

# Groundswell

Out of homelessness



Hello,

I am supporting #HealthNow, a national campaign run by Groundswell in partnership with Crisis and Shelter. We are working towards an inclusive health system where everyone has access to the healthcare they need; ultimately moving people out of homelessness.

Our research and lived experience tell us that people experiencing both homelessness and mental health issues are worried about being stigmatised in healthcare settings.

## Together we can end this multi-layered stigma.

In this leaflet we have gathered some resources that we hope can help you and your team to:

- Recognise and understand the fear of stigma and how it may present.
- Identify actions you can take to make your service welcoming.
- Help the people around you to recognise and avoid stigmatising behaviours.

Find all the resources listed in this leaflet at

[www.groundswell.org.uk/stigma](http://www.groundswell.org.uk/stigma)

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# 8 things you can start today

- 1. Be determined.** Resolve to help end the multi-layered stigma people can face when experiencing both mental health issues and homelessness.
- 2. Be compassionate.** Avoid defining people by their circumstances or experiences. Show compassion and treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- 3. Be curious.** Use our resources to learn more about people's experiences and educate others.
- 4. Be mindful.** Watch out for stigmatising thoughts, words or behaviours and try to change them.
- 5. Be outspoken.** Talk to the people around you about mental health, homelessness and stigma. Speak out if you hear or see someone stigmatising an individual or group.
- 6. Be smart.** Look at your processes and systems – do they make things harder for certain groups of people, and can you solve this?
- 8. Be inclusive.** Ask people what would improve things for them and work alongside people with lived experience to develop solutions.

## Mental health, homelessness and stigma resources

### Groundswell & Mind leaflet [‘You have the right to feel OK’](#)

This leaflet can be shared with anyone who might find it helpful, to help them understand their rights to mental health support if they're experiencing homelessness and having thoughts, feelings or experiences that are upsetting or overwhelming.

### #HealthNow peer research report [‘Knowing where to turn: access to mental health support whilst experiencing homelessness’](#)

Accessing mental health support while experiencing homelessness is challenging and complex. This qualitative, peer research is based on interviews with 73 people experiencing homelessness and 7 stakeholders. The findings highlight the key difficulties people who are homeless face when experiencing poor mental health.

### ‘Clarissa’, [the film and resources pack](#)

Clarissa's story is one of trauma, the importance of trust, and how this impacts someone's experiences of healthcare. It has been woven together from real experiences of people trying to access the healthcare system while facing homelessness in the UK. This film is used by many healthcare providers in team meetings, training or inductions.

### Listen Up! [Insight 1: Mental health and homelessness](#)

This Insight draws on nationwide research interviews with 44 people experiencing homelessness and a selection of stories from our 14 community reporters, who all have lived experience of homelessness.

# Other useful resources



## **Groundswell [Resources Hub](#)**

This hub includes resources for people experiencing homelessness and professionals supporting them, and it covers topics such as coping with suicidal thoughts, self-advocacy and sleep.

## **Short film: [Top Tips for GPs to support people with multiple disadvantage](#)**

Produced in partnership between Groundswell, #HealthNow and Westminster Changing Futures, this short film includes top tips from a specialist GP, and people with experience of homelessness, about how healthcare services can best support patients facing multiple disadvantage.

## **Making your service welcoming and psychologically informed**

Making your service psychologically informed or trauma informed will help reduce people's fear of being stigmatised. It means understanding how trauma can affect people, groups and communities, recognising the signs and symptoms, and avoiding retraumatising people. To learn about making your work trauma informed, you can use this [Groundswell resource](#).

Learn about creating a Psychologically Informed Environment using a range of resources on [Homeless Link's website](#).

If you prefer a short video, [this animation](#) was produced by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) in partnership with the Scottish Government. Alternatively, there is a slightly longer [guided workshop](#) (which includes the animation) that contains exercises to guide you and your team through applying a Trauma Informed approach in your own work.

For more information about #HealthNow, peer research or health guides for people experiencing homelessness, please contact [info@groundswell.org.uk](mailto:info@groundswell.org.uk)

[Stay in touch by signing up to Groundswell's newsletter.](#)