



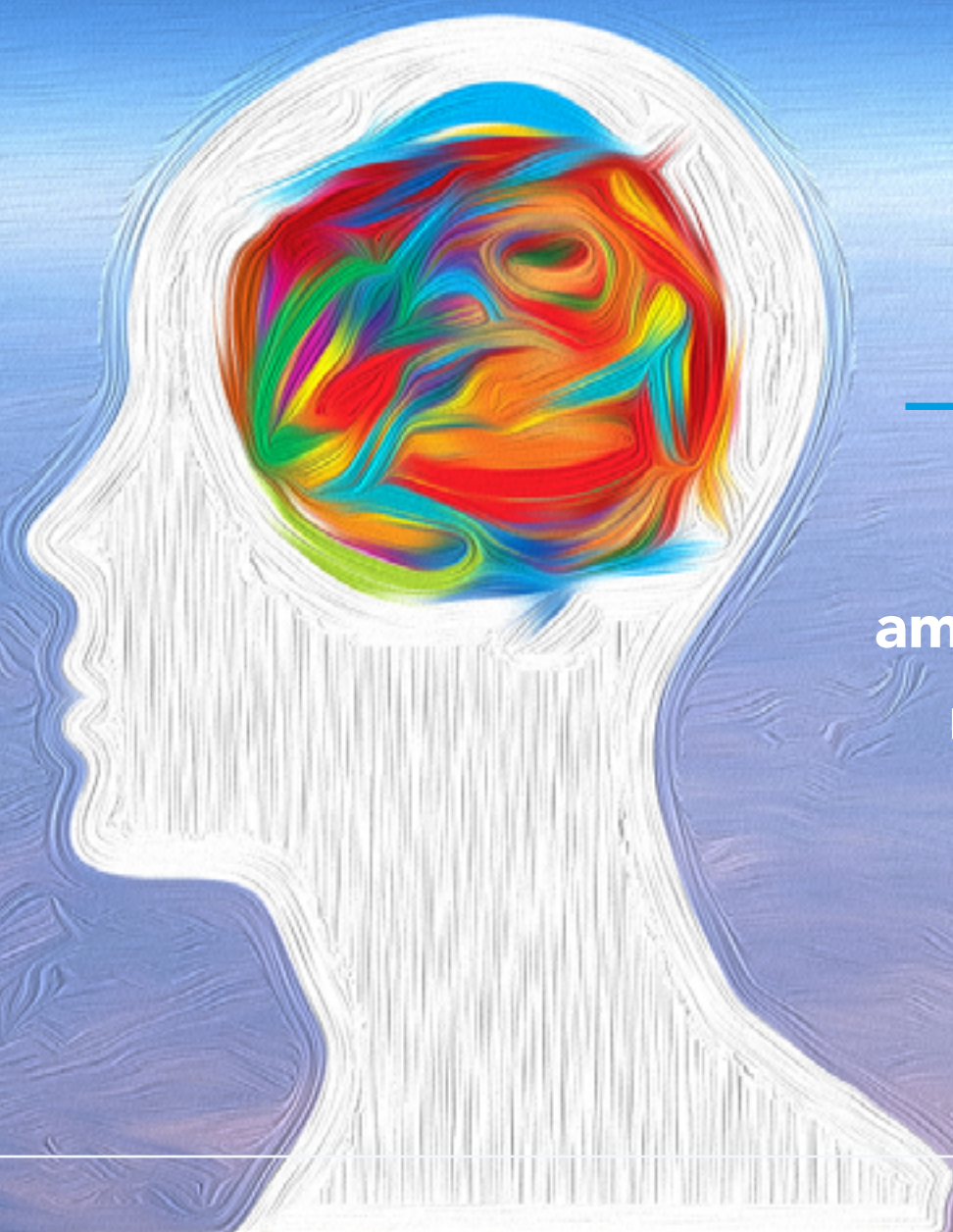
World Mental Health Day 2019

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+ **Aspire2's**
global brand
ambassadors on
mental health
around the
world



