

Wales Golf
Supporting the Mental
Health of our Golfers and
those who support them:
A Code of Practice

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Introduction

Wales Golf is committed to supporting its Golfers, Coaches and Support Staff to manage their mental health through appropriate education strategies and an effective referral process.

Our first aim with this Code of Practice is to set out the overall responsibilities of all those engaged in this support. It is not intended to provide comprehensive details of the day to day processes associated with this support.

Our second aim is to ensure that the highest standard of respect, empathy, responsibility and integrity are demonstrated by all members of Wales Golf when supporting the mental health of others. This Code of Practice supplements the Wales Golf Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and Strategy documents and should, therefore, be read in conjunction with these.

Mental Health

The term *mental health* is often used interchangeably within our language with related terms such as *mental wellbeing*, *mental illbeing* and *mental illness*. Consequently, it is important to provide clarity about these terms within this Code of Practice to promote understanding and consistency in the language used by all associated with Wales Golf.

Mental health is the term used to describe the overall mental health of an individual, encompassing an individual's mental wellbeing, mental illbeing, and [potentially] mental illness.

Mental wellbeing is the term used to describe how satisfied or happy an individual is as a result of how well the individual feels that he/she has fulfilled his/her potential, observed personal development across contexts, experienced good relationships with others important to them and led a purposeful life.

Mental illbeing is the term used to describe the experience of negative feelings, such as dissatisfaction and disappointment, unhappiness, anxiety and nerves, anger and frustration, and guilt. These are often felt by an individual as a result of not fulfilling potential, not observing personal development, not experiencing good relationships with others important to them and not leading a purposeful life.

Mental illness is the term used to describe all diagnosable mental disorders and conditions that involve significant changes in an individual's thinking, emotion and/or behaviour that may result in distress and/or problems with functioning in social, work or family activities.



Consequently, an individual's mental health represents the balance between mental wellbeing and mental illbeing, with mental illness potentially a result of an individual experiencing greater mental illbeing for prolonged periods of time. The potential for mental illness due to prolonged experiences of mental illbeing emphasises the importance of the Mental Health Code of practice to facilitate the identification of, and support with, mental illbeing. Further, the importance of good mental wellbeing emphasises the importance of developing proactive and preventative strategies within our golfers, coaches and support staff to help them improve the chances of living a healthy life.

Quality Assurance Processes for Mental Health Support

To ensure the standards and quality of the support offered by Wales Golf are suitable, clear and accessible, Wales Golf will: operationalise a working group; deliver various educational strategies for coaches and support staff, golfers and parents; and develop and maintain a webpage dedicated to good mental health.

The Working Group

A working group will be developed, consisting of Wales Golf staff and members of the High-Performance Team, to carry out the following roles: 1) review regularly the educational strategies in place to support our golfers, coaches, support staff and parents; 2) review regularly the Wales Golf website section that will be focused on Mental Health; and, 3) review regularly our referral processes against any recent presented cases, through an anonymous approach.

Our Educational Strategies

Coaches and Support Staff

Our intent is to provide regular learning opportunities for our High-Performance Team coaches and support staff on such topics as: understanding the demands that golfers experience in and outside of golf; ways of supporting the mental health of our golfers; noticing the signs when golfers may be struggling mentally; how to manage difficult and sensitive situations; guiding golfers who present with concerns (including when appropriate to refer or contact the clinical psychologist for advice). These learning opportunities will include workshops delivered at each High-Performance Team meeting (on site or remote), the opportunity for staff to undertake certified Mental Health First Aid training and the UK Coaching Mental Health Awareness for Sport and Physical Activity workshop.

Golfers

We will provide regular workshops for our golfers on strategies to support healthy living, for the benefit of mental health. These will be led by our Sport Psychologists and embedded within the scheduled performance days across the calendar year. Further, the golf related strategies that our golfers will be supported to develop can have benefits to their everyday life. The potential to transfer such strategies will also be highlighted during performance days and one-to-one sessions.



Parents

Part of our parent support package will involve a dedicated workshop on our mental health code of practice, which will also include the guidance we provide golfers on maintaining good mental health. Other sessions within the support package will cover the strategies that our sport psychologists will be working on with the golfers – that can be transferred to everyday life for the benefit of sustaining good mental health, and how the parents can be a part of their child's development of these strategies.

Wales Golf Website: Health and Wellbeing Section

Complementing the strategies covered in the workshops to coaches, support staff, golfers and parents, we will develop and maintain appropriate information and guidance on a Health and Wellbeing Section on our Wales Golf website.

