Unit Specification

UMH1 – Understanding mental health

Unit reference number: J/618/4015

Level: 1
Guided Learning (GL) hours: 6

Overview

This purpose of the qualification is to provide learners with an understanding of mental health and wellbeing. Learners will develop an awareness of a range of mental health conditions, the factors affecting mental health and the impact of mental health from a global, individual and workplace perspective.

Learners will develop an understanding of what constitutes good mental health and mental ill-health and how to recognise the signs and symptoms of a number of mental health conditions. Learners will also develop an awareness of the types of support available for mental health conditions and how to access them.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, learners will:

LO1 Understand what is meant by mental health

LO2 Develop an awareness of the effects of mental health conditions

LO3 Develop an awareness of the types of support for people with mental health conditions

Unit content

LO1 Understand what is meant by mental health

Know the difference between mental health, good mental health and mental ill-health
Taught content

- Definitions and descriptions
    - Health – health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO 1948)
    - Mental health – 'a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community' (WHO 2004)
    - Overview of terms used to describe mental ill-health, mental health conditions and disorders
        - Mental ill health – an umbrella term that includes mental health conditions, disorders or mental illness
        - Mental illness – mental illness would be diagnosed by a medical professional. It is a disorder that significantly interferes with an individual's cognitive, emotional or social abilities
        - Mental health conditions – a mental health problem which may also interfere with a person's cognitive, emotional or social abilities, but may not meet the criteria for a diagnosed mental illness
        - Mental health disorders – mental health disorders comprise a broad range of problems, with different symptoms. However, they are generally characterised by some combination of abnormal thoughts, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others (WHO https://www.who.int/mental_health/management/en/)
        - Good mental health – characterised by a person's ability to fulfil a number of key functions and activities, including:
            - The ability to learn
            - The ability to feel, express and manage a range of positive and negative emotions
            - The ability to form and maintain good relationships with others
            - The ability to cope with and manage change and uncertainty
            - (mental health foundation. https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health/about-mental-health/what-good-mental-health)
        - According to the World Health Organization (2019), good mental health is when you can:
            - Cope with the normal stresses of life
            - Work productively
            - Realise your potential
            - Contribute to the community

Know a range of mental health conditions and the factors affecting mental health

Taught content

- Examples of common mental health conditions
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - OCD
  - Phobias
  - Eating disorders

- Severe mental illnesses including:
  - Schizophrenia and other psychoses, bipolar disorder (NICE 2019)

- Factors affecting mental health. Mental health conditions generally have a wide range of causes:
  - Environmental factors, for example:
    - Socio-economic – examples: unemployment/economic recession /losing your job
    - Negative physical environments – examples: housing, workplace, urban vs rural, access to open spaces
    - Exposure to trauma, (see other considerations below)
  - Social circumstances, for example:
    - Poor social cohesion/social fragmentation
    - Childhood adversity – examples: abuse, trauma, or neglect
    - Social isolation or loneliness
    - Experiencing discrimination and stigma
    - Family conflict
    - Low income/poverty/social disadvantages
    - Domestic violence or other abuse as an adult
    - Attitudes and perceptions of others, – examples: stigma and judgement
  - Individual factors, for example:
    - The death of someone close to you
    - Loneliness
    - A long-term physical health condition
    - Drug and alcohol misuse
    - Work stress
    - Unemployment/debt

- Other considerations
  - Significant trauma, such as military combat, being involved in a serious accident or being the victim of a violent crime, experiences of pandemics, for example, COVID-19
  - Physical causes – for example, a head injury or a condition such as epilepsy can have an impact on behaviour and mood (it is important to rule out causes such as this before seeking further treatment for a mental health problem)
  - Influence of the media for example, social media and depression, anxiety and self-harm. Inadequacy about life or appearance. Negative portrayal of mental health in the media (Time to Change 2019)
  - Genetic factors – there is some evidence to suggest there might be a genetic cause related to some mental health conditions (national institute of Health 2013)

LO2 Develop an awareness of the effects of mental health conditions

Know the impact of mental health conditions from a global, individual and workplace perspective

