



GBS Mental Health Policy

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Definitions

“A&E”	means Accident and Emergency;
“CBT”	means Cognitive Behavioural Therapy;
“EIS”	means the English Institute of Sport;
“GBS”	means GB Snowsport Ltd.;
“GBS Athlete”	means an athlete who is part of a GBS Team/GBS Squad;
“GBS Staff”	means staff who are employed by, or acting as a consultant to, GBS;
“GBS Volunteer”	means volunteers who work for GBS without pay;
“GBS Safeguarding & Welfare Officer”	means the individual responsible for promoting safeguarding within the GBS environment. They ensure a safe and inclusive environment is achieved;
“GP”	means General Practitioner;
“IAPT”	means Improving Access to Psychological Therapies;
“Individual”	means anyone who is subject to the Policy;
“Line Manager”	means the person with managerial responsibility over any Individual subject to the Policy;
“Mental Health Problem/Issue”	means a pattern of behaviour, experiences, thoughts, and feelings that causes significant distress and/or impairment of daily functioning and/or difficulties in relationships with others. Such distress or impairments are more likely to be experienced over a period and are not easily alleviated by an individual’s typical coping strategies;
“NHS”	means National Health Service;
“Positive Mental Health”	means a state of wellbeing in which every individual (staff, athletes, and volunteers) realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of elite sport, can perform productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community;
“UKS”	means UK Sport;

“WCP”

means World Class Programme.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document contains the GB Snowsport (GBS) Mental Health Policy (the “Policy”). The Policy sets out GBS’ aims to address any mental health issues among GBS Staff, GBS Athletes, and GBS Volunteers. Addressing mental wellbeing can help to strengthen the positive factors of the GBS environment, reduce risk factors for poor mental health, and to improve the general health of everyone within the organisation.

Aims

- 1.2. To establish a consistent and practical approach where understanding, education, and positive mental health is promoted and fostered across GBS.
- 1.3. To create a system and an environment that demonstrates a “person first” culture to athlete development by nurturing healthy and resilient Individuals with the skills to be best prepared for the reality they choose.
- 1.4. To promote a system where all have the best opportunity to have positive mental health and to ensure there is appropriate support for anyone who experiences Mental Health Problems.

Scope

- 1.5. The Policy applies to all GBS Staff, GBS Athletes, and GBS Volunteers and failure to comply will lead to disciplinary action in line with the GBS Disciplinary Policy. If your conduct is unlawful or illegal you may be personally or criminally liable with respect to civil and/or criminal proceedings, claims, or actions.
- 1.6. The Policy does not put a minimum threshold on the severity of any Mental Health Problems/Issues and all Mental Health Problems/Issues will be given GBS’ attention.

2. Promoting Positivity

- 2.1. The promotion of positive mental health has significant benefits for the overall performance of GBS as well as GBS Staff, GBS Athletes, and GBS Volunteers and is therefore a Senior Leadership Team priority.
- 2.2. The Senior Leadership Team of GBS is responsible for directing on mental health, leading by example and overseeing the Policy and the initiatives required to achieve its aims.
- 2.3. We aim to:
 - 2.3.1. treat mental health seriously;
 - 2.3.2. identify any issues proactively and help to resolve them;
 - 2.3.3. support GBS Staff, GBS Athletes, and GBS Volunteers who face mental health problems;
 - 2.3.4. create a pleasant workplace and training environment; and to
 - 2.3.5. implement the positive mental health guidelines advised by UKS/EIS.

3. Ending the Stigma

- 3.1. GBS recognises that social attitudes towards mental health are evolving, however fears and myths may persist.
- 3.2. GBS makes it clear in its induction and employee training/education programmes that it takes the promotion of positive mental health seriously and offers non-judgemental support for those experiencing Mental Health Problems/Issues and mental ill-health.
- 3.3. Any abusive or discriminatory behaviour by any member of GBS Staff, GBS Athlete, or GBS Volunteer towards another will be considered a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with under the GBS Disciplinary Policy.

