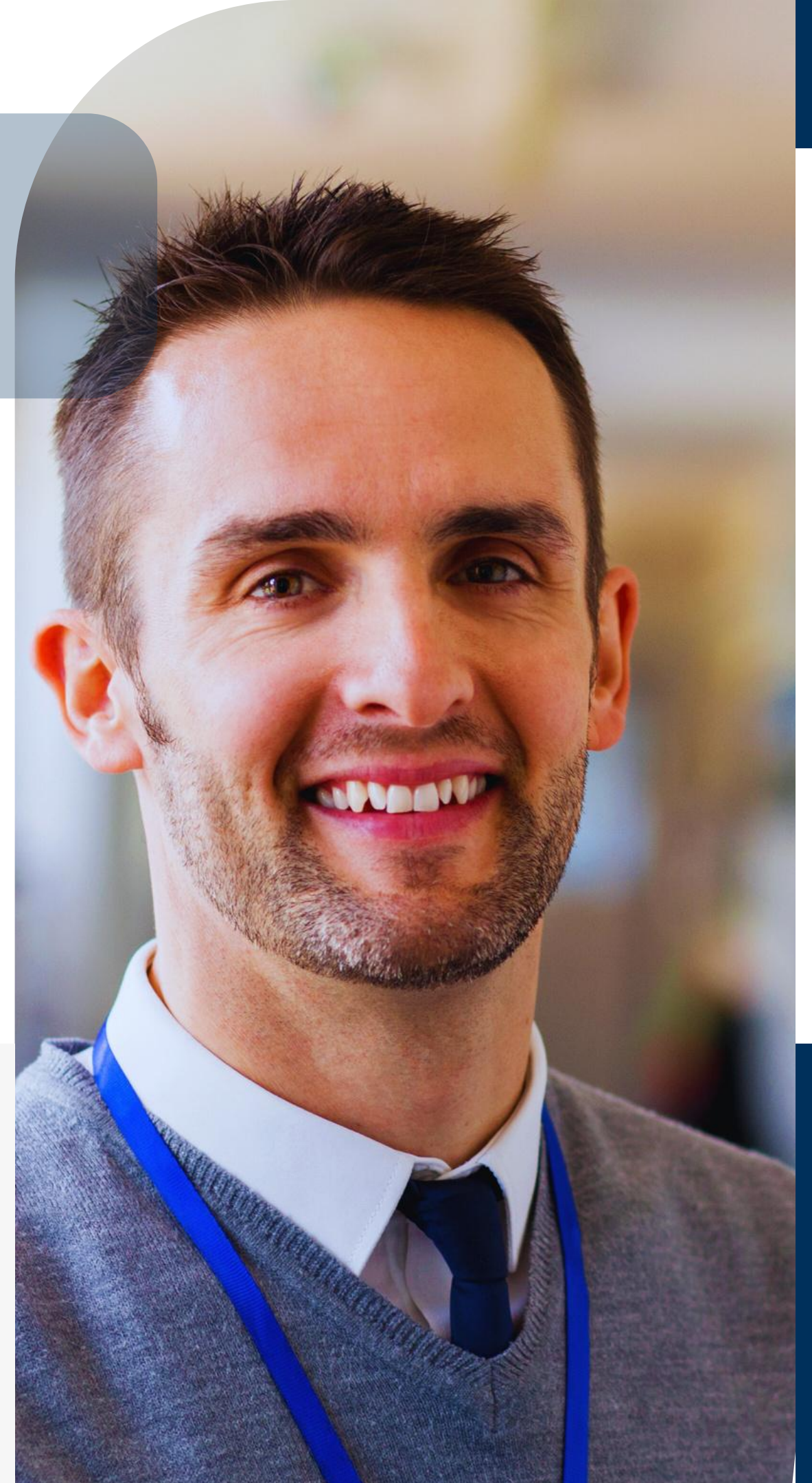




HOW TO BEST ASSESS TRAINEE'S WELLBEING

NASBTT Member Workshop –
Supporting trainee mental health



Overview

- Mental health challenges trainee teachers face
- Key statistics
- Factors affecting trainee's wellbeing
- Assessing trainee's wellbeing
- Mental health adjustments
- Support from Occupational Health

Understanding Mental Health in Trainee Teachers

- **Definition:** Emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing.
- **Importance:** Enables effective teaching, positive student relationships, and resilience.
- **Impact of Poor Mental Health:**
 - Decreased job satisfaction
 - Increased dropout rates from training programmes
 - Risk of long-term psychological conditions

