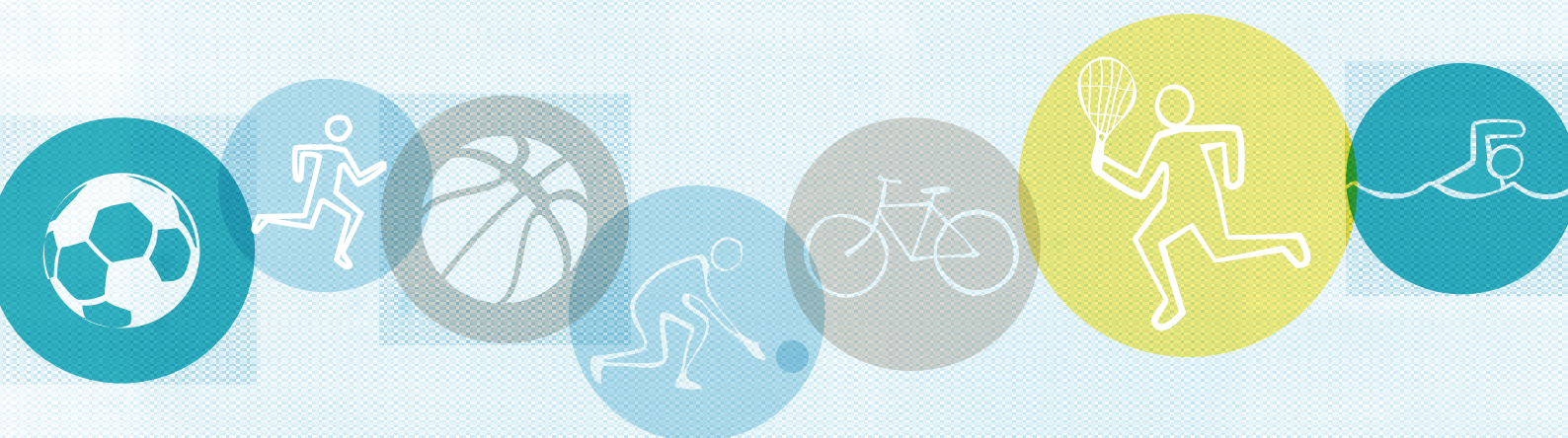


SCOTLAND'S MENTAL HEALTH CHARTER FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORT

PACE People Active for Change & Equality
funded by Comic Relief



INTRODUCTION

Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport aims to improve equality and reduce discrimination for anyone with a mental health problem, ensuring there is no barrier to **engaging, participating and **achieving** in physical activity and sport.**

Physical activity through sport or recreation has been proven to have a positive impact on physical and mental health and wellbeing¹.

36%
of individuals in
Scotland don't meet
physical activity
recommendations^{*2}.

Research suggests the less physical activity a person does, the more likely they are to experience low mood, depression, tension and worry. Despite this 36% of Scots don't meet physical activity recommendations^{*2}. It is believed people with mental health problems face stigma about their illness which may prevent them from engaging in physical activity and sport. Furthermore it has been highlighted that elite sportspeople face unique pressure in their day to day lives due to the nature of their employment which can cause a negative impact on mental health. The purpose of this Charter is to use the collective power of physical activity and sport to create positive lasting change in mental health and wellbeing. The Charter encourages participation in physical activity and sport as a way to maintain and improve mental health and wellbeing. The Charter supports anyone involved in physical activity and sport at grassroots to elite level to talk about mental health and wellbeing, and to know where to go to get help.

Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport aims to improve equality and reduce discrimination for anyone with a mental health problem, ensuring there is no barrier to **engaging, participating** and **achieving** in physical activity and sport.

^{*}Physical activity recommendations: 150 mins/week of moderate physical activity, 75 mins vigorous physical activity or an equivalent combination of these.

FOREWORD

Foreword from SAMH Ambassador Sir Chris Hoy:

Throughout my life I have benefitted from the positive impact of physical activity. My hope is that anybody can get active to improve their mental health and wellbeing whatever their level of fitness. I am a firm believer in the link between physical and mental health and I know from experience that if I don't get out on my bike regularly it affects my wellbeing.

I've been working with SAMH since 2009 and can see the difference that they and other mental health organisations are having on reducing stigma and helping people to open up. Of course, there is still a long way to go but initiatives such as this Charter will certainly help remove barriers, supporting people to increase their confidence and self-esteem.

