

Managing and Collaborating with a Care Team

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What do people mean by a mental health team?

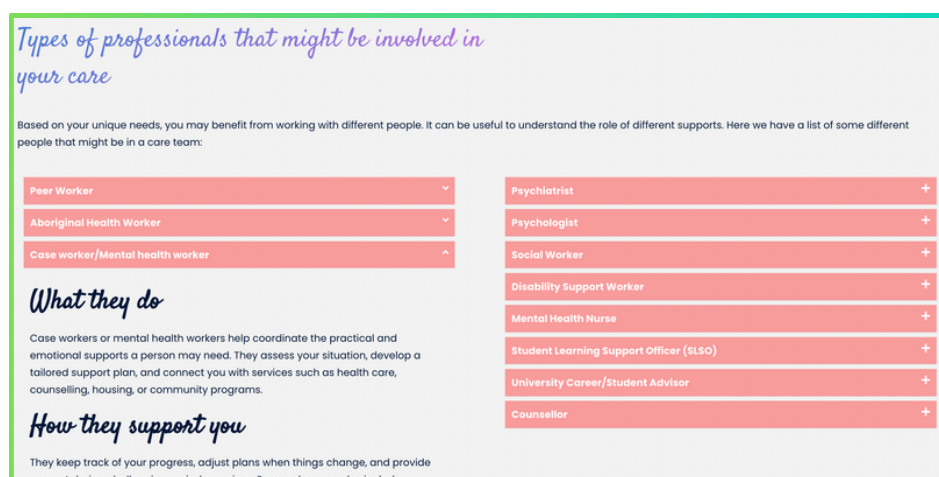
You may have heard of people talking about having a mental health team, but what does this actually mean, what does this look like, and who is part of a mental health team?

A mental health team generally refers to a multidisciplinary team, which is a team of different professionals who work together to help support your mental health.

A mental health team may include professionals like a:

- Psychologist
- Psychiatrist
- General Practitioner
- Counsellor
- Social worker
- Peer worker
- Mental health nurse
- Education support officer

To find a broader list of different professionals who can support your mental health and what they do, check out the Multi-Dimensional Assessment page of the Minding Your Mind website.



Types of professionals that might be involved in your care

Based on your unique needs, you may benefit from working with different people. It can be useful to understand the role of different supports. Here we have a list of some different people that might be in a care team:

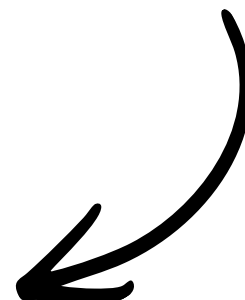
Peer Worker	Psychiatrist
Aboriginal Health Worker	Psychologist
Case worker/Mental health worker	Social Worker
	Disability Support Worker
	Mental Health Nurse
	Student Learning Support Officer (SLSO)
	University Career/Student Advisor
	Counsellor

What they do

Case workers or mental health workers help coordinate the practical and emotional supports a person may need. They assess your situation, develop a tailored support plan, and connect you with services such as health care, counselling, housing, or community programs.

How they support you

They keep track of your progress, adjust plans when things change, and provide support during challenging periods or crises. Some roles may also include



Where does a mental health care team come from? If I am wanting more support, how can I get one?

For some people a mental health team can be a more formal arrangement. This could look like your school coordinating a student support officer, school counsellor and social worker, or a clinician, work and study specialist and peer support worker working together at a headspace service. When these professionals work as part of the same organisation, they tend to be formed around what types of support they think may be helpful for you and what types of support you've expressed you may like. Sometimes, with your consent, these teams may also communicate with each other, such as your school counsellor calling your clinician at headspace.

Some people do not receive mental health support from one particular organisation and instead have several different professionals who they go between and take part in coordinating. This can look like going to a GP who then refers you to see a psychologist. The psychologist and GP will likely discuss your care, but you may also find yourself relaying additional information between them.

I have previously been supported by more formally arranged mental health teams but currently receive support from a GP, psychologist, psychiatrist and peer workers who are not part of a formally organised multidisciplinary team. This means that whilst they communicate with each other, I often have to relay information between them and update them separately about things relevant to my care. This also means that my supports need to ask for my consent to be able to share information about myself between them.



Ways to keep track of a care team

In order to make shared decisions, where your voice is heard alongside the expertise of different professionals, it is important to be able to communicate the right information to the right people and ensure that they are communicating the correct information with each other. Keeping track of who in your care team knows what information can be difficult. At times I feel like my own case manager, relaying information back and forth between different professionals.

Some tricks that I have found helpful for managing and collaborating with a care team have been:

- Making a list of all the things I want to speak about before any meetings or appointments
- Put different appointments into my calendar and try my best to line up these appointments in the order they need to go in (eg. If I need a progress letter from my GP to see my psychologist, I need to book the GP appointment before the psychologist appointment, even if the psychologist appointment has already been booked in advance)
- Letting a member of my care team know when they need to speak with another member to coordinate care
- Actually knowing what's been happening on my end! Although it seems obvious, after three months of not having an appointment, it is easy to forget important things that have happened. Tracking apps such as our [Minding Your Mind app](#) can help make this easier by giving you a snapshot of your mood, sleep and social connections over a period of time

I hope that this has been helpful with understanding what a care team is and how to coordinate one!

-Tara