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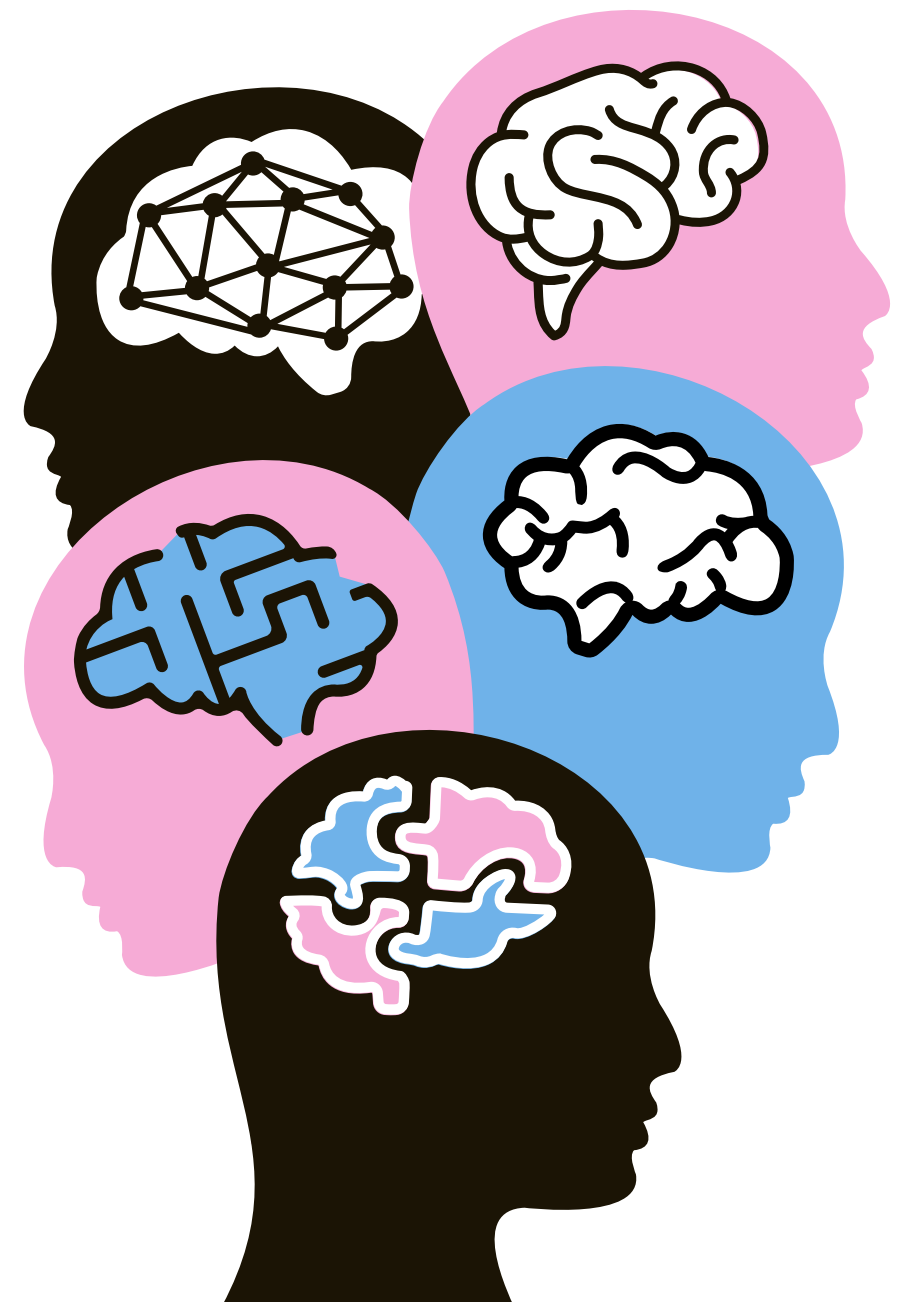
Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.

