

Concerned about someone's mental health?

How to approach – Do's & Don'ts

Do

- Choose your time and location wisely
- Approach with a non-judgemental and sensitive attitude
- Use concern as a conversation starter – what is it you've seen, heard or noticed?
- Ask, 'How can I help you?'
- Encourage them to seek support
- Reassure them you are there, you care and offer hope

Don't

- Be dismissive – 'man up', 'cheer up', 'she'll be right'
- Say 'I know how you feel'
- Express frustration
- Pressure them to 'do something about it'
- Tell them people are worse off
- Ignore the signs
- Discriminate

Examples

- Find a time and location that is private and free from interruptions
- 'I've noticed you're not your usual self, you seem quite down and withdrawn, how are you?'
- 'I'm concerned that you're having difficulties with your workload and I'd like to offer my support, is there any way I can help you?'
- Listen to the person, allow them as much time as they need to talk, encourage them to talk to you, reassuring them it's okay to do so
- 'Many people seek advice and support from their GP if they are having problems *sleeping *feeling anxious *overwhelmed *irritable, do you feel this is something that may help you to see what options there are?'
- 'I have some details of our Employee Assistance Program that you may find helpful'
- 'I am here for you anytime you want to talk or feel you need some help' (And be there!)