



Your Mental Health Guide

Complete support,
when you need it most



1. Mental Health Support Journey	p3
2. Self Care	p11
Mindfulness	
Online Health Experts	
Alternative & Complementary Therapies	
Vhi parkruns	
3. Because Sometimes you need Extra Support	p14
Reach out to your GP	
Talk Therapy	
4. Advanced Support for Mental Health conditions	p18
Outpatient Mental Health with Dean Clinics	
Addiction	
Eating Disorders	
Mental Health Illnesses	
5. Vhi Health Blogs and Events	p19
6. Useful Resources	p21
Appendix	p23
References	p26

Urgent assistance

If you, or someone you know requires urgent assistance or care, contact **emergency services** on **999** or **112**

1

Mental Health Support Journey



Mental Health Support Journey



Engaging in **mindfulness and meditation**, regular **physical activity**, **healthy lifestyle choices**, and accessing **alternative therapies** can

significantly enhance mental well-being by reducing stress, improving mood, and promoting overall health.



Life can be stressful and have its ups and downs, sometimes challenging us when we least expect it.

As a Vhi member, you have access to a wide range of benefits and supports to help you cope including **GP visits** and/or **Talk Therapists**.



There may be times when you need to access expert care from a **Consultant Psychiatrist** or **Specialist Treatment Facility**.

Rest assured, as a Vhi member you have access to a wide range of treatment options and **support programmes** in the best specialist facilities.
[See appendix 2](#)

2 Self Care



Mindfulness and Meditation: Helps manage stress and improve mental well-being.

As a Vhi member, you can avail of €30 off an annual subscription to the Headspace or Calm app, empowering you to develop a mindfulness practice that will help to improve your sleep, lower anxiety and reduce stress. You can claim money back for these expenses through Snap & Send Claiming in **MyVhi** or the Vhi App.

For more information visit [Emotional Wellbeing | Vhi: Expert Guidance & Support](#)

Physical Activity: Regular exercise can have a positive impact on mental health.

Vhi parkruns are free weekly community events held in parks all over Ireland on a Saturday morning, where you can walk, run or jog 5k at your own pace. Junior parkrun 2k events take place on a Sunday morning for children aged 4 to 14.

90% of those experiencing depression said participating in a parkrun improved their ability to manage their health condition.

You can find out more at parkrun.ie

Did you know?

Members can earn Vhi rewards with parkrun

Enjoy a €5 reward when you participate/volunteer at five Saturday parkruns. Just **link your parkrun account** to your Vhi App and start earning

Healthy Lifestyle Choices:
Balanced diet, adequate sleep and good lifestyle habits.

Vhi Online Health Clinic provides access to experts such as Online Dietitians, Physiotherapists and GPs who can provide you with information, guidance and support on health and lifestyle issues that can impact on your emotional wellbeing. **You can access these services through the Vhi App.** Most Vhi Plans offer a number of visits free of charge.

Complementary and alternative therapies can help to relieve stress, pain and anxiety

Most Vhi plans provide cover for an extensive range of complementary and alternative therapies such as acupuncture, reflexology and chiropractic to name but a few. You can claim money back for these expenses through **Snap & Send Claiming in the Vhi App.**

You are not alone



1 in 2 adults have experienced a mental health difficulty¹



72% of parents of under 18's worry about their children's mental health²



Six in ten people in Ireland have experience of addiction³

3 Because Sometimes you need Extra Support



Because Sometimes
you need Extra Support



Recognising the Need for Help

The first step is **acknowledging** that you need support. This can be due to **stress, anxiety, depression, addiction** or any other mental health concern. It's important to understand that seeking help is a **sign of strength**.

Reach out to your GP

They are often the first point of contact when you're not feeling yourself. Your GP is experienced in providing **assessments, advice, medication, and referrals** to specialist services if needed.

Vhi Online Doctor* gives you access to experienced doctors based in Ireland from the comfort of your home. If you don't have a GP and you are in need of support, rest assured, you can access this service **7 days a week** through the **Vhi App**.