The World Health Organisation (WHO)

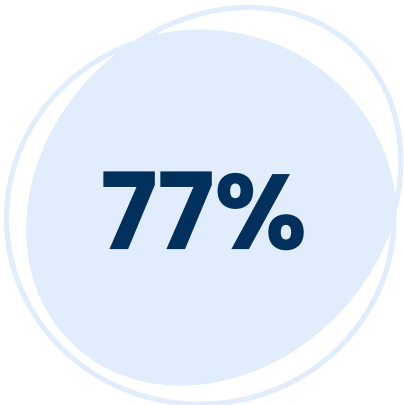
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Common Mental Health Issues

- **Anxiety Disorders:**
Performance anxiety, social anxiety, and generalised anxiety disorder.
- **Depression:**
Fatigue, loss of motivation, and disengagement from training.
- **Burnout:**
Emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy.
- **Imposter Syndrome:**
Feeling like a “fraud” despite evidence of competence.
- **Perfectionism–Related Stress:**
Chronic stress due to unrealistic expectations.



Key Statistics



77%

**of trainee teachers
reported experiencing
work-related stress**

(Education Support,
2024)



58%

**admitted that their mental
health had deteriorated since
beginning their training.**

(Teacher Well-being Index,
2022)



40%

**experienced symptoms
of depression during
their first year**

(University Mental Health Survey,
2024)



35%

**of newly qualified teachers leave
the profession within five years
due to stress and burnout**

(Department for Education,
2023)



1 in 4

**trainee teachers
considered quitting due to
mental health concerns**

(Teaching and Learning International Survey,
2022)

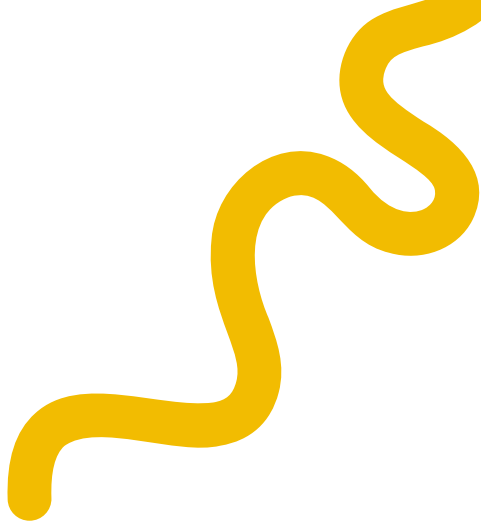


**only
30%**

**of teacher training providers
offer specific mental health
support for trainees**

(Education Policy Institute,
2022)

Contributing Factors to Poor Mental Health in Trainee Teachers



Academic and Professional Pressures

Extensive lesson planning, assessments, and university assignments.

Classroom management challenges and performance evaluations.

Continuous professional development requirements.

Limited preparation time for real classroom experiences.



Workplace and Environmental Stressors

Lack of mentorship and guidance from experienced educators.

Unrealistic expectations and job insecurity.

Challenging student behaviour without sufficient training.

Toxic school cultures and lack of leadership support.

Personal & Social Challenges

Financial strain due to low stipends or unpaid placements.

Work-life imbalance and struggles in maintaining relationships.

Self-doubt and questioning career choices.

Assessing trainee's wellbeing



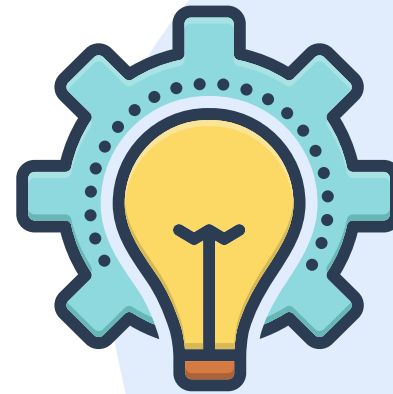
- **A Wellbeing Pulse Survey**

A Wellbeing Pulse Survey can help to:

- understand how trainees are feeling
- discover the common factors affecting their mental health
- identify areas for improvement including any additional support trainees need for their wellbeing
- monitor changes over time

Key considerations when creating a pulse survey:

- **Anonymity**
allows trainees to respond honestly without fear of identification
- **Structure**
keeping the survey short and questions relevant helps to receive more responses
- **Consistency**
using the same questions each time allows to track changes
- **Regularity**
conducting surveys on regular basis for ongoing monitoring



Free tools to build a pulse survey:

- SurveyMonkey
- Microsoft Forms
- Google Forms

Ideas for questions:

Wellbeing Measurement for Schools Staff Survey, Anna Freud

Staff wellbeing survey template, Education Support

Teacher Wellbeing Survey: 75 Questions to Ask, Schools & Academies Show



- **Discussion group**

- Helps break down stigma and builds trust among trainees and mentors
- Provides a representation of diverse opinions and ideas
- Allows trainees to share experiences, perspectives and concerns
- Helps to get the bigger picture of what might be causing poor mental health among trainees
- Helps to respond to matters that affect trainees