Taught content

- Overview of the impact of mental ill health/illness in terms of its global and national disability and cost to the nation for example:
    - Major global disease burden in terms of years lived with disability and premature death caused by mental illness (Lancet 2016)
    - https://www.mhinnovation.net/sites/default/files/downloads/resource/Vigo,%20Thornicroft,%20&%20Atun%20Policy%20Brief.pdf
    - Impact of mental health

        - 1 in every 8 people in the world live with a mental health disorder (WHO) https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-disorders
        - Around 8% of the world's young children (aged 5-9 years) and 14% of the world's adolescents (aged 10-19 years) live with a mental disorder (WHO)
        - Anxiety disorders and depressive disorders are the two most common mental disorders (WHO) https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/356119/9789240049338-eng.pdf?sequence=1
        - The World Economic Forum calculated that a broadly defined set of mental health the combined cost of lost productivity and direct costs of care was 2.5 trillion US dollars which could rise to 6 trillion US dollars by 2030
        - Mental health conditions are the biggest single cause of disability in the UK
        - The wider economic costs of mental illness in England have been estimated at £105.2 billion each year (DOH 2011)
        - This includes direct costs of services, lost productivity at work and reduced quality of life
        - Number of people receiving The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommended psychological therapies has more than doubled from 2013 to 2018 (NICE Impact report 2019)
- Impact of mental health problems on the individual
    - Social and cultural exclusion and stigma
    - Low self-esteem and personal empowerment
    - Reduced physical health
    - Reduced ability to form effective relationships
    - Education – studying may be more difficult when dealing with mental health problems
    - Risk of self-harm, substance misuse and suicide
- Impact of mental health problems in the workplace (WHO 2000)
    - Absenteeism, increased sickness absence
    - Poor health (depression, stress, burnout)
    - Reduction in productivity and output
    - Loss of motivation and commitment
    - Increase in error rates
    - Increased amount of accidents
    - Poor decision-making
    - Deterioration in planning and control of work

Know the signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions

Taught content

- Mental health conditions comprise a range of problems with different symptoms
  - General signs and symptoms
    - Pulling away from people and usual activities
    - Feeling numb or like nothing matters
    - Feeling helpless or hopeless
    - Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
    - Yelling or fighting with family and friends
    - Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
    - Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
    - Hopelessness
    - Despairing
    - Lack of motivation/energy
    - Low self esteem
    - Poor sleep patterns
    - Reduced appetite
    - Reduced sex drive
    - Constant worrying
    - Unpleasant physical symptoms (for example, panic attacks)
- Differentiate between 'common' mental health problems with severe mental illnesses
  - Common mental health problems such as anxiety and depression disorders (NICE 2019)
    - For example, depression, generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and social anxiety disorders
    - Often seen as extreme versions of normal states for example, every day anxiety vs anxiety disorder
    - Signs and symptoms may include:
      - Obsessions – repeated intrusive thoughts or urges, for example, the feeling of being contaminated by germs
      - Compulsions – repeated activities that one feels compelled to do in order to relieve the anxiety caused by the obsession. For example, repeatedly washing one's hands
  - Severe mental illnesses including:
    - Psychosis, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder (NICE 2019)
    - People with severe mental illnesses are at risk of dying 15-20 years earlier than other people (NICE 2019)
    - Signs and symptoms can include:
      - Depression – feeling low and lethargic
      - Mania – feeing very high and overactive
      - Hallucinations – hearing or seeing things others don't see or hear
      - Delusions
      - Muddled thoughts

LO3 Develop an awareness of the types of support for people with mental health conditions

Know the benefits of good mental health and wellbeing
Taught content

- The benefits of good mental health and wellbeing:
    - Better physical health (mental ill-health is associated with other health conditions)
    - Reductions in health-damaging behaviour, for example, smoking, substance misuse, inactivity, unhealthy eating
    - Greater educational achievement
    - Improved productivity
    - Improved financial opportunities
    - Reduced absenteeism
    - Reduced crime (linked to substance misuse/personality disorders)
    - Improved communication and relationships with others
    - More participation in community life
    - Improved overall functioning; and
    - Reduced mortality
    - Improved relationships
    - Improved self-care