Most Vhi Plans* offer a number of **visits free of charge**.

Did you know?

Most Vhi plans offer benefits for GP visits and talk therapy. You can claim money back for these expenses through Snap & Send Claiming in **MyVhi** or the **Vhi App**.

Because Sometimes
you need Extra Support



Talk Therapy

There may be times when you are feeling **overwhelmed or stressed** and you could benefit from the assistance and support of an **experienced, trained professional**. Whether you're a child, teen or adult there are a range of supports available including **counselling, psychotherapy and psychology**.

In addition, you may have access to our Positive Mind Programme and/or Employee Assistance Programme.

Counselling, Psychotherapy and Psychology

Most Vhi plans provide benefits towards counselling, psychotherapy and psychology and you can **claim money back** through the **Vhi App**.

Find an approved list of [psychotherapists](#), [counsellors](#), or [psychologists](#) through the following networks.

- Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP)
- Irish Council for Psychotherapy (ICP)
- Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI)

Because Sometimes
you need Extra Support



Vhi Positive Mind

Our Clinical Psychologists are here to help you cope with challenges like **stress, anxiety, low mood, workplace burnout and bereavement**, through in-person or remote sessions tailored to you.

Vhi Positive Mind is for members aged 18 years and over. This service is designed to provide assessment and treatment if appropriate for **mild to moderate mental health conditions** experienced in the last 12 months.

Many members can find information and register for our **Positive Mind Programme** through our app.

Employee Assistance programme

Check with your employer or Occupational health team to see if they have an **Employee Assistance programme**. Many companies offer this, and you may be entitled to several **counselling sessions for free**. If your employer has an Employee Assistance programme with Vhi you will be able to access counselling services through the **Vhi App**.

You are not alone



69% of employees reported their lives are very or highly stressful⁴



One in seven 10 to 19 year olds experiences a mental disorder⁵



28% of women experiencing perimenopausal symptoms identify as being highly stressed⁶

4

Advanced Support for Mental Health conditions



Addictions, Eating Disorders and Mental Health Illnesses

There may be times when you need to access expert care from a **Consultant Psychiatrist or Specialist Treatment Facility**.

Rest assured, as a **Vhi member** you have access to a wide range of treatment options and support programmes in the best specialist facilities.

These treatment programmes cover a range of conditions such as **clinical depression, schizophrenia, eating disorders, psychosis to gambling and substance addiction**. Some are delivered as an out-patient, others are on a day case or as remote homecare, and some are in-patient only (this will vary

depending on the programme and the treatment facility). Your **GP or Consultant** will refer you on if they feel you would benefit from this type of specialist care.

Most **Vhi plans** provide access to a package of **Mental Health supports and benefits** designed specifically to ensure that you can access the **specialist treatment and support you need**.

Did you know?

You can use 'Cover Check' in the **Vhi App** to check your plan benefits.

Outpatient Mental Health with Dean Clinics

The Dean Clinics offer accessible **mental health services across Ireland**. With clinics in Cork, Dublin, and Galway, they offer a range of treatments and support for various conditions, and provide the flexibility of online appointments.

They provide **holistic, multidisciplinary care tailored to individual needs**. As a Vhi member, you can avail of reduced rates and we are the only provider who offer direct pay as per your plan benefits.

Services include:

- **Adult and adolescent assessments** with personalised, recovery-focused treatment plans.
- **Referral pathways to in-patient care** at St Patrick's University Hospital, St Patrick's Hospital Lucan, and Willow Grove Adolescent Unit; various day programmes and individual therapies.
- **Specialist clinics**, such as Eating Disorders, Addiction, Dual Diagnosis and Care for the Elderly.
- **Flexible appointments** in person or by video or phone.

How to access care

You can talk to your GP for guidance, support and referrals. Most Vhi plans offer a benefit for Mental Health Therapy at Dean Clinics.

