



Royal Wootton Bassett Town FC Mental Health Policy

1. PURPOSE

Royal Wootton Bassett Town FC have a duty of care to our members therefore wish to assist where possible to support mental health, specifically spotting the signs, supporting and grow awareness. This document has been created in line with the FA guidelines version 1.1.

Definitions:

MENTAL HEALTH

Like physical health we all have mental health too. Just as our bodies can become unwell, so can our minds. As with our physical health, having a mental health problem can affect us all regardless of age, race, religion or income level. It is not the result of personal weakness or lack of character. The World Health Organisation defines good mental health as a state of wellbeing, in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

MENTAL WELLBEING

Wellbeing describes the wider set of feelings and thoughts that influence our emotions and day-to-day behaviour. It is influenced by a broad set of factors such as the quality of and engagement with: relationships, housing, employment, finances, physical and mental health, etc.

Our mental wellbeing can change, from day-to-day, month-to-month or year-to-year. It can be characterised by times when you are or aren't feeling confident, engaged with the world, living and working productively – and are or aren't coping with the stresses of everyday life.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Mental health problems cover a range of conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behaviour (or a combination of these). The experiences and symptoms of no two individuals are the same – we're all unique and so are the mental health problems we may encounter. The most common mental health problems you are likely to encounter as a coach/manager are anxiety and depression, or a mixture of the two. However, there's a wide range of conditions or problems which fall within the scope of mental health problems.

2. SCOPE

The following policy has been designed to give players, parents, coaches and committee member's guidelines. The club recognises that treatment of mental health requires a specialist, we as a club are unable to offer specialist treatments



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but need to play a part in “spotting” and notifying. In extreme cases there maybe the need to call the emergency services.

“Mental health problems can affect anyone, but it’s a fact that people from black and minority ethnic groups in England are more likely to be diagnosed with mental health problems than anyone else. Getting this talked about – and the reasons behind it, such as discrimination – is so important if we are to stimulate positive change. It follows that helping coaches and team managers who have BAME players in their team to understand a bit more about mental health is vital.”

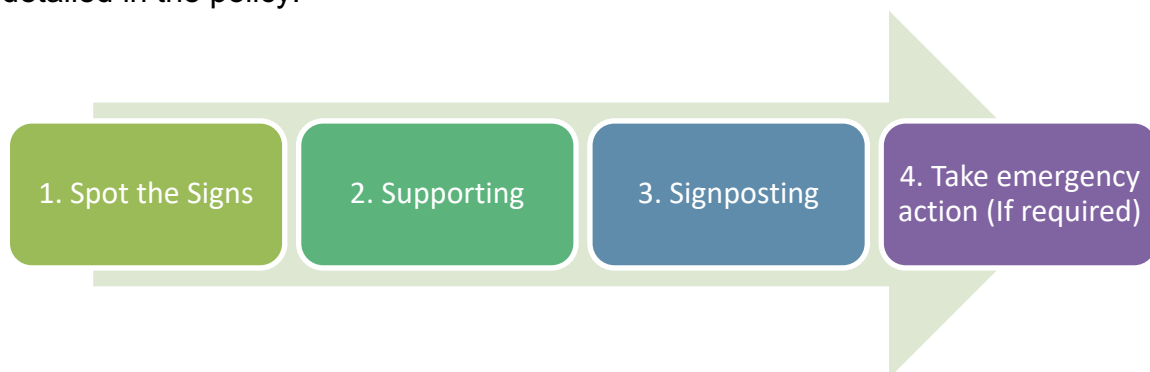
Dr. Colin King, Head Coach at Black and Asian Coaches Association – and mental health survivor

3. RESPONSIBILITY

We ask all our member to be on the look out for signs of mental health, we are not expecting our members to manage and take responsibility for any detailed recovery, this is the roles of a specialist, all we ask of our member is to be on the lookout for the early signs and take some basic action as detailed below. If you are uncomfortable with actioning the below, please discreetly speak to a committee member.

4. POLICY

There are 4 steps to our policy, as detailed below, the detail of the 5 steps are detailed in the policy.



5. SPOTTING THE SIGNS

As we train and play, speak to players and our coaching teams, can you spot any signs?

NOTICEABLE DISINTEREST:

- Becoming withdrawn – in training sessions, before and after matches;
- Not turning up for matches or training, despite having been quite engaged in them previously;



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BEHAVING OUT OF CHARACTER:

- Turning up late, drinking more alcohol after matches, smoking, showing unusual anger or violence
- in training/matches;
- Gaining or losing weight very quickly;
- Appearing tired, anxious or low in spirits.

SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS:

- Over-exercising as a form of self-harm;
- Experiencing anxiety or panic attacks;
- Having suicidal feelings or talking of harming themselves.

This is not an exhaustive list, but the above are all potential indicators. But please be aware other things may be triggering these behaviours.

For example, a bereavement or being a victim of adult abuse and/or discrimination.

If you work in open-age disability football, you can find out more about adult safeguarding by clicking [here](#). Of course, you may already be aware of a mental health problem of one of your players. If so, it's important you bear this in mind in your training sessions and on matchdays.

6. SUPPORTING

So if you spot the signs what can you do?

- **ASK** discreetly if they want to talk about it. If they say yes, then it's about finding the right setting – somewhere private where the person feels comfortable and equal, e.g. a café or football club bar/function room when quiet.
- **LISTEN** attentively. Ask simple, open and non-judgmental questions. Let the person explain in their own words how they're feeling. Try not to assume you already know what may have caused their feelings, or what will help.
- **ENCOURAGE** people to seek advice, where appropriate. You're not expected to be a mental health professional.



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- **REASSURE** the person that they're not alone. Seeking help can feel lonely, and sometimes scary. Let them know there is support out there – and that you can help signpost them to the help they may need.

7. SIGNPOSTING

If you feel someone needs support outside your role as a coach/manager after you've listened to them, here's some advice you could pass on:

1. Talk to a family member or friend, if appropriate: Sometimes people just
2. want to talk to someone they trust.
3. Visit their GP: If they feel comfortable visiting their GP, let them know GPs have general knowledge in the area of mental health problems, and are also the gateway to specialist mental health services.
4. Contact their Employee Assistance Programme: Assuming they are in employment and their organisation has this type of support available. Such programmes could also provide a route to specialist help.
5. Contact a specialist mental health organisation: Support can be either general or specific.

8. POSSIBLE ACTION

- **For non-urgent or life threatening advice** call the club's Welfare Officer ([RWBTFC - Contact Directory](#))
- **If they are not safe by themselves right now** – as long as you feel able to do so, you should stay with them and help them call 999 for an ambulance, or help them get to A&E. They may appreciate it if you can wait with them until they can see a doctor.
- **If they can keep themselves safe for a little while** – you can get quick medical advice by calling NHS Direct on 111, or you could help them make an emergency GP appointment to see a doctor.
- You can also encourage them to call the Samaritans on 116 123.
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- Alternatively, they can text 'HeadsUp' to 85258 to connect with a trained crisis volunteer, who will chat to them by text message, sharing only what feels comfortable, and help them through the moment, working together on a plan for longer-term support. This service is available 24/7 and free to text from most mobile networks.
- **If you feel personally in danger right now**, or that others are in immediate danger – you can dial 999 and ask for the Police to help. You might feel worried about getting someone in trouble, but it's important to put your own safety first. However, research shows that people with mental health problems are more likely to harm themselves than other people.
- An emergency might also arise if the adult discloses they are being harmed by someone and that they, or other adults, are at risk. You can seek advice from your local County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer or in an emergency adult services or the Police.

9. SPECIALIST ORGANISATIONS

WITHIN FOOTBALL:

Contact your County FA to see if they are running any initiatives around mental health. Click here for a full list of County FA contact details. You may also contact the clubs Welfare Office for support and advice. ([RWBTFC - Contact Directory](#))

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Mind InfoLine: 0300 123 3393 The Mind Infoline can help find specialist services in your area. Mind website: www.mind.org.uk/

HELPLINES AND LISTENING SERVICES:

- Samaritans: 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call 116 123 (free from any phone).
- SANEline: 0300 304 7000 (4.30pm–10.30pm every day).



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- HeadsUp: For immediate support text HeadsUp to 85258 to chat by text to a trained and supervised volunteer. Free, confidential and available 24/7.
- CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably): 0800 58 58 58 (5.00pm to midnight, 365 days a year).
- Drink Aware – 0300 123 1110 www.drinkaware.co.uk
- Gamble Aware – 08008 802 0133 www.begambleaware.org
- Mental Health Support YoungMinds – Text YM to 85258 or visit www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help
- Campaign Against Living Miserably: 0800 58 58 58 or www.thecalmzone.net

Endorsed by:

Signed: (Club Secretary) _____ *I Thomas* _____ Date: ___16/01/2022___

Signed: (Club Chairman) _____ *P Gerrish* _____ Date: ___16/01/2022___