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| **Communicating about my mental health** | |  |
|  | |  |
| A close-up of a newspaper  Description automatically generated with low confidence | This information is about communicating about your mental health.  It has information about | **Page** |
|  |  |  |
|  | * Communicating about your mental health | **3** |
|  |  |  |
| A person smiling for the picture  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | * Why communicating about your mental health is important | **6** |
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|  | * The best way to communicate about your mental health | **7** |
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|  | * How you can let health workers know how you like to communicate | **12** |
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|  | * How you can use tools to help you communicate about your mental health | **15** |

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| **Communicating about your mental health** | |
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|  | There are many ways to communicate about mental health.  To **communicate** is how you understand and share your feelings or information. |
|  |  |
|  | **Mental health** is about   * How you think * How you feel |
|  |  |
|  | You may want to communicate about your mental health to someone you trust.  There are many people you might trust.  For more information about who you might trust go to [https://www.idmhconnect.health/ someone-trust](https://www.idmhconnect.health/someone-trust) |
|  |  |

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|  | Below are examples of things you might want to communicate about to someone. |
|  |  |
|  | * Your feelings |
|  |  |
| A picture containing text, person, person, male  Description automatically generated | * When you feel different to normal   For example if you are sad more often than usual. |
|  |  |
| A person sitting on a chair  Description automatically generated | * You notice a change in your activities   For example if you do not feel like seeing people you usually visit. |
|  |  |
|  | * If your daily tasks are becoming more difficult   For example if you find it harder to clean your house. |
|  |  |
| A person wearing a colorful shirt  Description automatically generated with low confidence | * Why you feel the way you do |
|  |  |
| A person smiling for the picture  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | * What might make you feel better |
|  |  |
| A person pointing at the camera  Description automatically generated with low confidence | It is OK if you do not want to share everything.  Only tell someone things you are comfortable sharing. |

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| **Why communicating about your mental health is important** | |
|  | |
| . | Communicating with others about your mental health can help you |
|  |  |
| A person smiling for the picture  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | * Feel better |
|  |  |
| A group of people standing together  Description automatically generated | * Get help if you need it |
|  |  |
| **The best way to communicate about your mental health** | |

|  |  |
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|  | It is OK if you do not know   * How you feel * Why you feel this way   You could just tell the person you feel different to normal. |
|  |  |
| A picture containing person, people, group, table  Description automatically generated | **What you can do if you do not know how to communicate about your mental health**  You may feel you need help with your mental health. |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  | Below are some examples of ways you could communicate or ask someone you trust for support. |
|  |  |
|  | You could communicate   * I feel different to normal * I need some help * I would like to talk about how I am feeling |
|  |  |
| A picture containing text, person, person, male  Description automatically generated | * I feel sad * I feel down |
|  |  |
|  | * I feel worried |
|  | * I feel scared |
|  |  |
|  | * I feel angry |
|  |  |
|  | * Something has happened to me * I am worried |
|  |  |
|  | * I have noticed changes in my life |
|  |  |
|  | For example   * I have trouble getting out of bed |
|  |  |
| A person eating food  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | * I do not feel like eating |
|  |  |
| A person sitting on a chair  Description automatically generated | * I do not want to see my friends |
|  |  |
|  | You do not have to communicate with someone if you do not want to. |
|  |  |
|  | Some people are not sure how to support someone with their mental health. |
|  |  |
|  | If the person you ask for support does not know how to help   * Try talking to another person you trust * Ask them to find someone who can help |
|  |  |
|  | For more information about where to get help for your mental health go to [https://www.idmhconnect.health/ where-start-get-help/ER](https://www.idmhconnect.health/where-start-get-help/ER) |

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| **Let health workers know how you like to communicate** | |
|  |  |
|  | It is good to let health workers know how you like to communicate.  This may be a doctor such as your GP or a mental health worker. |
|  |  |
|  | A **GP** is the doctor that you see when you   * Are sick * Need a health check |
|  |  |
| Two people sitting at a table with books and papers  Description automatically generated with low confidence | **Mental health workers** are people who work to help you with your mental health. |
|  |  |
|  | Knowing how you communicate will help   * Them to understand you better * You to understand them better |
|  |  |
| Two people sitting at a table  Description automatically generated with low confidence | You can let health workers know how you would like to communicate   * When you make an appointment * At your first appointment |
|  |  |
|  | You can ask someone you trust to help explain how you like to communicate. |
|  |  |
|  | You could also include the information in a health passport.  A **health passport** is a list of important information about you and your health. |
|  |  |
|  | For example you could use the Council for Intellectual Disability’s My Health Matters folder. |
|  |  |
|  | For more information about the My Health Matters folder go to <https://cid.org.au/resource/my-health-matters-folder/> |