Check your cover

You can use "Cover Check" in the Vhi App to check your plan benefits. Simply search "Mental Health Therapy" or "Mental Health Assessment".

For more details about The Dean Clinics from St Patrick's Mental Health Services, visit <https://www.stpatricks.ie/care-treatment/outpatient-clinics>

Addiction

Addiction can include.

- **Alcohol Addiction**
- **Drug Addiction**
- **Gambling Addiction**
- **Sex & Porn Addiction**
- **Gaming Addiction**

A poll, commissioned by **Merchants Quay Ireland** found that **59% of people** said that they have direct experience of **addiction**, whether that be themselves, a family member, or a close friend.

If you have concerns for you or a family member, help is available. Vhi are partnered with several specialist treatment facilities nationwide to offer our members access to a range of **rehabilitation programmes** for those struggling with an addiction.

Specialist Addiction Facilities See [appendix 1](#)

Our partners provide Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDT) of experts which can include consultant psychiatrists, psychologists, specialist nurses, social workers, and therapists who will work closely with you to create a treatment plan focused on achieving long-term recovery.

How to access care

You can talk to your GP for guidance, support, and referrals to specialists and/or treatment facilities. You'll also find details of the cover provided by your Vhi plan at MyVhi.

For full details of care available, please check directly with the facility.

Research conducted by the ESRI in 2023 has shown that 1 in 30 adults struggle with gambling problems.⁷

Eating disorders

It is estimated that up to **200,000 people** in Ireland are impacted by an eating disorder, but many will recover with early intervention and timely access to the right professional treatment and supports.

Vhi provides our members with access to a range of specialist treatment programmes for Anorexia, Bulimia and Binge Eating Disorders.

Specialist Facilities for Adults and Teens:

- **Dean Clinics**
- **Lois Bridges, Dublin**
- **National Eating Disorders Recovery Centre, Dublin**
- **St John of God, Dublin**
- **St Patrick's Mental Health Services, Dublin**

How to access care

You can talk to your GP for guidance, support and referrals to specialists and/or treatment facilities. You'll also find details of the cover provided by your Vhi plan at MyVhi.

For full details of care available, please check directly with the facility.

Did you know?

Vhi offer access to the **largest network of eating disorders facilities**

Mental Health Illnesses

Nearly half of Irish adults have been treated for a mental health difficulty. If you've been struggling with a mental health illness, it's reassuring to know that you're not alone and you have access to a range of specialist treatment and supports.

Mental Health Illnesses can include:

- Depression
- Anxiety Disorders
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Psychosis
- Schizophrenia
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Bipolar disorder
- Personality disorder

(Appendix 3 Glossary of terms)

As a Vhi member, you have peace of mind that you have access to care for specialist treatment programmes.

Specialist Facilities for our Adult members:

- St Patrick's Mental Health Services
- St John of God Hospital,
- Dean Clinic
- Hampstead Clinic

Specialist Facilities for our Teen members:

- **St Patrick's, Willow Grove Adolescent Unit**
For patients aged between 12 - 17 years
- **St John of God, Ginesa Adolescent Suite**
For teens and adolescents between 14 and 18 years of age.
- **Dean Adolescent Clinic**
In Cork and Dublin, Dean Adolescent Clinics provide individualised treatment plans, prepared in consultation with the young person and their parents.

How to access care

The journey to getting care often begins with **your GP**, who can provide guidance, support, and in some cases medication. They can also refer you to **specialist psychiatrists** and our **partners facilities** for more comprehensive support. If you or someone you know is struggling, don't hesitate to seek professional help. You'll also find details of the cover provided by your Vhi plan at MyVhi.

For full details of care available, please check directly with the facility.

5 Vhi Blogs and Events



Vhi Health Blog - Mental Health

Welcome to our **comprehensive education health blog**, where we delve into a wide array of topics centred around mental health and emotional well-being.

Our blog covers crucial subjects such as fertility challenges, emotional support during pregnancy, teen mental health, emotional well-being during menopause, and workplace well-being.

