

#AskHowIAm Top tips for practitioners



1. Ask patients how they are at every opportunity. Sometimes people just want to be asked how they are feeling. Creating a space for them to express how they are feeling can be a vital first step to getting the right support.

“Listen, believe, and ask me what is important.”



2. Be aware of what help is available to people using your service for their emotional health. This could be how to get access to talking therapies, peer support, voluntary and community sector services, online help or advice, or referrals for specialist mental health support.

“I think it would have been helpful if they’d pointed me in the direction of some emotional support.”



3. Give information and advice to help people to manage their condition, and be available when people need help with this. Where possible share decisions and acknowledge how much people have to cope with in living with a long-term illness.

“Make it clear your door is always open.”



4. Reassure people that it’s ok to seek emotional support at any time while living with a long-term condition. Acknowledge that it can be difficult and that looking after your mental health is an important part of living with a long-term condition.

“Ask me how I am mentally at every medical appointment and check-up.”



5. Show compassion: small gestures of care can help people who are struggling with their mental or physical health.

“I just want someone to understand.”



6. Challenge inequality: be aware that for people from marginalised and excluded communities there are additional barriers to support and low levels of trust that need to be rebuilt.

“You just know that how you’re being treated is because of who you are.”

