

An Introduction to
NI's Interim Mental
Health Champion

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The Role of Mental Health Champion

- ☀️ **Public Advocate.**
- ☀️ **Policy Influence.**
- ☀️ **Network Hub.**



Public Advocate

- ★ People with lived/ living experience of mental illness, poor wellbeing, & their carers.
 - ★ Professional groups (e.g. mental health policy, General Practitioners, Maternal & Infant Mental Health).
 - ★ Campaign groups (e.g. PPR, Elephant In The Room).
 - ★ Other stakeholders (e.g. Commissioners).
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- 🔥 Understand current difficulties.
 - 🔥 Understand what success looks like.
 - 🔥 To collaborate & align to achieve common goals.
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Policy Influence

- ⚡ Cross Departmental (e.g. Justice, Education, Health, Communities).
- ⚡ Local & Regional.
- ⚡ Key projects (MH strategy and plan, suicide prevention, young people) .
- ⚡ Supporting key messages to promote mental health.
- ⚡ To collaborate & align to achieve common goals.
- ⚡ Advising senior stakeholders.



Network Hub

- ☀ Promoting positive mental health.
- ☀ Participation in public debate.
- ☀ Education, awareness and information.
- ☀ A focal point for mental health discussions.
- ☀ A voice for the voiceless.

Key Themes

- Prevention & Early Intervention
- Suicide Prevention
- Children & Young People
- Alcohol & Drugs
- Service Improvement





Find out more...

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ProfSiobhanONeill>
- Twitter: @ProfSiobhanON
- Email: MHC@HSCNI.net
- Meetings: Titanic Suites Belfast or ONLINE
- Web: profsiobhanoneill.com
- NI Direct Website: Mental Health Champion

WE WANT YOU!



Join me & be a **Mental Health Champion**



FOR YOU ---- FOR OTHERS

Mental Health Impact of COVID Infections

Primary

- Lonely painful death.
- Stress of illness.
- Complicated grief/ trauma in relatives & friends of the deceased.
- Stress of long-COVID & impact on loss of job/ role.
- Neurological impact of COVID.
- Trauma & pressure on health care workers.

Secondary

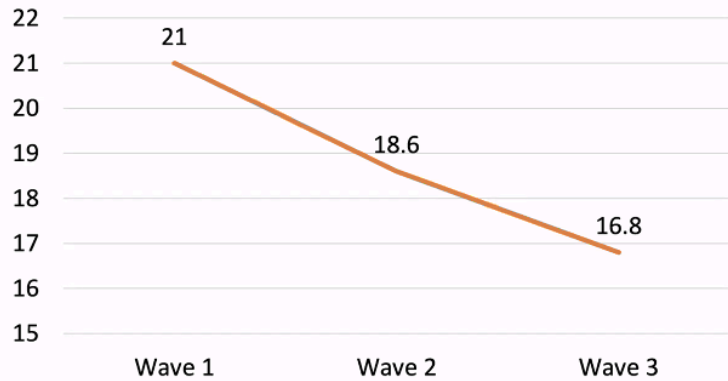
- Pressure on the health care system → reduced ability to treat other urgent mental & physical health conditions.

Mental Health Impact of Restrictions

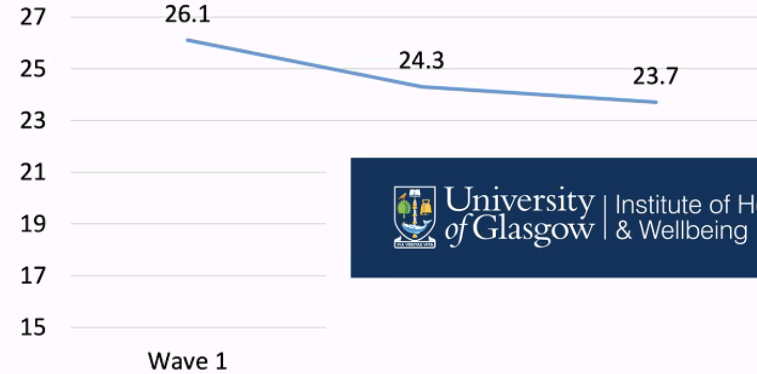
- Stress/ trauma of job loss.
- Stress/ trauma of reduced income.
- Stress of social isolation and loneliness.
- Missed services for people with existing mental health problems.
- Missed services for people with physical conditions.
- Missed opportunities to support & aid people at high risk (abuse, violence, poverty).
- Time critical developmental stages (infancy, early years, childhood, adolescence, older people).
- Lifestyle & behaviour (alcohol, drug, aggression).

Trends in anxiety and depressive symptoms

Trends in anxiety symptoms (GAD-7 % \geq 10)
waves 1 - 3



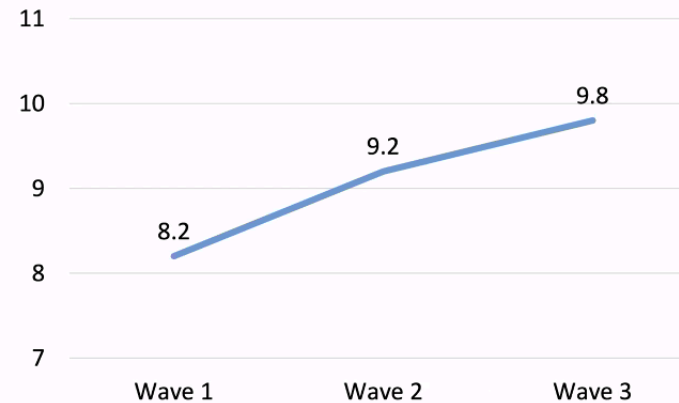
Trends in depressive symptoms (PHQ-9, % \geq 10)
waves 1 - 3