Whether you're seeking guidance, support, or simply looking to expand your knowledge, our expertly crafted articles are here to **help you navigate the complexities of mental and emotional health at every stage of life.**

Recent Articles on our Blog:

- Disrupted **sleep in pregnancy**
- Navigating the **emotional changes of perimenopause**
- Why your **teen's mood fluctuates**
- The powerful effects of **social media on your teen's mental health**
- How to **spot and solve burnout**
- How to handle **feeling isolated at work**
- **Fertility in focus:** the workplace realities

Did you know?

Our blog, Vhi Verified, provides advice from Vhi experts on a range of mental health topics. See [Vhi.ie/blog](https://vhi.ie/blog)

Stay informed with our wellness online events

Members can access a number of educational webinars throughout the year. Check your **Vhi app** for active webinars.



You are not alone



25% of employees told us they are dissatisfied with their work-life balance⁸



1 in 4 older adults experience social isolation⁹

6 Useful resources



You can find **additional support, advice and guidance** through the following bodies and associations:

- **Aware:** aware.ie
- **BodyWhys, The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland:** bodywhys.ie
- **HSE Health and Wellbeing:**
hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing
- **HSE Mental Health Issues:**
hse.ie/mental-health-issues
- **Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy:** iacp.ie
- **Irish Council for Psychotherapy:** psychotherapycouncil.ie
- **Jigsaw, The National Centre for Youth Mental Health:** jigsaw.ie
- **Mental Health Ireland:** mentalhealthireland.ie
- **Pieta House:** pieta.ie
- **Samaritans:** samaritans.org
- **SpunOut.ie, Ireland's youth information website:**
spunout.ie
- **The Psychological Society of Ireland:** psychologicalsociety.ie

Specialist Facilities for Addiction

Facility Specialist Facilities for Addiction	Alcohol Addiction	Drug Addiction	Gambling Addiction	Sex & Porn Addiction	Gaming Addiction
St. Patrick's Mental Health Services	✓	✓			
St. John of God Hospital	✓	✓			
Smarmore Castle Private Clinic, Louth	✓	✓	✓		
Rutland Centre, Templeogue, Dublin	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aiséirí Centre, Cahir & Roxborough	✓	✓			
The Grove (Talbot Grove Centre)	✓	✓	✓		
Hope House, Addiction Residential Treatment Centre, Foxford	✓	✓			
Aislínn Treatment Centre, Ballyragget, Kilkenny (15-21 years)	✓	✓			
Bushypark Treatment Centre, Ennis	✓	✓	✓		
Cuan Mhuire, Bruree	✓	✓			
White Oaks Rehabilitation Centre, Muff, Co. Donegal	✓	✓			

Eligible bed days:

Alcohol and Drug or other substances abuse - Max 91 days in any 5 year period.

Gambling, Sex & Porn or Gaming addiction - Max 100/180 annually depending on your plan benefits for in patient psychiatry treatment.

Specialist Facilities Addiction, Eating Disorders and Mental Health illnesses

Addiction	Eating Disorders	Other Mental Health Illnesses
St. Patrick's Mental Health Services	Dean Clinics	St. Patrick's Mental Health Services
St. John of God Hospital	Lois Bridges, Dublin	St. John of God Hospital
Smarmore Castle Private Clinic, Louth	National Eating Disorders Recovery Centre, Dublin	Dean Clinics
Rutland Centre, Templeogue, Dublin	St. John of God Hospital	Hampstead Clinic
Aiséirí Centre, Cahir & Roxborough	St. Patrick's Mental Health Services	St. Patrick's Mental Health Services, Willow Grove Adolescent Unit
The Grove (Talbot Grove Centre)		St. John of God Hospital, Ginesa Adolescents Suite
Hope House, Addiction Residential Treatment Centre, Foxford		Adolescents Dean Clinic In Cork and Dublin
Aislinn Treatment Centre, Ballyragget, Kilkenny (15-21 years)		
Bushypark Treatment Centre, Ennis		
Cuan Mhuire, Bruree		
White Oaks Rehabilitation Centre, Muff, Co. Donegal		