4. Providing Support

- 4.1. The GBS support processes are geared towards the earliest possible identification, assessment, and treatment of any mental health issue. The sooner the issue is identified, the less adverse impact it may have and the better the chances of effective treatment.
- 4.2. The best method of early identification of an issue is for the Individual to inform their Line Manager or the GBS Safeguarding & Welfare Officer if they are experiencing difficulties. GBS have designed referral pathways for all GBS Staff, GBS Athletes, and GBS Volunteers to best support access to support.
- 4.3. GBS Staff will be educated in Mental Health First Aid/Awareness via an education series, which has been developed specifically for our environment.
- 4.4. GBS Staff, non WCP GBS Athletes, and GBS Volunteers are encouraged to consult their GP, who in most cases are best placed to advise and manage mental health care. NHS mental health services (such as IAPT) are another first line of support if a GP consultation is not feasible.
- 4.5. WCP GBS athletes are encouraged to consult the GBS Chief Medical Officer, who can refer them to a specialist via the Athlete Medical Scheme.
- 4.6. Other care pathway options may also include, MIND, IAPTs, clinical psychology, psychiatry, CBT, and the Samaritans. Any of these options that are not provided for by the NHS would be at the Individual's own cost.
- 4.7. For serious psychological difficulties and clinical conditions, GBS encourages Individuals seek help from medical and non-medical mental health specialists and for urgent assistance to access the A&E department at their local hospital.
- 4.8. It is important that those internal to GBS who are providing assistance do not attempt to deal with problems that require expert assessment and management. However, there is still an important role to play in supporting the Individual with reasonable steps and adjustments to help recovery.

5. Assistance During a Crisis

- 5.1. If another member of GBS Staff, GBS Athlete, or GBS Volunteer is considered by their Line Manager or colleagues to be at serious risk of harming themselves, harming others, or harming the organisation, the matter should immediately be reported to the GBS Safeguarding & Welfare Officer.
- 5.2. If the safety of the Individual or those around them is compromised, emergency services should be contacted immediately.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1. A member of GBS Staff, GBS Athlete, or GBS Volunteer experiencing poor mental health can seek help, safe in the knowledge that the information they provide will be treated as confidential.
- 5.2. GBS recognises that at times secrecy can result in the isolation of an Individual and cause unnecessary strain on the situation. Therefore, GBS will always consult with the Individual about whether a general disclosure should be made to other colleagues, so that they can receive guidance on how to work or train alongside and how best to support that Individual.
- 5.3. GBS cannot extend absolute confidentiality to disclosure that identify breaches of criminal law or to a situation where an Individual may be at risk of either harming themselves or others.

6. Taking Time Off

- 6.1. If a member of GBS Staff, GBS Athlete, or GBS Volunteer requires time off in relation to a Mental Health Problem/Issue, GBS will consider what adjustments could be made, or support provided, to enable them to continue attending to their responsibilities constructively.
- 6.2. In certain circumstances, an occupational health referral may be necessary to ensure the GBS Employee gets the most appropriate help. All processes must be in line with the GBS Sickness Absence Management Policy.
- 6.3. While GBS will make all reasonable efforts to support an individual experiencing difficulties, the duty of care owed by GBS to GBS Employees will take priority where the behaviour of the Individual with the Mental Health Problem/Illness causes significant disturbance or distress to others.
- 6.4. GBS will try to resolve such problems through discussion with the Individual concerned including the impact of their behaviour on others. However, if these efforts are unsuccessful, GBS will consider what further assistance can be provided to help them manage their behaviour. This may include requiring the Individual to undergo an occupational health assessment to receive an independent physician's opinion to determine, in collaboration with the Individual, appropriate steps to take.

Contacts

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Safeguarding & Welfare Officer

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Mind

Confidential Telephone Help-Line

Monday-Friday, 9am - 6pm

0300 123 3393

Samaritans

Confidential Telephone Help-Line

24/7, every day of the year

116 123 (free from any phone)

Saneline

Out of Hours Confidential Telephone Help-Line

Every day of the year, 4.30pm - 10.30pm

0300 304 7000

Childline

Confidential Telephone Help-Line

24/7, every day of the year

0800 1111

In cases of emergency always dial 999.

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