

Your first appointment



This information is about your first appointment for your mental health

It has information about

Page



- Going to your GP

2



- Seeing a mental health worker

14



- Going to the emergency department for your mental health

20



- Where to get more information

22

Going to your GP

The first health worker most people go to for help with their mental health is a GP.



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

- Are sick
- Need a health check



Mental health is about

- How you think
- How you feel

You can take someone you trust to any appointment.



There are many people you might trust.

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



But it is OK to go on your own if you prefer.



You can get ready for the first visit.

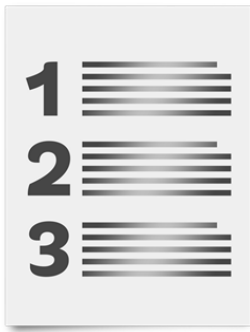


It can be hard to communicate how you feel to your GP.

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



It can help to think about what you want to communicate before you go to get help.



You can think about

- What you want help with
- How you have been feeling lately
- Any questions you might have



It can help to make some notes.

You or someone you trust can make notes.



Before you go to get help you can practise

- Communicating your points
- Asking your questions with someone you trust



What happens when you go to your GP

Your GP will ask you some questions.



You can tell them

- How you have been feeling
- What has been going on in your life



For more information about communicating about your mental health go to

<https://www.idmhconnect.health/communicating-about-my-mental-health/ER>



Your GP might also ask about what has been going on in your life.



Your GP might ask if any stressful things have happened.

For example if you are experiencing bullying.



Bullying is when someone or a group of people are mean to you on purpose.

This could be more than one time.



Your GP might ask about your mental health.

For example how you have been feeling.

You have different types of feelings.



Feelings can make you feel good.



You can be

- Happy
- Excited



Feelings can make you feel bad.



You can be

- Upset
- Sad



For more information about feelings and mental health go to <https://www.idmhconnect.health/about-mental-health-and-id/ER>



Your GP might ask about your physical health.

Physical health is about

- How your body feels
- How well your body is doing what it is supposed to



For example if you have been feeling unwell.



They might also ask how you take care of your body.

For example how much exercise you get.

Your GP might ask you questions about medicines.



Medicine is sometimes called medication or drugs.

Medicine can be in

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



For example your GP might ask

- What medications you take
- How they make you feel



You might want to ask your GP some questions.

You might ask

- Why am I feeling like this?



- What could help my mental health?

- Who can help me with my mental health?



- Do they work with people with intellectual disability?



- Will I have to pay money to get help for my mental health?



- When will I start to feel better?



Your GP will let you know what could help your mental health.

Your GP might give you information on things you can do to help your mental health.



Your GP might discuss ways people who support you can help you feel better.



Your GP will let you know what treatments might help you feel better.

Treatments are things that can help you feel better.

Treatments can be therapies and medicines.



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



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



Your GP might help you find a mental health worker who can support you.

They might suggest you see a mental health worker such as a psychologist or psychiatrist.



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

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



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



For more information about these health workers go to <https://www.idmhconnect.health/mental-health-services-health-workers/ER>



Your GP might also suggest a treatment plan for your mental health.

A **treatment plan** is a list of things you can do to help you get better.

A treatment plan is sometimes called a care plan.



People who have been told they have a mental health disorder by a doctor can get a rebate.

A **rebate** means you get some money back after paying for your treatment.

For more information about

- Mental health treatment plans go to **<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/mental-health-treatment-plan>**
- Seeing your GP go to **<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/talking-to-your-doctor-gp-about-mental-health>**



Seeing a mental health worker



Your GP might have suggested you see a

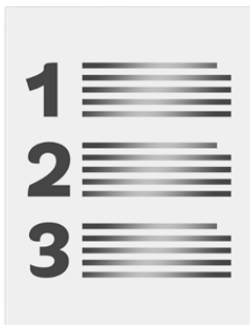
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist
- Other mental health workers such as an occupational therapist



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



For more information about these and other health workers go to <https://www.idmhconnect.health/mental-health-services-health-workers/ER>



For a list of questions you might want to ask when finding a new mental health worker go to https://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/3DN_Questions_Community_ERv1.pdf



Intake session

Before you start seeing a health worker you might have what is called an intake session.