Information provided on here will include: this code of practice; our policy and strategy for mental health and wellbeing; top tips for healthy living and good mental health; our referral process; useful resources to support good mental health; links to free support for mental health; and any other media developed to support good mental health.



The Referral Process

The referral process involves the supported referral to our Clinical Psychologist of any of our golfers, coaches or support staff who have presented mental health concerns to a Wales Golf coach or support staff member. This process is guided by knowing: when to refer; how to refer; what to do if you have concerns about an individual's mental health; what not to do; what a referral to our clinical psychologist involves; what other free support may be available; and what education coaches and support staff need to facilitate this referral process.

When to refer

An individual can be referred to our clinical psychologist if he or she has disclosed a mental health concern with you and is willing for you to undertake the referral process. **If the individual is under the age of 18, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must be informed.** More details on what to do if you have concerns about an individual and how to refer are provided below.

What to do if I have a concern about a golfer's, coach's or support staff member's wellbeing?

Supporting someone who may be presenting signs of a mental health issue, but who has not presented the issue to you can be challenging. Especially if you feel that the individual may be at risk of harming his or herself. During this context, you must immediately contact the clinical psychologist via telephone for guidance on how to approach this sensitive situation (details provided to all coaches and support staff). The clinical psychologist will inform the Performance Director if a referral has been made, without disclosing the reason for the referral.

Similarly, it is difficult when someone acknowledges that they have a mental health concern, but is reluctant to get help and support. In this situation, you should stay calm, listen to them and, when they have stopped talking for a period of time, signpost the individual to the sources of support identified at the end of this document.

Then, highlight the benefits of a discussion with our clinical psychologist and that you or another Wales Golf staff member can accompany the individual to this discussion. **All individuals under the age of 18 will have been informed that if we feel that they pose a risk to themselves, we will inform their parent(s) or legal guardian(s).** We will support your confidence in managing this context through our mental health workshops in the High-Performance Team meetings.

How to refer

You can refer to our clinical psychologist by contacting him via telephone. Our clinical psychologist's contact details are provided to all coaches and support staff to enable a quick referral.

What not to do

Do not work beyond your competencies. That is, do not provide any guidance or advice on how the individual could cope or offer any opinion about the individual's context. Simply stay calm and listen and, if required, move to another location that is public, yet private, and then provide insight into our referral system and the further support that is available (see below).





What a referral to our clinical psychologist involves

A referral to our clinical psychologist will first involve a meeting between the individual, the clinical psychologist and any other person(s) that the individual may wish to attend. The meeting will take place at a location preferable to the individual seeking support. Here, the clinical psychologist will discuss the mental health concern with the individual and assess the condition and required treatment. If the clinical psychologist feels there is a safeguarding concern, then the Safeguarding Lead Officer for Wales Golf will be informed.

Wales Golf will support financially this initial assessment. Any further sessions, where treatment may involve one-to-one therapy with the clinical psychologist, will be at the expense of the individual or parent(s)/guardian(s), as will a clinical report or therapeutic letter. The rates will be provided at the end of this document. Given the cost of such professional support, the clinical psychologist can direct the individual or parent(s)/guardian(s) to alternative support, which may include reference to the free networks provided below.

Further Support

We will provide a comprehensive list of potential support on our webpage dedicated to Mental Health. However, below are links to free support for mental health concerns:

Samaritans

Phone **116 123**

(24 hours, 7 days a week)

www.samaritans.org.uk

Mind

Phone **0300 123 3393**

(Mon-Fri, 9am - 6pm)

www.samaritans.org.uk

Anxiety UK

Phone **03444 775 774**

(Mon-Fri, 9.30-5.30pm)

www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Calm

For men aged 15 to 35

Phone **0800 58 58 58**

(5pm to midnight)

www.thecalmzone.net

Young Minds

Phone line for parents only

Phone **0800 802 5544**

(Mon-Fri, 9:30am - 4pm)

www.youngminds.org.uk

Sane Line

Phone **0300 304 7000**

(Daily, 4.30pm - 10.30pm)

www.sane.org.uk

Supporting the Referral Process: Educating Coaches and Support Staff

As emphasised earlier, to support the referral process for our golfers, coaches and support staff, all High-Performance Team members will participate in educational workshops focused on noticing the signs when golfers may be struggling mentally and guiding golfers who present with mental health concerns or who are demonstrating signs of mental health concerns.

Clinical Psychologist Service Charges

Telephone call for guidance / referral:	Cost covered by Wales Golf
Initial Assessment:	Cost covered by Wales Golf
Follow up individual therapeutic sessions:	£80 per hour
Clinical assessment report:	£240



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