Mental Health Helplines

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
0845 769 7555

Alzheimer's Society

www.alzheimers.org.uk
0300222 1122

Anxiety UK

www.anxietyuk.org.uk
08444 775 774

BEAT

www.b-eat.co.uk
0800 801 0711

Bipolar UK

www.bipolaruk.org.uk
0333 323 3880

CALM

www.thecalmzone.net

Cruse Bereavement Care

www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk
0844 477 9400

Depression Alliance

www.depressionalliance.org

Family Lives

www.familylives.org.uk
0808 800 2222

Gamblers Anonymous

www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk
0845 769 7555

Mencap

www.mencap.org.uk
0808 808 1111

Men's Health Forum

www.menshealthforum.org.uk
020 7922 7908

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Mind

www.mind.org.uk
0300 123 3393

Narcotics Anonymous

www.ukna.org
0300 999 1212

No Panic

www.nopanic.org.uk
0844 967 4848

NSPCC

www.nspcc.org.uk
0808 800 5000

OCD Action

www.ocdaction.org.uk
0845 390 6232

OCD UK

www.ocduk.org
0845 1203778

PAPYRUS

Young Suicide Prevention Charity
www.papyrus-uk.org
0800 068 4141

Relate

www.relate.org.uk
0300 100 1234

Refuge

www.refuge.org.uk
0808 802 5544

Rethink Mental Illness

www.rethink.org
0300 5000 927

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org.uk
116 123

Sane

www.sane.org.uk
sanemail@org.uk
0845 767 8000

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www.giveushout.org
Text SHOUT to 85258

Victim Support

www.victimsupport.org
0808 168 9111

Young Minds

www.youngminds.org.uk
0808 802 5544

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World Mental Health Day

Welcome to this special edition of Aspire2!

Though Aspire2 is typically a monthly publication, we thought it was absolutely essential to create this 12-page special edition to celebrate World Mental Health Day.

As with last month's World Suicide Prevention Day, it is important that awareness days like these continue to grow and catch the attention of people all around the world.

While mental health is slowly becoming a major talking point here in the UK, it is doing so at widely varying rates in other countries. The idea of this special edition is to shed some light on how mental health is perceived, talked about and managed in other parts of the world, which you'll learn from the articles in this issue that have been written by our brand ambassadors from around the world.

The official theme of this year's World Mental Health Day is suicide prevention,

a topic I'm sure we can all agree is in dire need of discussing. In the UK last year, the suicide rate rose for the first time since 2013 and around the world, someone loses their life to suicide every 40 seconds. To learn more about World Mental Health Day's theme, click [here](#).

Alongside this, Aspire2 will be spending the day supporting our campaign "Buy a Homeless Person a Meal."

In the UK it is thought that around 80% of homeless people suffer with a mental health condition, a significantly higher proportion than the rest of the population. People who are homeless are 10 times more likely to have depression. These people need help with both their physical health and their mental wellbeing. The simple act of buying someone homeless a meal will hopefully boost both.

We thank you for reading and wish you a happy World Mental Health Day.

Help for suicidal thoughts

If you're feeling like you want to die, it's important to tell someone.

Help and support is available right now if you need it. You don't have to struggle with difficult feelings alone.

Phone a helpline

These free helplines are there to help when you're feeling down or desperate.

Unless it says otherwise, they're open 24 hours a day, every day.

Samaritans – for everyone

Call 116 123

Email jo@samaritans.org

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

Call 0800 58 58 58 – 5pm-midnight every day.

Papyrus – for people under 35
Call 0800 068 41 41 – Monday to Friday 10am-10pm, weekends 2pm-10pm, bank holidays 2pm-5pm
Text 07786 209697
Email pat@papyrus-uk.org

Childline – for children and young people under 19
Call 0800 1111 – the number won't show up on your phone bill

The Silver Line – for older people
Call 0800 4 70 80 90

Talk to someone you trust
Let family or friends know what's going on for you. They may be able to offer support and help keep you safe.

There's no right or wrong way to talk about suicidal feelings – starting the conversation is what's important.

