

## **Mental Health**

Mental health problems can affect people of all ages and background. Mental illness can be categorised into anxiety disorders, mood disorders, schizophrenia/psychotic disorders, eating disorders, and dementia.

The exact cause of most mental illnesses is largely unknown, and can be contributed by a combination of genetic, biological, psychological, and environmental factors. Life stressors such as a family death, divorce, or work-related stress, can trigger one who is at risk.

Recovery from a mental illness is more than a matter of will and self-discipline. If left untreated, one will typically be unable to cope with daily routines and demands as he/she experiences both cognitive and emotional dysfunctions.

When diagnosed and treated early, individuals with mental illnesses are able to successfully manage their symptoms and return to their valued roles and activities.

### **What does rehabilitation involve?**

Rehabilitation and recovery from mental illnesses is a long journey and requires long-term treatment. Intervention is often a multi-disciplinary effort: medication prescribed by doctors, psychotherapy from psychologists, therapy from occupational therapists, and social support from social workers/community partners.

Each individual is empowered to manage their symptoms and return to living full and productive lives.

In the inpatient acute phase, occupational therapists provide both individual and group therapy for patients. Group therapy programmes aim to facilitate socialisation among patients and rekindle their interest in meaningful activities.

For individual interventions, the occupational therapist assesses how an individual's mental health illness affects his/her daily activities, and how certain lifestyle factors may further aggravate the condition. Interventions include collaborating with patients to build up crucial life skills and adaptive coping strategies. The therapist works with each individual to regain a meaningful and balanced daily routine. Healthy roles and daily routines are also reinforced to help prevent relapse.

### **Useful websites**

[Institute of Mental Health: "Understanding your mental health"](#)

[Singapore Anglican Community Services: "Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Recovery Services"](#)

[Singapore Association of Mental Health](#)

[Silver Ribbon Singapore](#)

[Club Heal](#)