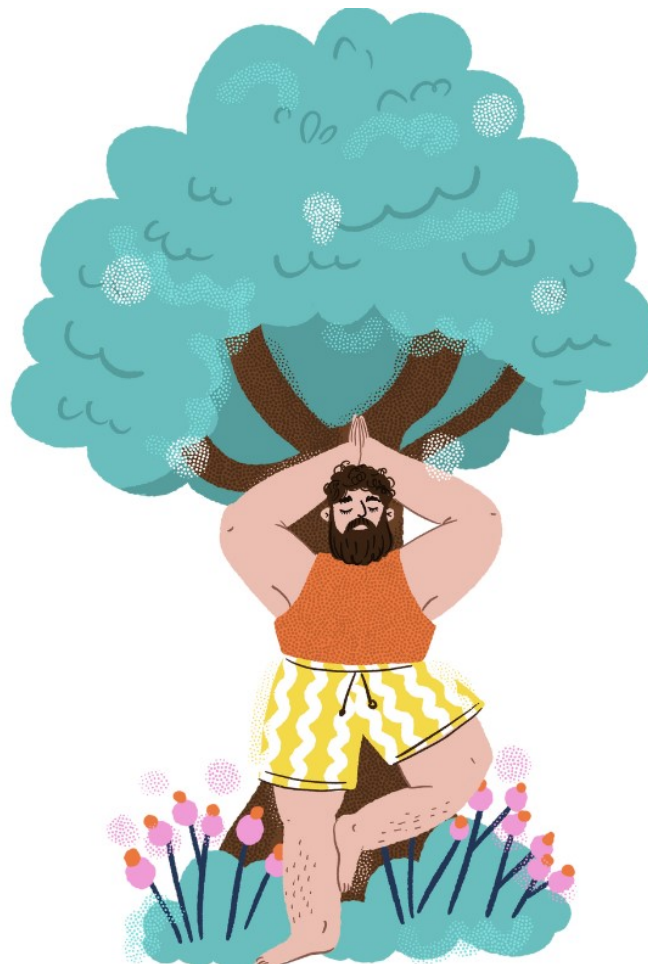
- It recognises the adoption process can be stressful and intrusive and it may have an impact on the individual's mental wellbeing.
- It recognises that issues discussed within the assessment and preparation process could trigger emotions that the individual may need support to deal with.
- It is designed to provide pointers for review and assistance in identifying means of supporting the prospective adopter(s) and to work with them to source appropriate support to address identified issues.
- It is not designed to be a 'one off' discussion, but a regular review incorporated into the assessment, preparation and adoption support processes.
- The guide and the mental health wellbeing assessment tool is not intended to replace a consultation with a GP if the person is struggling.
- This guide seeks to make the regular, but not onerously frequent, assessment of the prospective adopter's mental wellbeing a routine part of the assessment and support mechanisms and is not for use only when the individual expresses that they are feeling 'down' or struggling.
- Information shared that may be of concern for a safeguarding reason, will be shared as per the organisation's safeguarding policy.
- This guide should be used in conjunction with the **guide to having difficult conversations**.

The guide makes the following assumptions:

- That the prospective adopter(s) will discuss their mental wellbeing with their R&A Social Worker in an open and honest way.
- That the R&A Social Worker will enter into any discussion with the prospective adopter(s) about their wellbeing and document these in an open and honest way.
- That the R&A Social Worker will provide support and signposting for further sources for support to the prospective adopter(s).
- That the R&A Social Worker will review the wellbeing of prospective adopters in a relationship (cohabiting or not/civil partnership/marriage etc.) as a unit.

Process

- The prospective adopter will be introduced to the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) [wellbeing assessment tool](#) as part of the R&A discussions at Stage 1 of the process and again at the beginning of stage 2 and regularly thereafter.
- The prospective adopter is **not** expected to share their results from the SAMH wellbeing tool, it is a tool for them to proactively assess their current wellbeing and respond accordingly
- As part of the assessment and preparation process, the R&A Social Worker will discuss with the prospective adopter, their mental wellbeing, with reference to the assessment tool and in a supportive manner.
- The R&A Social Worker should not ask the prospective adopter what their SAMH assessment score was, but the prospective adopter may wish to share this.
- The R&A Social Worker should not try to persuade the prospective adopter(s) that sharing their SAMH assessment score is part of the assessment process.
- Whether the assessment tool has been used or not, if a discussion identifies that the prospective adopter is struggling or experiencing difficulties, the R&A Social Worker will assist the prospective adopter to make a plan to address the identified areas of stress/concern (See Appendix 1) this may include:
 - Recommending they make use of their current support network
 - Recommending they develop a support network
 - Recommending they seek a consultation with their GP
 - Recommending they discuss the issue identified with an existing support provider (mentor/ counsellor/support group/support organisation etc.)
 - Recommending they seek professional support



- Signposting relevant support groups/organisations

Using the guide with Early permanence (Foster) carers

Social Worker to discuss at the beginning of the placement and thereafter.

- The supervision of the EP foster carer, while a Foster carer, will usually be delegated to the R&A Social Worker and it is anticipated that the discussion of the mental health wellbeing is incorporated into the supervision discussion and documentation.
- The fostering Social Worker will be aware, through shared visits and scrutiny of the supervision records, of discussions regarding the mental wellbeing of the EP foster carers.
- The fostering Social Worker must be included in discussions regarding any identified provision of support.
- The Child's Social Worker retains responsibility for the looked after child and should be involved in any discussions regarding mental wellbeing that may impact upon the EP foster carer's ability to



Using the guide in Recruitment & assessment of prospective adopters

- Social Worker to discuss at the beginning of the assessment process and thereafter.

Using the guide and the adoption support plan

- To incorporate identified issues into the adoption support plan, with regular review.

Social Worker/professional use of the assessment tool

- The wellbeing assessment tool is not just for prospective adopters, it is for anyone. Recognising or assessing your own wellbeing is just as important.
- If you feel you are struggling and/or the assessment tool provides support to indicate that you are, please discuss this with your supervising manager at the earliest opportunity, to obtain the necessary support.

Further resources

[Mind, the mental health support charity](#)

[NHS 5 steps to mental wellbeing](#)

[Five ways to wellbeing: New applications, new ways of thinking | New Economics Foundation](#)

Appendix 1: Steps to support mental wellbeing

YouGov research shows that around one quarter of us never take the time to look after our mental health.

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Trying these things could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

Connect

Staying in touch with loved ones can make us feel happier and more secure; and often just having a chat can help to lift our mood.

- Put five minutes aside to ask someone how they are
- Arrange to meet up with friends that you haven't seen in a while
- Join a local group or club and meet new people in your community

Be Active

Being active isn't just good for our physical health; it's also proven to have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing.

- Go for a short walk at lunchtime
- Discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits you
- Try the NHS's [couch to 5K](#)



Take Notice

Whether you're spending time with friends or taking a moment for yourself, try to stop to take notice and be aware of the present.

- Set aside time to practise mindfulness or take up yoga
- Take notice of how your friends or colleagues are feeling
- Spend time outdoors, enjoy the fresh air and notice what's around you

Learn

Learning enhances your self-esteem and confidence, and can be a great way to meet new people.

- Sign up for a class and learn something new
- Rediscover an old interest,
- Take on a new challenge to make or fix something

Give

Giving can be very rewarding; in fact those who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.

- Volunteer your time for a cause you are passionate about
- Spend time with someone who you know has been having a difficult time
- Fundraise for a charity

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