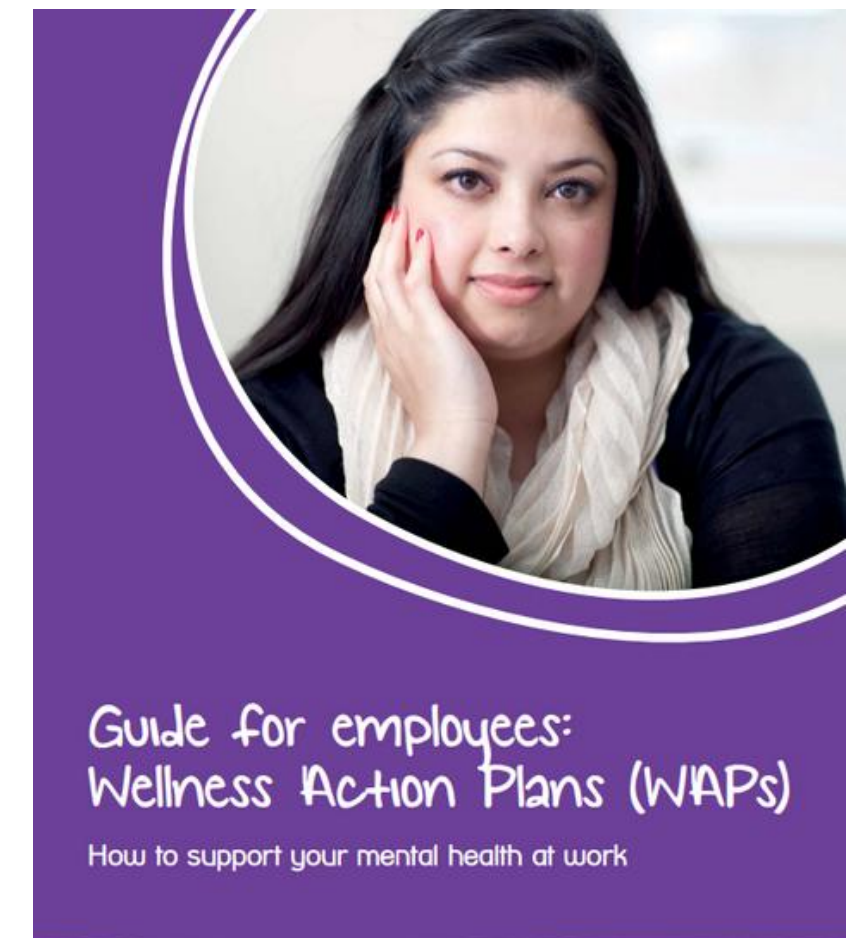
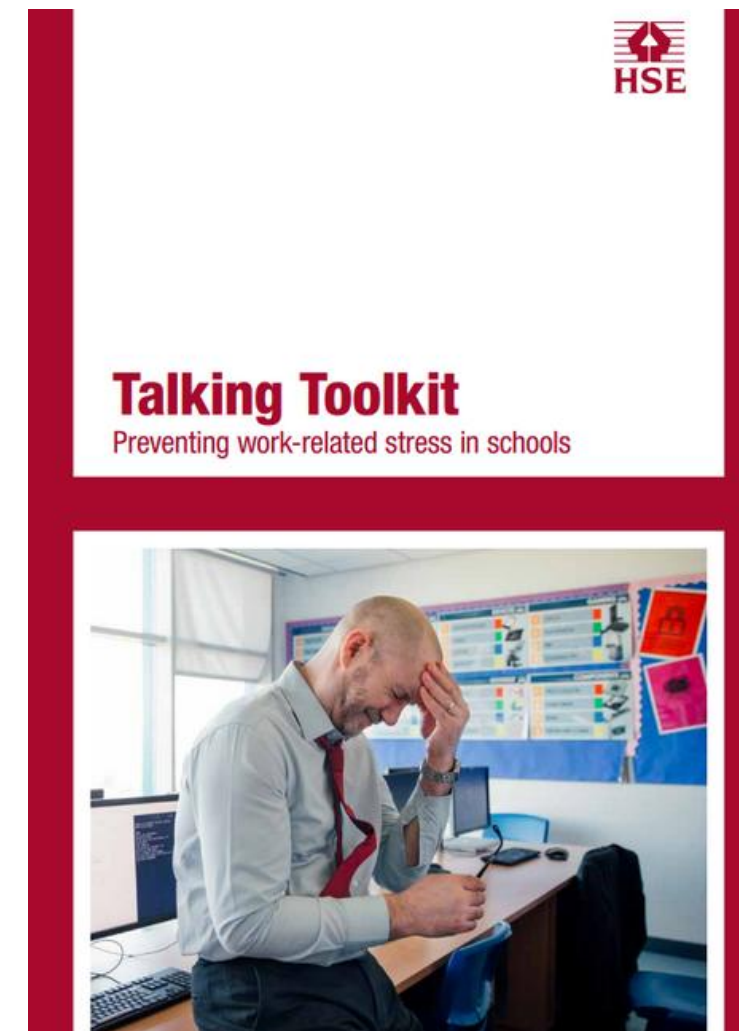