“There’s much to celebrate, but much awareness still to raise”

David Brindle, Public Services Editor at **The Guardian** explains the progress we’ve made in the UK in terms of mental health and the progress we are still yet to make



On the whole I’m not a big fan of awareness days. You will never catch me wearing a ghastly Christmas jumper for whatever cause that is, or jeans to work for another. But I do make an exception for World Mental Health Day, which since its inception in 1992 has grown to become established as a highly effective global focus for improving understanding of mental health issues.

By coincidence, or perhaps not, 1992 was an especially bleak year for understanding of mental ill-health in the UK. It culminated in outcry over the killing in London of Jonathan Zito by Christopher Clunis, the most notorious of a series of what became known as “care in the community” homicides which prompted widespread calls to reopen the asylums and bring back institutional care.

That we did not turn back the clock is thanks to the courage of politicians, both left and right, who held the line in defence of community treatment and support for people with mental ill-health. It was, I am sad to say, little thanks to many of my professional colleagues in the media who continued for years to fuel stigma and prejudice against such people with headlines such as “Nightmare in the Community” and “Freed to Kill”.

Some of us journalists took a more responsible approach. I became involved in Mental Health Media, a tiny charity that punched hugely above its weight and was instrumental in laying the foundations for the Time to Change anti-stigma campaign. It also launched the Mental Health Media Awards which, after the charity became part of Mind, grew into today’s glitzy and enormously successful Mind Media Awards which play such an important part in fostering positive coverage of mental health.

But it is Time to Change that has been central to turning the tide of stigma and prejudice in England and arguably beyond. In its first eight years, from 2008 to 2016, it is independently estimated to have improved the attitudes of more than 4 million people and significantly reduced levels of reported discrimination against people with mental ill-health. Beyond the statistics, though, it helped create an environment in which people could admit to having experience of mental illness.

This was key. Back in the 1990s, few celebrities or public figures were willing to disclose mental ill-health, even stress. Today, it is commonplace to hear stars of stage and screen candidly discussing their most personal challenges, or read about sportspeople, captains of industry and our elected leaders who have

wrestled with depression. Disclosure has become unexceptional.

Yet we still have some way to go. There is a clear sense that while stress and depression are these days seen as unexceptional disorders, in some ways almost functions of modern life, “heavier” mental illness is still regarded with suspicion and fear. I am vice-chair of Richmond Fellowship and the wider Recovery Focus group of charities, working across mental health and addiction, and we still encounter prejudice and ignorance in communities where we work.

Recently we have been seeking planning permission to move an existing residential facility into badly needed new premises. The unit has no record of problems, but the planning application was met with a raft of objections from local people including that it would “dominate” the skyline – it would have two storeys on most of the footprint, three on a small part – that it would be too close to a railway line and that it would be “morally wrong” in a family neighbourhood. At least the latter had the merit of honesty.

Happy World Mental Health Day. There’s much to celebrate, but much awareness still to raise.



Mental health in the UK: A Time for Reflection

By Peter Oates, Operations Manager, Aspire2



My passion for the provision of better and improved mental health services has been with me for as long as I can remember. As someone in their fifties I can honestly say I have four decades of lifetime mental health experiences.

Does that make me an expert? Sadly not, because of the vast and complex issues that are attached to this subject. Has society in the United Kingdom become more open to the understanding of mental health? Absolutely. Is there less stigma and social exclusion over the last five years? Massively. Have we reached the pinnacle of social acceptance, tolerance, care and treatment? No not yet. We are, however, as a society, openly talking about mental health.

Whilst some of the interest is (in my view) more about lip service, PR or attachment to a trendy corporate image I can put those beliefs, right or wrong,

safely to one side. Let's stay positive, stay focussed on the bigger picture - the United Kingdom is talking about mental health.

So, while I truly and passionately believe that our services, treatments and social acceptance has long roads ahead, World Mental Health Day allows us time to reflect on world events. Would I like to be a service user in other parts of the world? I'm not sure if I can safely answer that one. Yes, we have our problems, some major, very serious funding issues and waiting times.

But let's also remember the vast collection of volunteers, service users, charities and organisations who work on behalf of mental health and are dedicated to improving our services.

There are parts of the world that have better systems in place that are more attune to service user strategies but,

let's be honest, there are places in this world where we would simply hate to be using mental health services, where barbaric treatment and abuse is sadly the daily norm.