Mental Health Glossary

<p>Counselling</p>	<p>Counselling can be really helpful in dealing with issues that have recently arisen, such as bereavement or a relationship breakdown. The focus in counselling is on the client’s concerns and difficulties and understanding how patterns of behaviour, thoughts and feelings can cause problems in daily life.</p>
<p>Psychotherapy</p>	<p>Psychotherapy deals with deeper, long-term issues that may be rooted in the past. Designed to help people with a broad variety of mental illnesses and emotional difficulties, it may be used in combination with medication or other therapies. It works to control symptoms, build resilience and improve overall emotional wellbeing.</p>
<p>Psychology</p>	<p>Psychology - psychologists are trained in talk therapy and have the clinical training to make clinical diagnoses, if necessary. While psychotherapy and counselling sessions are largely led by the patient, psychologists tend to be more directive and prescriptive.</p>
<p>Anxiety Disorder</p>	<p>Anxiety is our body and mind’s natural reaction to threat or danger. If you experience severe symptoms over time, you might have an anxiety disorder.</p>
<p>Depression</p>	<p>Everyone feels sad or fed up from time to time. However, these feelings usually last only a few days. Depression is where these feelings are severe or long-lasting. It leaves you feeling down most of the time and finding it hard to cope from day to day.</p>
<p>Addiction</p>	<p>If you live with an addiction, you find it difficult to control or stop how much you use a substance or carry out a behaviour.</p>

<p>Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)</p>	<p>Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a mental health condition where you have repeated and upsetting thoughts and behaviours. You often have a higher sense of responsibility for preventing harm and an intense awareness of risk and danger.</p>
<p>Eating Disorders</p>	<p>An eating disorder is a mental health disorder where you use food and weight to cope with emotional distress.</p>
<p>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)</p>	<p>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that develops after very frightening, upsetting or overwhelming events.</p>
<p>Bipolar Disorder</p>	<p>Bipolar disorder is a mood disorder which is marked by extreme changes in a person's mood, thinking and energy over several weeks or months.</p>
<p>Schizophrenia & Psychosis</p>	<p>Psychosis is a condition where you may have difficulty recognising what is real and what is not. Schizophrenia is when you have these symptoms for at least six months.</p>
<p>Personality disorder</p>	<p>A personality disorder is a type of mental disorder in which you have an unhealthy pattern of thinking, functioning and behaving, an enduring set of thoughts feeling and behaviours, present since before adolescence and persistent throughout adult life.</p>

- 1. 1 in 2 adults have experienced a mental health difficulty**
<https://www.stpatricks.ie/media/3761/2023-annual-stigma-and-attitudes-to-mental-health-survey-findings.pdf>) intense awareness of risk and danger.
- 2. 72% of parents of under 18's worry about their children's mental health**
<https://www.stpatricks.ie/media/3761/2023-annual-stigma-and-attitudes-to-mental-health-survey-findings.pdf>
- 3. Six in ten people in Ireland have experience of addiction**
Poll, commissioned by Merchants Quay Ireland found.
- 4. 69% of corporate employees reported their lives are very or highly stressful.**
Workplace Insights 2024
- 5. One in seven 10 to 19 year olds experiences a mental disorder**
Mental health of adolescents (who.int)
- 6. 28% of women who identify as being highly stressed are also experiencing perimenopausal symptoms - and 28% of them believe that they're more likely to have increased health problems in future if their current high stress levels are maintained**
Vhi Workplace Insights
- 7. 1 in 30 adults struggle with gambling problems.**
Research conducted by the ESRI in 2023
- 8. Current global estimates suggest that 1 in 4 older adults experience social isolation**
WHO Commission on Social Connection
- 9. 25% of employees told us they are dissatisfied with their work-life balance.**
Workplace Insights 2024

