

# Health workers who provide mental health services



This information is about the people and services that can support the mental health of people with intellectual disability.

It has information on

**Page**



- Types of health workers

**5**



- A GP and where to find one near you

**6**



- A psychiatrist and where to find one near you **8**



- A psychologist and where to find one near you **11**



- A mental health nurse and where to find one **13**



- A social worker and where to find one **15**



- A counsellor and where to find one **18**



- A psychotherapist and where to find one **21**



- An occupational therapist and where to find one **23**



- A peer worker and where to find one **24**



There is a lot of information.

Some words can be hard to understand.



You can ask someone to read this information with you.

## Health workers who support mental health



There are many health workers who can help you with your mental health.



**Mental health** is about

- How you think
- How you feel



If you need help to find a health worker you can ask someone you trust.

There are many people you might trust.

For more information about who you might trust go to <https://idmhconnect.health/someone-trust>



## GP

A **GP** is the doctor you see when

- You are sick
- You need a health check



A GP is usually the best person to communicate with if you have concerns about your mental health.



To **communicate** is how you understand and share your feelings or information.



A GP can

- Give you information about mental health
- Suggest a mental health worker who is right for you



**Mental health workers** are people who work to help you with your mental health.



To find out more about GPs and what they do, go to <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/the-role-of-a-gp>



To find a GP near you

- Go to <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services>
- Ask someone you trust
- Ask at a local chemist for their suggestion



## Psychiatrist

A **psychiatrist** is a doctor who helps you with your mental health using talking and medicine.

**Medicine** is sometimes called medication or drugs.



Medicine can be in

- A tablet
- A pill
- A drink
- An injection



You may see a psychiatrist in

- Private practice
- A community mental health centre

**Private practice** means the psychiatrist works for themselves.

A **community mental health centre** has services to help you stay well in the community.





You may see a psychiatrist in

- An emergency department

**Emergency departments** are usually in hospitals.

They are sometimes called EDs.



- Hospital

A psychiatrist can also

- Do assessments



An **assessment** is when a mental health worker asks you questions about you and your health.

They use this information to work out the best way to help you.



A psychiatrist can also

- Suggest medication that will help you



- provide therapies

**Therapies** are activities your mental health workers use to support your mental health



To find out more about psychiatrists and what they do go to

**<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/psychiatrists-and-psychologists>**



To find a psychiatrist

- Communicate with your GP
- Go to **<https://www.yourhealthinmind.org/find-a-psychiatrist>**



You need a referral from a doctor to see a psychiatrist.

A **referral** is when a doctor suggests you see a health worker who can help you.

## Psychologist



A **psychologist** helps you with your mental health by talking with you.

Psychologists help you find things you can do to feel better.



Psychologists do not give you medication.



There are different types of psychologists.

For example clinical psychologists have specialist training in helping you with mental health problems.



A **mental health problem** is when your feelings start to worry you.



To find out more about psychologists and what they do go to

**<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/psychiatrists-and-psychologists>**



To find a psychologist near you

- Go to **<https://psychology.org.au/find-a-psychologist>**
- Go to **<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>**
- Communicate with your GP



## Mental health nurse

A **mental health nurse** is a nurse who focuses on helping people with mental health problems.



Mental health nurses usually work as part of a team of health workers.

For some people a mental health nurse will be the main person they communicate with in the health system.



A mental health nurse can

- Check on how a persons mental health is



- Provide some therapies



A mental health nurse can also help people take their medications.



To find out more about mental health nurses and what they do go to

**[https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/  
mental-health-nurses](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/mental-health-nurses)**



You can communicate with your GP or other mental health workers about mental health nurses.

## Social worker



A **social worker** is a mental health worker who helps you find the support you need to stay well.

A social worker can provide

- Counselling therapy

**Counselling therapy** is when you chat with mental health workers about



- Issues in your life

- Ways you can fix these issues



- Information on services that can support your mental health



A social worker can also provide advocacy

**Advocacy** is having your voice heard so your rights and needs are met.

You can have needs in many areas of your life.



**Rights** are rules about how everybody should be treated fairly.

A right is something everyone has.