So, today I will stop and pause, to think about service users across the world, consolidate with them in compassion and empathy and think how lucky I am to live in the UK.

Our theme for today is 'buy a homeless person a meal' so if you're reading this wherever you are in the world, go out and buy someone a meal and reflect that for just a few moments of your time, with spare change in your pocket and on this 10th day in October 2019 you made someone's day, you made them feel part of the human race, made them feel 'accepted' and 'included' and by doing so you showed the world that you cared.

Did you catch our latest issue?

Aspire2 publishes a regular issue each month, featuring mental health-based news, articles and much more. It's free to view and download.

The latest edition, October, asks whether the UK is in or approaching a mental health crisis, as well as covering topics like seasonal affective disorder, music therapy, the effects of bullying and why our pets are so good for our mental health.

You can view the edition in full by clicking [here](#).

To subscribe to receive Aspire2 as soon as it's published each month, click [here](#).



Mental health in Namibia

By Ohemaa, Aspire2 Brand Ambassador - @blvc_butter on Instagram

The reality is that people are too often taking their own lives, self-harming or finding peace and comfort in substance abuse in order to cope with academic pressures, family commitments, not being able to provide and stress in the workplace.

When things don't meet the expectation of students and their parents, a spouse and the rest of the family, even the employer, their whole life seems to fall apart and they end up in an incredibly lonely and dark place. People quite often have no outlet for their stress, disappointment, questions, feelings of anxiety and depression.

Mental health is not always high on peoples lists of priorities and mental health awareness is something that is still often lacked by the public.

There is a need to create awareness and educate people about the possible causes of mental illness, the preventative methods by avoiding things that give rise to and prolong the development of mental disorders. It

is hard enough dealing with a mental illness, so it is of no relief when friends and family may be piling onto that with pressure and unrealistic expectations.

By raising awareness we can break down the stigma attached to mental health and highlight the importance of taking care of ourselves, both mentally and physically.

The University of Namibia is the only institution in Namibia offering training to psychologists at undergraduate, graduate and doctoral levels. Many psychologists practicing in Namibia today have been trained outside the country.

Despite the challenges faced, the discipline of psychology in Namibia is on a growth trend and it is well-placed to solidify its contribution to the health and wellbeing of all Namibians more so with support and guidance of more established bodies.

Recent increases in the rate of suicidal attempts and actual suicides in Namibia



have caused a great deal of concern. There appears to be a shift toward the younger age group especially with regard to the increase in the suicide, domestic violence, rape and murder rates.

Stigma and discrimination, patient rejection and the nature of some mental disorders have hampered the provision of adequate mental health services.

The Namibian government has been offering free treatment to people who are suffering from mental illness and it has provided rehabilitation facilities as well as mental health centres for the country. However, the main challenge at mental health care centres is the lack of resources, and there are not enough staff, skills, money or medication.

By 2021, the government plans to construct mental health centres in four different towns.

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Mental health in Nigeria and Africa

By Prudence Onaah, Aspire2 Brand Ambassador - @prudenceonaah on Instagram

The African Culture of Neglect Might Have Its Bed in the Mental Health System

As I carried out the research for this piece, I realised that the situation of having fleeting policy creation around mental health was not particular to my country alone. It appears that mental health is a neglected issue around the whole of Africa.

Attempts at creating government policies that are targeted at mental health seem defeated. It is like every trial to make solid policies in this regard will walk down the aisle to being discarded. This calls for worry.

The mental health system in Africa is almost non-existent despite the fact that cases of mental illnesses are prevalent and remain on the rise. Nigeria has experienced many incidences of suicide (and attempted suicide) in the past year and depression and anxiety are taking their toll on people. Yet, nothing is being done about this.

Chronic cases of mental illnesses are stigmatised. There are only 250 psychiatrists in Nigeria despite its population of 200 million, with 60 million people living with mental illness.

