

Section 2: The role of adult educators in promoting mental health awareness

Educators as mental health allies

Adult educators can oftentimes act as first points of contact for learners experiencing distress.

You are not expected to diagnose or treat – but you can notice changes, offer a listening ear and signpost to appropriate support.

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Responsibilities in mental health education

Responsibilities include:

- Creating a safe space for open dialogue.
- Respecting confidentiality.
- Modelling healthy behaviours.

Educators should also promote awareness activities and encourage peer support.

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Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations involve respecting privacy, setting clear boundaries, gaining informed consent when sharing personal experiences and using trauma-informed practices.

As an educator, reflective practice and practicing cultural sensitivity are key.

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Recognising early signs of mental health distress

As a front-line educator, you have direct access to migrant and refugee adults in your practice. Look out for the following signs that some may be in a state of distress.

Common signs include:

- Withdrawal.
- Lack of concentration.
- Changes in attendance.
- Irritability.
- Visible anxiety.

Remember to always approach learners sensitively and without judgement.

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Collaborations and referrals

Educators are encouraged to build relationships with local support services.

- Know who to contact when a learner needs additional help – from counselling to housing support.

A warm handover is often more effective than simply giving a number.