

Having Effective Conversations about Mental Health

1. **Recognize** – familiarise yourself with common signs so that you can recognize accurately and with some confidence For the Mental Health Continuum see [Access to Mental Health Supports](#) poster
2. **Observe & Identify** – stay alert to when people might be reacting or struggling; check body (posture), emotion (tone of voice), thoughts (exaggerations – ‘I always’, ‘they never’, ‘everything...’)
3. **Reach out in privacy and with respect**– ensure the person receives a safe and respectful connection
4. **Ask & Care** - if concerned, demonstrate care in asking – ‘I have noticed that you haven’t been yourself lately, is everything ok?’ Let them know you care and that you value them.
5. **Listen with to understand** – be present in a simple open and humble way; remove distractions; listen carefully and acknowledge; don’t interrupt – stay dialled in and quiet.
6. **Give them time** - let the person be the guide, sharing as much or as little as they feel comfortable. If they express emotion or look a little fragile offer to get them a glass of water – give them space to regroup and come back into the conversation.
7. **Know your boundaries** – say at least once ‘I am not an expert but I am concerned about you and want you to feel better’. Your role is not to diagnose or provide advice but reassure.
8. **Know available resources and support** – A comprehensive list of ‘*Wellbeing and Resilient Workplace Resources and Supports*’ can be found in [MyConnection](#). Search KB# 0011533.
9. **Share & encourage** – If even slightly concerned, with the persons permission and interest encourage them seek support as necessary to aid diagnosis, treatment, healing and recovery.
10. **Provide relevant information** – be clear that the organization wants to support them. Be open to knowing that they have the freedom to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’.