There are 85 psychiatrists in Ethiopia serving its population of 112 million. In Sierra Leone, the rate of people who go without treatment for mental health is as high as 98.8%. This is a reoccurring figure around the continent

with Nigeria's treatment gap standing at 90%. Visits to outpatient facilities for mental health care are higher in Africa than other parts of the world. This situation calls for immediate action.

Although mental health is seen as a taboo by most, it has become more common than people think. Mild cases are on the rise with the victims having no idea that they have a mental health problem. When you are unable to function properly in a social setting and you have a dependence on some external factor to keep you emotionally balanced, you might be having a mental health problem.

This manifests today in Nigeria in the form of over-reliance on social media. People cannot have a good day without going online. Lots of people experience a loneliness that they hope to cure by the imaginary close connection and the sensation of physical presence that they have with the people on the screens of their mobile phones. Mental health might indeed be taking a 360 degree turn around the world and manifesting itself as FOMO (fear of missing out).

Regardless of what form mental illness takes, there is very little facility to properly treat it in Nigeria and any treatment available is reserved for more chronic forms.

This is the case in other African countries too. There is a change in the status quo but this change is gradual. Non-profit organisations are beginning to spring up to correct the situation and

listen to people who need to unload their emotional burdens. There have also been mental health interventions in form of randomised controlled trials such as group inter-personal therapy in Uganda, "Friendship Benches" in Zimbabwe and counselling sessions held on Twitter and WhatsApp in Nigeria.

It seems that most of the mental health care in Africa is community based and plagued with scarcity of trained personnel.

While any attempt at mental health care at all is commendable, a lot would change if the Government allotted more recognition to mental health issues and passed bills into law that advocate proper treatment, national budgeting and prevention in line with the many facets that mental illness has today.

Whether mental health is chronic or mild, everyone experiencing it deserves a system that listens to them and that unburdens them. A lot of people in Nigeria have stories to tell about what change a shoulder made available at the right time would have created in their lives.

Many mentally ill people in Africa turn out okay on their own but the process of living would have been more enjoyable for all these people if there was a concrete mental health system in place.

I think it's time we ditched the neglect and took more responsibility. It's time to be bold for change!

Mental health in the USA

Written by Greycy, Aspire2 Brand Ambassador - @greycy14 on Instagram



Over 47 million Americans (one in five) have a mental health condition. With similar mental health statistics to here in the UK, America is more fortunate than many countries – but like everywhere, more needs to be done.

Greycy, Brand Ambassador for Aspire2, details how people in the States seek mental health help.

It's ironic that in a day and age where mental health is still seen as a taboo, we find increasing rates of poor mental health. According to the American Psychological Association mental health disorders have increased significantly over the past decade.

A study conducted by psychologist Jean Twenge from San Diego State University found that: The rate of individuals reporting symptoms consistent with major depression in the last 12 months increased by 52% in adolescents from 2005 to 2017 (from 8.7% to 13.2%) and by 63% in young adults aged 18 to 25 from 2009 to 2017 (from 8.1% to 13.2%). There was also a 71% increase in young adults saying they'd experienced serious psychological distress in the last 30 days from 2008 to 2017 (from 7.7% to 13.1%). The rate of young adults with suicidal thoughts or other suicide-related outcomes increased 47% from 2008 to 2017 (from 7.0% to 10.3%).

Today, it is very easy to manipulate and hide what we truly are thinking and feeling. By captioning our photos with things like "living my best life" we are masking how we are truly feeling. Bottling up our feelings and thinking that no-one will care about how we are feeling is counterproductive because that just makes the darkness inside our

heads grow and gain power. If you feel like you want to talk to someone there are many things you can do some of which are:

Talk to a trusted family member, friend, teacher, or faith leader

Talking about your feelings and thoughts with someone you know and trust can be a great step in helping you build a strong support system. They will be able to give you detailed advice that will help you regain control of your life.

Search #mentalhealthambassador on social media

It is important to note that many of the mental health ambassadors on social media are not certified counselors or therapists, however we are a community of people that believe mental health is something that should be talked about more because communication is key and helps us all move on. Talking to a mental health ambassador can be a great way to build new friendships with people who know about what you are going through because we went and might still be going through the same things.