Know the types of support relating to mental health
Taught content

- General principles of support for people with common mental health conditions:
    - Listen and signpost to support
    - Build a relationship and work in an open, engaging and non-judgemental manner
    - Listen to and explore the person's worries in order to jointly understand the impact of the condition
    - Be aware of possible stigma and discrimination associated with conditions
    - Be aware of risks, for example, self-harm, suicide
    - Signpost to information about the condition and its treatment, and about self-help groups, support groups and other resources
    - Ensure that discussion takes place in settings in which confidentiality, privacy and dignity are respected (the exception would be if any risk of harm, then information would need to be shared)
- Types of help and support:
    - Information from charity websites
    - Signposting to GP to access talking therapies, for example, cognitive behavioural therapy
    - Listening services advice, for example, Samaritans

- Medical referral (see above)
- Self-help guidance, for example:
  - Self-help techniques, bibliotherapy, positive affirmations, exercise, yoga, healthy eating, meditation etc.
- The Department of Health (DOH) model for improving personal wellbeing (five ways to wellbeing)
  - Connect – with people around them, family, friends and neighbours
  - Be active – go for a walk or a run, do the gardening, play a game
  - Take notice – be curious and aware of the world around them
  - Keep learning – learn a new recipe or a new language, set themselves a challenge
  - Give – do something nice for someone else, volunteer, join a community group
- Emergency help in crisis situations, for example, crisis resolution and home treatment teams, community mental health teams
- Benefits of community based mental health care
  - Increase accessibility to care
  - Reduce stigma
  - Protect human rights
  - Improve outcomes
  - Promote person centred care
- Types of community based care (examples)
  - Support groups
  - Community outreach
  - Crises services
  - Peer support services
- Factors stopping people from seeking help
  - Limited access to quality serviced
  - Low levels of mental health literacy
  - Stigmatisation of mental health
- Common sources of information on mental health (list not exhaustive)
  - World health organisation (WHO) https://www.who.int/mental_health/en/
  - NHS https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/
  - Mind https://www.mind.org.uk
- Aims of WHO mental health campaigns – To raise awareness of priority mental health issues around the world and mobilize efforts in support of mental health
- Further reading, resources and UK specific campaigns
  - Rise Above – https://riseabove.org.uk/
    - A social marketing programme which aims to equip 11 to 16-year-olds with the skills they need to withstand social pressures and build their resilience
  - One You – https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/
    - A nationwide programme that supports adults in making simple changes that can have a huge influence on their health

- Every Mind Matters – https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/
  - A national campaign and digital platform with the aim of equipping people to take simple, early steps to look after their own and other's mental health
- MindEd – https://www.minded.org.uk/
  - A free educational resource on children and young people's mental health

- Other useful websites
  - Mental health foundation – https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk
  - Crisis resolution – https://www.tewv.nhs.uk/services/crisis-and-intensive-home-treatment-team/
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  - Rethink – https://www.rethink.org
  - Sane – http://www.sane.org.uk
  - Time to Change – https://www.time-to-change.org.uk

Guide to taught content
The content contained within the unit specification is not prescriptive or exhaustive but is intended to provide helpful guidance to teachers and learners with the key areas that will be covered within the unit and relating to the kinds of evidence that should be provided for each assessment objective specific to the unit learning outcomes.

Assessment requirements

1. Knowledge outcomes

Learners must complete an external theory examination for this unit. This will consist of a multiple-choice question paper which is mapped to the relevant assessment criteria stated below. The theory examination will test the knowledge and understanding from across learning outcomes 1, 2 and 3. Learners should use the unit content sections of this unit to aid revision since exam questions will test the full breadth of content over time.

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Assessment requirement
LO1 Understand what is meant by mental health	1.1. Describe the difference between mental health, good mental health and mental ill-health	Theory examination
	1.2. Identify a range of mental health conditions and the factors affecting mental health	

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Assessment requirement
LO2 Develop an awareness of the effects of mental health conditions	2.1. Outline the impact of mental health conditions from a global, individual and workplace perspective	Theory examination
	2.2. Identify the signs and symptoms of common mental health conditions	

Learning Outcome	Assessment Criteria	Assessment requirement
LO3 Develop an awareness of the types of support for people with mental health conditions	3.1. Outline the benefits of good mental health and wellbeing	Theory examination
	3.2. Identify the types of support relating to mental health	

Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v1.0	24/09/2020	First published	Product and Regulation Manager
v2.0	28/11/2023	Unit content updated in LO2 page 4 and LO3 page 7	Qualification Administrator