|  |  |
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| **How you can use tools to help you communicate about your mental health** | |
|  |  |
|  | Some people use communication tools to help them share information.  Below are some examples of communication tools. |
|  |  |
|  | * Written text * Pictures * Symbols |
|  |  |
|  | * Body Movements * Pointing * Sign language |
|  |  |
| A person holding a paper and looking at another person  Description automatically generated with low confidence | You can use communication tools to show others how you feel.  You can share when you   * Feel good * Do not feel good |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Below are some examples of common communication tools you can use to show someone how you feel. |
|  |  |
| A picture containing timeline  Description automatically generated | **Feelings thermometer**  Different feelings can change   * How we think * How our bodies feel * What we do |
|  |  |
|  | A feelings thermometer can help you   * Notice your feelings * Choose what to do when you feel this way |
|  |  |
| A picture containing timeline  Description automatically generated | A feelings thermometer has   * A colour for each feeling * A picture for each feeling * Some ideas on what you can do when you do not feel good |
|  |  |
| A person smiling for the picture  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | For example if your feelings are in the green area this shows you feel good. |
|  |  |
|  | Or if your feelings are in the red area this shows you do not feel good. |
|  |  |
| A person pointing at the camera  Description automatically generated with low confidence | It is OK not to feel good sometimes.  We can try to change what we do to help us feel better. |
|  |  |
| A picture containing timeline  Description automatically generated | You can make a feelings thermometer right for you using the Council of Intellectual Disability feelings thermometer.  For more information visit page 30 of their My Health Matters Folder <https://cid.org.au/resource/my-health-matters-folder/> |

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| A picture containing text, white  Description automatically generated | **Feelings diary**  A **diary** is a place where you keep information.  A **feelings diary** is a place where you can note down your thoughts and feelings. |
|  |  |
|  | You might note down your thoughts and feelings in writing.  You might note them down in a drawing. |
|  |  |
| Graphical user interface, application  Description automatically generated | You might also note them down with a photo or video. |
|  |  |
| A picture containing text, white  Description automatically generated | Your feelings diary can be on   * Paper |
|  |  |
| Graphical user interface, application  Description automatically generated | * Your phone |
|  |  |
|  | * Your computer |
|  |  |
|  | Below are some examples of things you might want to note down in your feelings diary |
|  |  |
|  | * Something that happened |
|  |  |
|  | * How it made you feel * How strong the feeling was |
|  |  |
| A person wearing a black jacket and white shorts  Description automatically generated with low confidence | Other examples of things you might want to note down in your feelings diary are   * How your body felt |
|  |  |
|  | * If you might have done anything differently |
|  |  |
| A person pointing at the camera  Description automatically generated with low confidence | You can share your feelings diary with someone you trust.  It is OK if you do not want to share your feelings diary. |
|  |  |
|  | There are some tricky words in this Easy Read sheet.  For more information about these words go to  <https://www.idmhconnect.health/word-list> |

Text

Description automatically generated

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| --- | --- |
| A group of men sitting at a table  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | **Who wrote this Easy Read**  Janelle Weise, Claire Eagleson, Jenna Zhao, Tahli Hind, Dominique Abagi and Julian Trollor.  **Where these people work** |
| Text  Description automatically generated | Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry UNSW Sydney.  Also known as 3DN.  For more information about who wrote this Easy Read go to <https://idmhconnect.health/who-wrote-easy-read> |
| **A person smiling for the camera  Description automatically generated with medium confidence**A picture containing qr code  Description automatically generated | The Council for Intellectual Disability reviewed this Easy Read sheet.  The information in this Easy Read sheet is from the <https://idmhconnect.health/> website |
| Two people sitting at a table looking at a card  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | For information on how to support people to use Easy Read go to [https://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/ professionals\_toolkit](https://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/professionals_toolkit)  © Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry UNSW Sydney 27.012023 v2  No changes can be made without asking the people who wrote this sheet. |

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