Talk to certified support groups

Here in the United States there are plenty of both in-person and online support groups that take their time to find the best help for you and your needs. These organisations include:

- **National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI):** This organisation is one of the largest in the United States and, like many organisations, they offer a free texting hotline in case of a crisis. Just text NAMI to 741741 and you will be connected with one of their representatives.
- **Trans Lifeline:** One of the many support organisations for LGBTQ+

community. This organisation is focused on "to end transgender suicide and improve overall mental health of transgender people through education, advocacy, and direct service," as stated in their mission. Trans Lifeline also offers a 24/7 hotline just call the following number 877-565-8860.

- **To Write Love On Her Arms (TWLOHA):** Perhaps one of the best-known organisations thanks to social media and celebrity collaborations TWLOHA is a non-profit organisation whose goal is to present hope and find help for people struggling with depression, self-harm, addiction and suicide. TWLOHA does not offer a hotline however they do hold events all across the United States. You can find their next event lineups here: <https://twloha.com/events/>
- **Project Semicolon:** Project Semicolon is another well-known organisation thanks to social media. The message of Project Semicolon is the plain definition of a semicolon. "A semicolon represents a sentence the author could have ended but chose not to. That author is you and the sentence is your life." You may have heard about project semicolon thanks to people who post their tattoos of semicolons most commonly on top of their self-harm scars. On their website you can find the service they offer which looks for mental health service providers in your area.

It is important to note that your mental health is a work in progress. Don't assume you will be okay from one night to another. However, you will see gradual changes. And remember, there is always a community of people rooting for you.

Mental health in Mexico:

“As taboo as it gets”



Written by Greycy, Aspire2 Brand Ambassador - @greycy14 on Instagram

Mental health in Mexico is as taboo as it gets.

Mexico has consistently been number two in the world for discrimination against people suffering from mental health illnesses and only one in five Mexicans have the financial capability of paying for treatment and therapy with a psychiatrist and/or psychologist.

Being fortunate enough to live right next to the most transited border in the world and still having family in Mexico, I find myself driving from San Diego to Tijuana nearly every weekend. I not only get to see the change in culture but also the extreme way mental health is perceived in both places.

In Mexico you are straight-up labelled “crazy” the moment you say “I think I need to have therapy.” Family members will talk about anything except the fact that the family has someone with a mental illness.

And the government and health departments are no help either. In the image on the right you can find an outline of the Mexican Republic with two colors green and red. Green represents fewer than 50 psychologist/psychiatrists and less than one psychiatric hospital. Red represents zero for all categories.

When you visit the official website for the Secretaria de Salud which is the government offices that oversee health you can find steps that they have taken to increase awareness for depression and anxiety. However, through research and talking to friends who still live in Mexico, I found that Mexico has no organisations like To Write Love On Her Arms, National Alliance of Mental Illness, or Project Semicolon.

People suffering from mental illness have to turn to social media and international campaigns to get the help they need and that is only if they have the financial means to do so.

What I did find hidden in page 12 of Google is the Spanish website for mentalhealth.gov, which is from the US government. Yet they offer a master list of American organisations willing to provide recourses for Spanish speaking



individuals looking for help (<https://espanol.mentalhealth.gov/hablar/conversacion-comunidad/servicios>).

What is perhaps the scariest thing I found while doing my research is that as of March 13, 2019 the Mexican government has drafted Mexico’s Mental Health Bill which continues not to address either this lack of integration of people with mental health disabilities into society, or the forced placement of these people into the prison-like system that is psychiatric hospitals.

This Mental Health Bill would increase the services available for people with mental health disabilities, but the proposal continues to force medical treatment upon them, as well as denying their right to consent and refuse treatment.

What should you do if you are from Mexico and looking for mental health services?

My best advice is to find out if there is a certified psychologist or psychiatrist in your area. If there is not, go on social media, search #mentalhealthambassadors and I guarantee that we are willing to help and listen to you.

We all have a role to play in transforming mental health services

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of mental health charity, Mind, explains what is needed for the UK to progress its perception and treatment of mental health conditions.

We have seen a seismic and welcome shift in public perceptions of mental health. Although attitudes and awareness surrounding mental health have improved, many people with mental health problems still aren't able to access the treatment they need, so the fight isn't over yet.