**Counselling therapy** is also when you chat with mental health workers about

- Help to get support from other services

Other services may be

- Emergency accommodation





**Emergency accommodation** is for people who have nowhere to live and need somewhere to stay.



- Support with money



- Health services



- Legal services

**Legal services** support you with things to do with the law.



To find out more about social workers and what they do go to

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/social-workers>



To find a social worker go to

<https://www.aasw.asn.au/find-a-social-worker/search/>



## Counsellor

A **counsellor** is a health worker.

You can communicate with them about problems in your life.



A counsellor can support you to

- Find ways to feel better
- Cope with difficulties



**Coping** describes your ability to handle hard things or times.

To **cope** means you can deal with difficult things.



To find out more about counsellors and what they do go to <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/counsellors-and-counselling>

To find a counsellor near you



- Go to <https://www.arcapregister.com.au/find-a-therapist/?surname=&suburb=&state=NSW&search=search>
- Go to <https://www.sane.org/get-support/drop-in-service>
- Go to <https://www.sane.org/referral>

SANE has a new Guided Service.

This service gives free online and telehealth services and support to people

- 18 years or older
- With complex mental health needs

Support is available for people with intellectual disability or autism.

To find a counsellor you might also ask someone at your university or TAFE if you are studying.

**TAFE** is somewhere you can study and learn skills.



## Psychotherapist



A **psychotherapist** helps with mental health by using talking therapies to help you learn ways to cope with stressful things in your life.

A psychotherapist is often a

- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- Counsellor



A **talking therapy** is when you communicate with a mental health worker to learn new ways to cope with how you think or feel.



A psychotherapist can support you to

- Change your thinking
- Improve your coping skills



To find out more about psychotherapists and what they do go to

**<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/psychotherapy>**



To find a psychotherapist near you

- Communicate with your GP
- Go to **<https://pacfa.org.au/FindATherapist>**
- Go to **<https://www.goodtherapy.com.au/>**
- Go to **<https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>**

## Occupational therapist



**Occupational therapists** support people to take part in daily activities and support them to learn new skills.

Occupational therapists are sometimes called an OT.

An occupational therapist can

- Find your strengths and difficulties
- Support you to take part in everyday life



To find out more about occupational therapists and what they do

- Go to <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/occupational-therapy>
- Go to <https://www.otaus.com.au/>



To find an occupational therapist near you

- Go to <https://www.otaus.com.au/find-an-ot>
- Go to <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/>



## Peer worker



A **peer worker** is someone who has a lived experience of mental health problems, disability or both.

Peer workers use their own life experiences to help others.

Peer workers can support people individually or in groups.



Peer workers can work in

- Hospital teams
- The community



To find out more about peer workers and what they do

- Go to <https://cid.org.au/resource-tag/peer-support/>
- Watch [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fF\\_3Ex3wXGM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fF_3Ex3wXGM)





To find a peer worker near you

- Ask your mental health workers if there are peer groups you could be a part of



- Ask if local disability support services and mental health groups offer peer support

If you are an NDIS participant you can ask your Support Coordinator.



**NDIS** is short for National Disability Insurance Scheme.



A **support coordinator** is a person who helps plan and organise

- Your care
- Other services you get



To find a peer worker near you you might also go to <https://www.sane.org/peer-support/connect-with-a-peer-worker>



There are some tricky words in this Easy Read sheet.

For more information about these words go to <https://www.idmhconnect.health/word-list>



## Who wrote this Easy Read

Janelle Weise, Claire Eagleson, Jenna Zhao, Tahli Hind, Dominique Abagi and Julian Trollor.

## Where these people work

Department of Developmental Disability  
Neuropsychiatry UNSW Sydney.

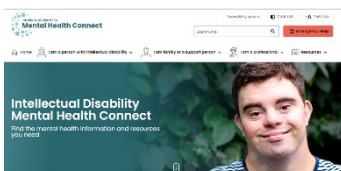


Also known as 3DN.

For more information about who wrote this Easy Read go to <https://idmhconnect.health/who-wrote-easy-read>



The Council for Intellectual Disability reviewed this Easy Read sheet.



The information in this Easy Read sheet is from the <https://idmhconnect.health/> website



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 27.01.2023 v2

No changes can be made without asking the people who wrote this sheet.