- **Conversation with a trainee around wellbeing and mental health & Individual Stress Risk Assessment**

Identifying causes of poor mental health and finding practical solutions that could be put together to help trainee in their role.

Helpful tools:

- **Talking Toolkit: Preventing work-related stress in schools, HSE**
- **Guide for employees: Wellness Action Plans (WAPs). How to support your mental health at work, Mind**



HSE's Talking Toolkit

Can be easily implemented to assess trainee's mental health and conduct an Individual Stress Risk Assessment.

Includes six conversations around the factors that are known to contribute to stress at work:

Demands

Relationships

Control

Role

Support

Change



Building a picture of trainee's wellbeing and identifying the potential causes of stress



Mind's Wellness Action Plan

A structured framework that helps individuals to identify what keeps them mentally healthy at work, what causes them to become unwell, and how to address a mental health problem at work.

- Workplace stressors and symptoms to look out for
- Support the individual might need from colleagues or managers
- Action to take if the individual experiences compromised mental health
- What enables the individual to be in positive mental health
- What the work environment looks like when it is enabling positive mental health for the individual



Mental Health Adjustments

- Making adjustments for trainees suffering from, or recovering from, mental health conditions can have several positive outcomes.
- A reasonable adjustment is an adjustment to the workplace or work practices that is effective for the employee without being too disruptive, costly or impractical for the employer to provide.
- The type of adjustment implemented will be unique to the individual and their circumstances.
- Many adjustments are simple and inexpensive, but can make a big difference.



Examples of reasonable adjustments

Making changes to the working environment

relocating trainee's workspace to a quieter area, providing safe and comfortable rest areas, providing reserved parking

Making changes to the working arrangements

regular breaks, paid or unpaid leave for medical or counselling appointments, flexible working if possible, extended phased return for trainees who are off sick

Providing services and support for the trainee

increasing frequency of catch-ups and 1-to-1's, providing additional training or coaching, providing a buddy who can support with tasks

Changing some of the trainee's responsibilities

reviewing tasks or deadlines, breaking down work into short term tasks

Support from Occupational Health

- Through the Management Referral Service, OH Professionals can advise on reasonable adjustments to enable trainees with a mental health condition to work effectively and safely.
- The referring person should meet with the trainee to discuss the situation, obtain their consent to be referred to Occupational Health and explain the reason for the referral.
- Trainee's situation should be reviewed in light of the written advice and any recommendations in the Management Referral report.
- Occupational health reports are advisory only. It is for the referring person to decide whether any suggested adjustments can be accommodated.

Scenario– Emma's story



Background: Emma, a 24-year-old trainee teacher, initially felt excited but soon experienced stress due to workload and classroom management issues.

Symptoms: Anxiety, sleepless nights, loneliness, and eventual burnout.

Possible interventions

- › Mental Health Services and Support Networks
- › Mental Health Resources
- › Additional Training
- › Mentorship and Peer Support
- › Temporary adjustments to job role



Conclusion

- Early intervention is crucial. Understanding the causes of trainee's poor mental health early on allows the organisation to make informed decisions and reasonable adjustments to reduce excessive pressures where possible and/or support the individual.
- Regular one-to-one meetings, individual stress risk assessments, discussion groups, wellbeing pulse surveys, and Occupational Health Assessments are vital in evaluating trainees' mental health and wellbeing.



THANK YOU

Any questions



REFERENCES:

- [Teacher Wellbeing Index 2024 Education Support](#)
- [Teachers and Workplace mental health, an Occupational Health case study, iOH](#)
- [Summary and recommendations: teacher well-being research report, Ofsted](#)
- [Mental health adjustments, Acas](#)
- [Talking Toolkit. Preventing work-related stress in schools, HSE](#)



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