In the current period of extreme political unrest, achieving real and lasting positive change can seem impossible. As a mental health charity, with a long and proud history of campaigning to address the many injustices faced by those of us with mental health problems, we cannot, and will not, let domestic issues be placed on the back burner because politicians are distracted by other issues.

There is no quick fix, but people can and do recover from mental health problems with the right support. Promoting good mental health and preventing poor mental health requires a combined effort with all kinds of institutions – whether that's schools, workplaces, GP practices or the NHS – working together to make sure support is there when people need it.

Being left without support can have life-threatening consequences. A significant proportion of people who take their own lives have asked for support for their mental health within the last 12 months.

The latest figures from the Office for National Statistics – which show suicides have increased for the first time since 2013 – were concerning as they suggest services aren't meeting demand.

As Nadine Dorries takes up her post as Minister for Mental Health with responsibility for Suicide Prevention, high on her list should be trying to understand the factors behind this rise – including employment, debt, housing and benefits.

The reasons why someone might end their life are many and complex, but every suicide is a tragedy and even one person deciding to end their life is one too many.

When people are experiencing a mental health crisis they should be looked after by staff who want the best for their patients, in safe and therapeutic

environments; as opposed to being taken to a police cell for example. Such places can be incredibly scary and overwhelming for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis.

There is a need to increase safe places in the community such as crisis houses and cafes. We are still awaiting the Government response to the Mental Health Act Review. Due out before the end of the year, we demand to see them commit to taking forward all the recommendations to strengthen the rights, dignity and wellbeing of people who are at their most unwell and have been detained under section.

Key to improving services for people in crisis is protecting the mental health of our health service staff, which is close to breaking point. Staff working within NHS mental health services do a hugely important job, often in challenging conditions.

Poor workforce planning has left us with a huge gap between what's in place and what's needed to deliver good quality care. Cuts to mental health services have directly led to posts being axed.

As a result, many valued conscientious staff have been left overworked, demotivated, frustrated and burned out.

The support of a great nurse, doctor, psychologist or social worker can make all the difference to people's lives and at the moment, they're in short supply. The Government has said it will recruit 21,000 more mental health workers – including nurses, therapists and consultants - over the next five years, benefitting an extra one million people who need support from mental health services.

It's not just about recruiting extra staff – it's about attracting and retaining staff who are passionate and committed. Senior leaders need to radically reform workplaces to prevent people's work contributing to their own worsening mental health.

It's around two years since the Thriving at Work employment review was published, which outlined a set of core

standards that should be embedded into all workplaces of all sizes. The fact that the NHS is losing 348,028 working days due to anxiety, stress and depression in one month, shows something clearly isn't working. It's concerning that one of the UK's biggest employers is not prioritising its commitments, with these standards gathering dust on a desk somewhere while NHS staff and anyone accessing mental health services are continuing to be let down.

After years of underfunding and increased demand, the ambitious NHS Long Term Plan is welcome and comes with funding attached specifically for mental health services. But we need to see this funding reach the frontline, with improved experiences reported by those trying to access support for their mental health now.

Because mental health affects and is affected by so many different areas of our lives, we want to see a cross-

government strategy to sit alongside existing commitments to improve mental health services, which puts mental health at the heart of every department's agenda.

Making sure there is a joined-up approach between all different services – social care, education, housing, welfare, policing and health – is desperately needed if we're to prevent people falling through the gaps, and to improve people's day-to-day lives.

If you are aged 16+ and have accessed or tried to access primary care (GP) or voluntary mental health services in the last 12 months, tell us about your experiences in our [Big Mental Health Survey](#) to help us improve people's experiences of primary care.

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of mental health charity, Mind.

Mind Infoline: **0300 123 3393**

Text 86463 | info@mind.org.uk

Open Monday to Friday 9am – 6pm.

We provide information on mental health problems, where to get help, treatment and advocacy.

mind.org.uk/info



Mind is a registered charity (219830). Registered company in England number 424438.

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Aspire 2 depends solely on capital raised through advertising, donations, grants, and sponsorship.

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