That is why I am delighted to support Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport. We must ensure that having a mental health problem is never a barrier to **engage, participate** and **achieve**; whatever your goal.

DEVELOPING THE CHARTER

At SAMH we believe in mental health and wellbeing for all: sport and physical activity has a huge role to play in achieving this. For over ten years SAMH has actively engaged and championed the positive impact that physical activity and sport can have on mental health and wellbeing. We have worked in partnership with key organisations to develop leading projects and programmes aimed at demonstrating the power that regular physical activity can have on mental health and wellbeing.

In August 2016 we continued to focus on physical activity and sport, announcing the development of Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport.

Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport was developed through the People Active for Change & Equality (PACE) project which is funded by Comic Relief. PACE is led by SAMH and supported through the project steering group with representatives from the following organisations:

NHS Health Scotland
sportscotland
SPORTA
Scottish Student Sport
North Lanarkshire Leisure
KA Leisure
Glasgow Sport

For the purpose of clarity Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport is for communities based in Scotland only. For those out with Scotland in the UK please refer to the Sport & Recreation Alliance at www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/mental-health-charter.

CONSULTATION

The Charter was informed by over 300 people who took part in online and offline people's panels. The people's panels gave those with lived experience of mental health problems and professionals from the physical activity and sport communities the opportunity to share their feedback. Following this consultation, PACE produced a baseline report in December 2016 which highlighted findings. A copy of this can be found on the SAMH website.

TAKE ACTION

Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport aims to empower physical activity and sport communities to improve equality and reduce discrimination, ensuring mental health and wellbeing is not a barrier to **engaging, participating** and **achieving** in physical activity and sport. By signing up to the Charter you will help create the positive change needed. You can help achieve this by:

- 1 Actively promoting inclusive practice and ensuring a positive and welcoming environment for all.**
- 2 Developing inclusive policies and practices informed by the inclusion of mental health and wellbeing in strategic planning.**
- 3 Actively encouraging participation and promoting messages focusing on the benefits of physical activity on mental health and wellbeing.**
- 4 Participating in Scotland's Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter Network supporting meaningful collaboration, sharing resources and best practice.**
- 5 Routinely reviewing performance and identifying ways to improve and take positive action in relation to mental health and wellbeing.**

1

Actively promoting inclusive practice and ensuring a positive and welcoming environment for all.

“There is a lack of training on mental health problems and the benefits of participation. The barriers to participation are invisible and misunderstood”

PACE Report 2016

We urge organisations to do more to signal their accessibility for people with mental health problems. By improving awareness of opportunities, seeking feedback and being visible, supporters of mental health will help breakdown stigma, promote conversations around mental health and improve confidence for people accessing services.

Be visible supporters of mental health inclusion

Publish any policies in relation to mental health on your website, communications and social media. Promote opportunities which are tailored for people experiencing mental health problems, for example ‘Health Referral Programmes’.

Participate in mental health awareness raising activities

World Mental Health Day and Mental Health Awareness Week provide great opportunities to run events such as open days to raise the profile of the work you are doing to support people experiencing mental ill health.

Staff Training

Ensure mental health and wellbeing awareness is included within training for all staff and volunteers.

Resources

Utilise resources that promote inclusive practice and ensure a positive and welcoming environment for all.

2

Developing inclusive policies and practices informed by the inclusion of mental health in strategic planning.

“People with mental health problems are not currently well included or represented within the sports or physical activity community”

PACE Report 2016

Organisations are urged to review existing policies and listen to the needs of their participants to address potential barriers. Support from managers at a senior level will be vital to initiate cultural change.

Working with people with lived experience

Engage participants to help you identify and address barriers which could be stopping them from getting active.

Demonstrate senior level buy-in

It is crucial to involve leaders within your organisation. With their support it will be easier to create and deliver an action plan.

Review and update policies

Create an action plan that details what your organisation will do to promote good mental health and wellbeing and how you will engage people who experience mental health problems within your services and facilities.

Create a mentally healthy workplace

Participate in SAMH’s Workplace Wellbeing campaign to help ‘Open Up’ about the issue of mental health and encouraging conversations in the workplace.

3

Actively encouraging participation and promoting messages focusing on the benefits of physical activity on mental health.

“Knowing services are mental health aware would increase our confidence”

PACE Report 2016

Stigma and lack of awareness are barriers for engaging people with mental health problems. Promoting the links between physical and mental health can improve understanding and using local champions can support this.

Target people experiencing mental health problems

Some organisations will already have tailored activities suited for people with mental health problems. Make sure these are all publicised. Create peer support/buddy schemes.

