

Who can Help: Mental Health

My family member in prison has mental health problems – is there any help available within the prison?

Yes, they can talk to a member of the Healthcare team or alternatively each prisoner has a Personal Officer assigned to them. Some prisons also have Listeners - prisoners trained by the Samaritans - who will listen in confidence and are available 24 hours a day. Inmates can also call the Samaritans: most prisons have a direct confidential telephone link which can be requested at any time and cannot be listened to by prison staff. Prisoners can also ask to see a member of the Independent Monitoring Board or ask to speak to a prison chaplain.

How can I be sure the prison knows that a prisoner has a mental health problem?

Every prisoner sees a doctor or nurse on reception into prison for a health screening. They will be asked about their health, any concerns they may have, and any medication that they may be on. If the prisoner requires medical treatment that cannot be delivered on the prison wing then they maybe transferred to a special location in the prison. Prisoners with mental health problems should be detected at this stage and referred for appropriate assessment and treatment.

However, if you think your family member may not mention their difficulties or tell anyone about any medication they need, the best course of action is to ring the prison and ask for the Duty Governor, and make him/her aware of the situation.

I think that my family member's problems may lead to him or her harming his/herself or someone else – is there anything I can do to help prevent this?

If you think a prisoner is at risk of suicide or self harm, you can phone the prison and ask to speak to the Duty Governor. If you are calling to raise concerns about the safety of a prisoner, the operator should not refuse to put you through. If you are unsure, or do have a problem, call us on 0808 808 3444 and we can make the call for you.

I think I may be suffering from severe depression myself as a result of what's been happening. Where can I find out about this?

It is not at all unusual for stressful events such as someone in the family going to prison to trigger depression. Problems sleeping or eating, feeling lethargic and unable to do the things you would normally do are among the symptoms.

Depression Alliance can provide information about the symptoms and treatments available, how you can help yourself, and where to find help and support locally.

Telephone: 0845 123 23 20 for an information pack , or write to:

Depression Alliance
212 Spitfire Studios
63 - 71 Collier Street
London N1 9BE

Email: information@depressionalliance.org

Website: www.depressionalliance.org

I feel I have reached crisis point. I'm feeling desperate and suicidal – what can I do?

If you can get to see your doctor, s/he may be able to help with some medication. You may only need to take medication for a short time to get you through the crisis – not necessarily long term - though your doctor is the best person to advise you about this. In an emergency you can go to your nearest Accident and Emergency Department and ask to see the Duty Psychiatrist. NHS Direct (0845 46 47) can also provide you with medical advice 24 hours a day. If it is emotional support you need, you can call **The Samaritans** on **0845 7 90 90 90 24** hours a day, (web site www.samaritans.org.uk) or **Saneline**, **0845 767 8000** (1pm – 11pm daily) 1st Floor Cityside House 40 Adler Street London E1 1EE Helpline: Email: info@sane.org.uk Website: www.sane.org.uk Sane Line is for anyone affected by mental illness, their families, friends and carers. Provides emotional crisis support and information.

I am worried about the mental health of a young person.

Young Minds

48-50 St John Street
London EC1M 4DG
Helpline: 0800 018 2138
Office: 020 7336 8445
Fax: 020 7336 8446
Email: enquiries@youngminds.org.uk
Website: www.youngminds.org.uk
Committed to improving the mental health of all babies, children and young people. Provides a Parents Information Service for any adult concerned about the mental health of a young person. Also provides training, consultancy, wide range of publications and a bi-monthly magazine.

I have a female family member in prison – is there any specific help for women prisoners who have a mental health problem?

Women in Prison

1a Aberdeen Studios
22 Highbury Grove
London N5 2EA
Office: 020 7226 5879
Fax: 020 7354 8005
Website: www.womeninprison.org.uk
Provides welfare and education to women in prison. Can offer support to women with mental & physical health problems to access the services they need from within the prison and when they re-enter the community.

Women's Therapy Centre

10 Manor Gardens
London N7 6JS
Office: 020 7263 7860
Fax: 020 7281 7879
Email: info@womenstherapycentre.co.uk
Website: www.womenstherapycentre.co.uk
Therapy and counselling services for women with mental health problems.

Are there any organisations that can help someone with learning difficulties or a mental health condition settle into the community when they leave prison?

Revolving Doors

The Turnmill
Units 28-29
63 Clerkenwell Road

Prisoners Families and Friends Service
20 Trinity Street, London SE1 1DB
Tel: 0207 403 4091/9359
Helpline: 0808 808 3444
Registered Charity no. 251847
July 10, 2009

London EC1M 5NP
Office: 020 7253 4038
Fax: 020 7553 6079
Email: admin@revolving-doors.org.uk
Website: www.revolving-doors.org.uk
Helps with access to health, housing and social care for people with mental health problems involved in the criminal justice system.