An intake session helps the mental health worker to find out

- A bit about you
- What is happening for you now
- Whether the mental health worker or service will be right for you



You can have someone you trust with you during an intake session.



You can get ready for an intake session by thinking about what you want to tell the mental health worker.



You can also get ready by noting down any questions you might have.

You can ask someone to help you.



During an intake session the mental health worker will ask you questions.



They might ask you

- Information about yourself

For example who you live with.

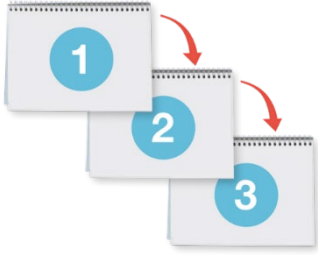


- What you are experiencing
- What you want help with
- If you have had support for your mental health before



- If you have any medical conditions
- If you are taking any medication
- If you are seeing any other doctors

What happens next



After an intake session you might make an appointment for an assessment session.



After the intake session the mental health worker might need to discuss with someone they work with if the service is right for you.



The mental health worker might say the service is not right for you.

If this happens you can ask the mental health worker why.



You can also ask the mental health worker to suggest another service that could help you.



You can go back to your GP who can suggest another mental health worker.



Tips

It is normal to feel nervous in waiting rooms.

To be **nervous** is when people feel worried about something that is happening or might happen.



If you feel nervous after you check in with the service you can wait somewhere else.

You might wait

- Outside
- In the car if it is close by



Ask the person at the check in to call you when the mental health worker is ready to see you.



If you do not understand something the health worker says it is OK to speak up.



You can ask the mental health worker to

- Repeat what they said
- Communicate it in another way



Let the mental health worker know if you think you will have trouble getting to your appointment.



The mental health worker might be able to see you in your home.

If you go to the emergency department for your mental health



If you need to go to the emergency department at a hospital, a nurse will see you soon after you arrive.



The nurse will ask you

- How you are feeling
- What is wrong



You might have to wait a while to see a doctor.



The noise in the emergency department might worry you.

If you want to you can ask the nurse if there is somewhere quiet you can sit.



You might feel stressed or afraid if you need to go to the emergency department.

It is normal to feel afraid.



You can let the nurse or doctor know if you are afraid.

The nurse or doctor will try to make you feel comfortable.



You can ask the nurses and doctors

- What is going to happen now
- How long will I have to wait

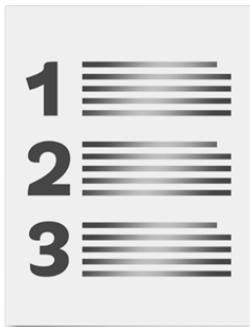
Where to get more information



Below is a list of websites and sheets to support you for your first appointment.

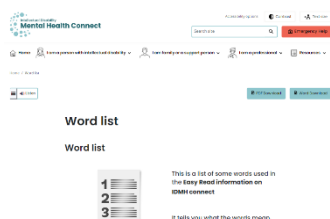
For more information about

- Mental health treatment plans go to <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/mental-health-treatment-plan>
- Seeing your GP go to <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/talking-to-your-doctor-gp-about-mental-health>



For a list of questions you might want to ask when finding a new mental health service in the community go to

https://www.3dn.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/3DN_Questions_Community_ERv1.pdf



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



UNSW
Department of
Developmental
Disability
Neuropsychiatry

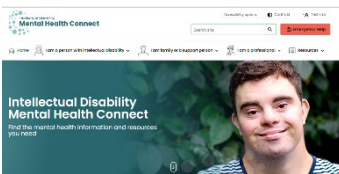
Department of Developmental Disability
Neuropsychiatry UNSW Sydney.

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

© Department of Developmental Disability
Neuropsychiatry UNSW Sydney 25.02.2023 v2

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