Recognise mental health affects everyone

From grassroots to elite level anyone can experience a mental health problem.

Display and promote information about services and facilities

For many people experiencing mental health problems the first step to getting active can be very intimidating. You can encourage those with mental health problems by promoting the fact that your service is open and accessible to them.

Participating in Scotland’s Mental Health Charter Network to support meaningful collaboration, share resources and best practice

Recruit local champions with lived experience to talk about the impact physical activity and sport has on their mental health. Capture their story to inspire others experiencing mental ill health.

4

Participating in a Scottish Mental Health Charter Network to support meaningful collaboration, share resources and best practice.

“There are lots of people who would like to get active but don’t know how”

PACE Report 2016

The PACE report identified the lack of support as a major barrier for people who want to start getting active. Developing partnerships with a range of agencies, including mental health, will allow organisations to look at how to build pathways for initial engagement and how to include peer support or buddy schemes. Sharing information will encourage mental health services to signpost individuals onto relevant opportunities and promote practical ways of making services inclusive.

Reach out to mental health groups and services

Look at local mental health services and make them aware of the work you are doing. When participating in mental health awareness campaigns invite them to attend open days or taster sessions.

Making connections

Use the power of storytelling to reinforce the link between physical activity and mental health. Share these stories within your community and with your wider network.

Facilitate a partnership approach

Where possible connect to existing networks and partnerships, look at building pathways with local mental health services. Encourage support workers and carers to attend. If possible promote peers or buddies to support new participants.

5

Routinely reviewing performance and identifying ways to improve working in relation to mental health.

“The first step is the hardest. Keep going!”

PACE Report 2016

Promoting inclusion is an ongoing process and requires a cohesive approach which is routinely reviewed and measured.

Monitor and evaluate

Where possible track the number of referrals received from mental health services. As part of your evaluation ask participants, players, and employees ‘As an organisation what can we do to promote good mental health?’

Source good practice

Take time to look at similar organisations or individuals and identify what they are doing to engage individuals with mental health problems.

Keep up to date with new guidelines

Actively participate in Scotland’s Mental Health Charter Network to keep updated.

Involve participants in your review

Build on the experiences of participants and involve them when reviewing performance.

BY BECOMING A SIGNATORY YOUR ORGANISATION WILL:

- ✓ Have a better understanding of how mental health problems can affect participants, and how you can apply the knowledge from being involved in the Charter to your organisation.
- ✓ Have the opportunity to promote your involvement in ‘Scotland’s Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport’ and use the PACE logo on relevant publications.
- ✓ Access to information which offers practical guidance and ideas on how to promote your involvement in the Charter.
- ✓ Have access to Scotland’s Mental Health Charter Network to engage with other signatories, share best practice, to work collaboratively and learn from each other.

What is Scotland’s Mental Health Charter Network?

The network enables you to collaborate with other signatories, to share best practise, learn from each other and to work together to promote the reach and impact of the charter. The network will be delivered through an online forum. You will feedback experiences and learning of signing the Charter with other signatories and how you are achieving your action plan.

What happens at the end of the two years?

At the end of the two years your organisation will be invited to repeat the process and re-submit a declaration of support with updated actions.

SIGNING SCOTLAND'S MENTAL HEALTH CHARTER FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT

Who can become a signatory?

Any organisation that is committed to improving equality and reducing discrimination, ensuring mental health is not a barrier to **engage, participate** and **achieve** in physical activity and sport is encouraged to sign Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport. This includes leisure trusts, national governing bodies, educational institutes, third sector organisations and local/community clubs and groups and independent instructors, coaches and teachers. Following submission of your declaration of support your organisation will be a signatory for two years.

In order to become a signatory your organisation must:

- 1 Create an action plan
- 2 Complete a declaration of support detailing your actions and return it to mhc@samh.org.uk
- 3 Promote your involvement in the Charter through partners, relevant stakeholders, and online
- 4 Be actively involved in the Scotland's Mental Health Charter Network

NOTES

- 1 Mental Health Foundation, Let's Get Physical, 2013
- 2 Scottish Government, The Scottish Health Survey, 2016 Edition, October 2017
- 3 The Scottish Government, Attitudes to Mental Health in Scotland: Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2013
- 4 Mind, Performance Matters: Mental Health and Elite Sport, 2014

PARTNERS

SAMH would like to thank the following organisations with their support in developing the Mental Health Charter:

