



Introduction to mental health awareness presentation

— cover note

Background:

The peer supporters who worked with us to develop the mental health awareness presentation identified the need for this cover note. This presentation was created with the intention that it can be delivered to peer supporters as part of their training, and then delivered by those peer supporters to raise awareness amongst their team mates and colleagues in their service. This presentation has been co-created with emergency services staff and volunteers. We really hope you find it useful and effective.

The presentation can help to:

- Improve awareness of mental health, including what good mental health looks like, basic understanding of mental health problems and give an introduction to the mental health continuum.
- Introduce the concept of mental health at work and how the mental health of emergency services personnel can be affected.
- Increase confidence in where to get information and support around mental health for you or a teammate.
- Empower staff and volunteers to reflect on their own mental health and seek information or support themselves.
- Increase knowledge of further training opportunities and where to find them.

I thought I was mad until my doctor told me I was normal. What I was dealing with on a daily basis was mad and any sane person would be affected. I was a normal person dealing with abnormal situations.

By telling my story it helps me. I hope by listening it helps you.
Brian, Blue Light Champion

The presentation is designed to be an hour long, however we encourage you to tailor it to your audience's needs; it can be extended or cut down to work for you. The presentation is a flexible resource that can be adapted to suit your audience's needs and your personal style.





Key notes:

- The presentation slides include speaker's notes; these are intended to give you the information you need.
- Slides 18 to 25 are service specific; please delete the slides apart from the ones you want to use.
- When creating the presentation we heard from emergency services staff and volunteers on the way they would like it to be delivered to them. They said that, for it to be effective, it would be best delivered in an informal and interactive way. Other words that came up were relaxed, accessible, authentic, professional and comfortable.
- It's important that you let the group know you are not a subject matter expert, what your role is as a presenter and how you'll deal with any questions you are not able to answer.
- Look after yourself, each other and the group.

The key to all of this is speaking to someone without fear of judgment or reprisal. To tell someone how crazy you feel and have them completely normalise the horrid things going on in your head is completely enlightening. It stopped the guilt for me and helped me to see that the whirring thoughts in my head and behaviours I was displaying were a direct result of my OCD, not because I was a bad person. A year ago, I thought my life, my career, my ability to be a mother was over. A year on, with the support of lots of people and the ability to be strong and speak out about mental health, I am in one of the best places I have ever been mentally. Rhi, Blue Light Champion