Equinox

177 Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 0ED
Office: 020 7939 9800
Website: www.equinoxcare.org.uk
Specialist care organisation providing community and residential services for vulnerable women and men with alcohol, drug & mental health issues and those who have come into contact with the criminal justice system.

United Response

113-123 Upper Richmond Road
London SW15 2TL
Office: 020 8246 5200
Fax: 020 8780 9538
Minicom: 020 8785 1706
Website: www.unitedresponse.org.uk
Supports people with learning difficulties and mental health problems in England to live in the community - range of support services.

The prisoner and I are joint carers of a person with a severe mental condition. Now I am on my own – where can I get support?

Rethink

5th Floor, Royal London House
22-25 Finsbury Square
London EC2A 1DX
Office: General Enquiries: 0845 456 0455
National Advice Service: 020 8974 6814 (10am-3pm Mon-Fri)
Email: info@rethink.org advice@rethink.org
Website: www.rethink.org
Runs a variety of services for people with severe mental illnesses and their carers, and can provide contact details for local support groups for carers.

Where can I get counselling?

The first place to try would be your GP, who should be able to refer you to someone. Or you could contact the **British Association**

for Counselling and Psychotherapy for a list of therapists in your area:
BACP House,
Unit 15 St John's Business Park,
Lutterworth,
Leicestershire LE17 4HB
Phone 0870 443 5252
Email bacp@bacp.co.uk
Web site: <http://www.bacp.co.uk>

There is also:

Salvation Army Counselling Service

1 Water Lane
Stratford
London E15 4LU
Office: 020 8536 5480
Fax: 020 8536 5489
Email: counselling@salvationarmy.org.uk
Counselling for individuals or couples for personal or family problems.

Where can I get information about mental health issues in general?

Mind

Granta House
15-19 Broadway
London E15 4BQ
Helpline: 0845 7 660 163
Office: 020 8519 2122 9.15am – 5.15pm
Mon - Fri
Fax: 020 8215 1725
Email: contact@mind.org.uk
Website: www.mind.org.uk
Mind is a leading mental health charity in England and Wales, working for people experiencing mental distress. It campaigns for their right to lead an active and valued life in the community, drawing on the knowledge and skills both of people who provide and use mental health services.

Mencap

123 Golden Lane
London EC1Y 0RT
Office: 020 7454 0454
Fax: 020 7608 3254
Email: information@mencap.org.uk
Website: www.mencap.org.uk
Works with people with learning disabilities and their families and carers.

Prisoners Families and Friends Service
20 Trinity Street, London SE1 1DB
Tel: 0207 403 4091/9359
Helpline: 0808 808 3444
Registered Charity no. 251847
July 10, 2009

Other sources of specialist help:

Voice UK

Wyvern House
Railway terrace
Derby DE1 2RU
Helpline: 0845 122 8695
Office: 01332 295 775
Fax: 01332 295 670
Email: voice@voiceuk.org.uk
Website: www.voiceuk.org.uk
Supports people with learning disabilities who have experienced crime or abuse and supports their families, carers and professional workers.

Respond

Helpline: 0808 808 0700
Office: 020 7383 0700
Fax: 020 7387 1222
Website: www.respond.org.uk
Provides a range of services to victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse who have learning disabilities.

Advocacy Partners

Macmillan House
54 Cheam Common Road
Worcester Park
Surrey KT4 8RH
Office: 020 8330 6644
Fax: 020 8330 6622
Email: info@advocacypartners.org
Website: www.advocacypartners.org
Provides advocacy for people with learning disabilities and also socially isolated people.

Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health

Central Office
80 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1HE
Office: 028 9032 8474
Email: edassistant@niamh.co.uk
Website: www.niamh.co.uk
Provides a range of services for those with mental health needs in locations across Northern Ireland.

Vishvas (Confed. Of Indian Orgs)

5 Westminster Bridge Road
London SE1 7XW
Office: 020 7928 9889
Fax: 020 7620 4025
Email: headoffice@cio.org.uk

Website: ww.cio.org.uk

Vishvas is a culturally sensitive and accessible mental health service offering information, support and counselling services to the South Asian community.

Anti-Bullying Campaign

185 Tower Bridge Road

Bermondsey

London SE1 2UF

Office: 020 7378 1446

Email: help@bullying.co.uk

Website: www.bullying.co.uk

Helpline advice for parents and counselling for children who are victims of bullying.

The information provided in this factsheet is intended for information purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice. Prisoners' Families and Friends Service (PFFS) recommends that professional legal advice should always be sought. The information contained in this factsheet is subject to change and may not be up-to-date or accurate. PFFS gives no guarantee of the accuracy or completeness of this information. PFFS will not be held responsible for any loss or damage arising from the use of the information provided.