

Evidence Summary

Mental well-being in adults



Public Health Outcomes Framework indicator 3b

Measure

The mean mental well-being score according to the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being scale (WEMWBS) in adults (aged 16 or over).

Questions used to generate the evidence summary:

What population level actions are effective and cost effective in maintaining and improving the social, psychological and emotional wellbeing of adults?

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Mental well-being across the adult life course is affected by a myriad of different factors; the identified secondary literature has only addressed interventions for some of the contributing risk factors. Readers interested in this summary may also be interested in the summary relating to indicator 16 *People feeling lonely*.

Older people

Service providers (such as local authorities, local NHS providers, housing organisations, fire and rescue services, and voluntary organisations) should ensure their staff in contact with older people can identify older people who may be at risk of decline in their mental well-being and independence [NICE].^{1,2} Those who may be at risk should be offered physical activity programmes (for example dancing or walking); group activities to build or maintain social participation (for example singing, creative activities, intergenerational activities such as helping with reading in schools or multicomponent activities such as lunch with the opportunity to learn a new skill or socialise); one to one activities such as friendship programmes [NICE].^{1,2} Occupational therapy interventions, physical activity interventions and walking schemes are recommended as interventions supporting mental well-being in those over 65 [NICE].³

Evidence is currently not robust enough to recommend social role interventions (activities which may provide a sense of purpose, worth, identity or structure to life) to adults in retirement transition.⁹

Workplace

Integrated organisation wide approaches to promoting mental health should be used [NICE].⁴ Policies and the workplace environment should support employees in proactively protecting and enhancing their own health and well-being, and should engender a workplace culture that respects work-life balance [NICE].⁵ Where reasonably practical, opportunities for flexible working should be provided [NICE].⁴ A management style encouraging participation, delegation, constructive feedback, mentoring and coaching should be used, as this style is most likely to promote mental well-being [NICE].⁴

Community engagement approaches

There is a lack of evidence on the impact of community engagement approaches on mental well-being in adults [NICE].^{6,7}

Environmental enhancement and conservation activities

It is not possible to determine whether participating in environmental enhancement and conservation activities confers positive or negative health and well-being effects due to the quality of the available evidence.⁸

Crime and fear of Crime

It is unclear whether interventions which impact on broad social determinants of fear of crime is an effective way to improve well-being.¹⁰

Context in Wales

Published in 2012, *Together for Mental Health* is the Welsh Government's 10 year strategy to improve mental health and well-being. The current priorities are set out in the 2016 – 2019 Delivery Plan for Together for Mental health. Aims include:

- Helping people of all ages become more resilient and better able to cope with poor mental well-being
- Improving people's quality of life by addressing problems such as loneliness and unwanted isolation.

References and further detail from the sources on which this evidence summary is based are available in the [evidence map](#). The user guide is available [here](#).