- Anxiety symptoms (moderate cut-off GAD-7 \geq 10) decreased significantly across waves
- Depressive symptoms (moderate depression cut-off PHQ-9 \geq 10) decrease v

Trends in suicidal ideation in last week


Trends in suicidal ideation waves 1-3 (%)



- o Participants were asked: "How often have you thought about taking your life in the last week?" ('never', to 'nearly everyday')
- o Suicidal ideation= at least one day/week
- o Rates of suicidal ideation in the last week increased from wave 1 to wave 2 and from wave 1 to wave 3

Conclusions

- Mental health and wellbeing of specific groups of the UK adult population appear to have been particularly affected in the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The trajectory of increasing rates of suicidal thoughts, especially among young adults, is concerning.
- These early data highlight that the detailed monitoring of the longer-term mental health outcomes and inequalities is essential.

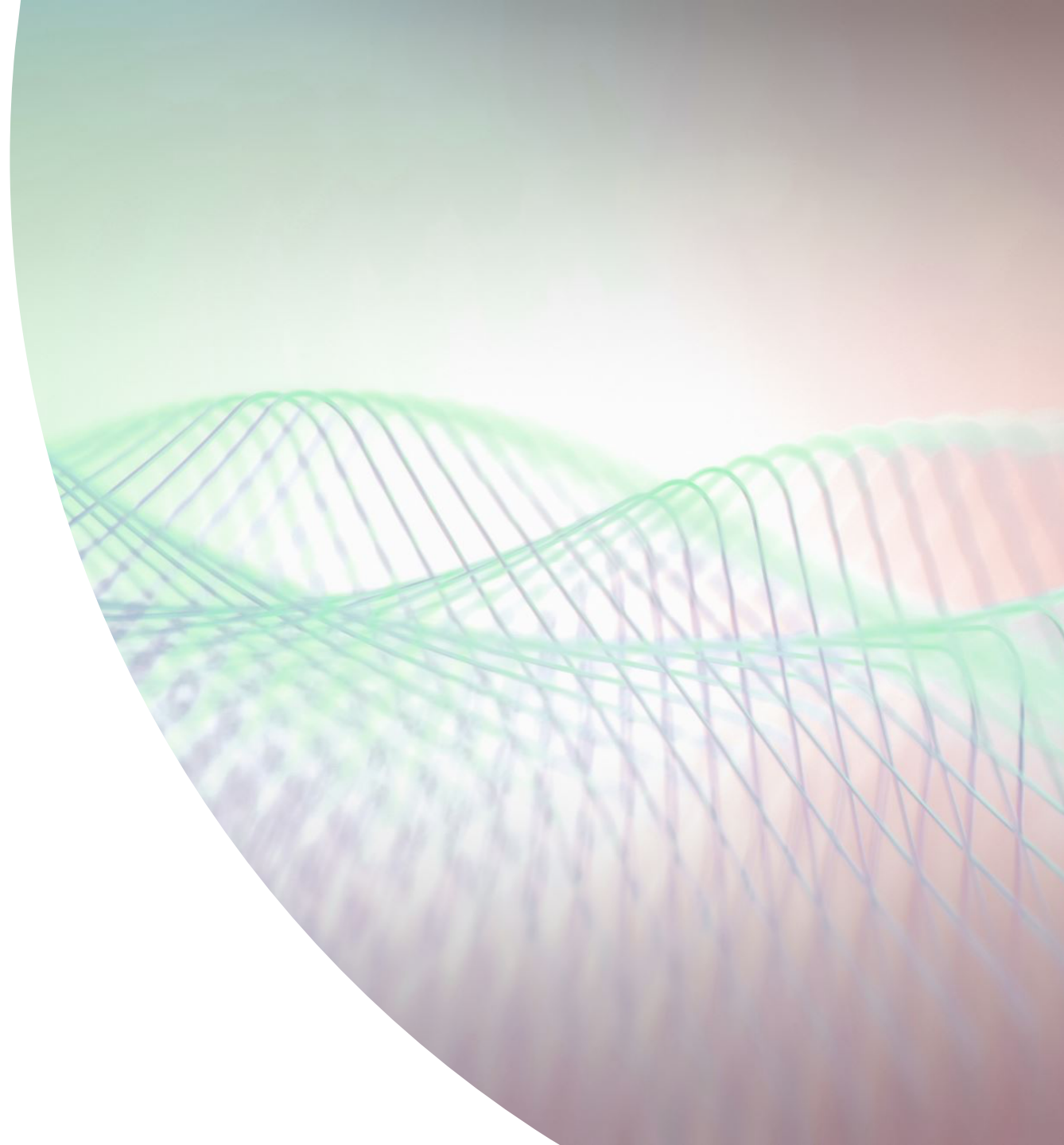


The Neuroscience of Community

- We are a social species.
- Our neuroception is attuned to the state of other mammals.
- We subconsciously mirror the survival states (cues) from other mammals in the herd.
- If one animal senses danger the others are on high alert -increases the chance of survival of the group.
- Calmness, safety and a sense of wellbeing are also contagious.

What does this mean?

- People are looking to you for information about whether they should feel afraid.
- You need to MODEL self care and self regulation.
- Trust → adherence.
- Calm self regulation → adherence.





Q & A