SOME RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE 
WITH PRE-EXISTING MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS 
AND FOR THOSE IN THE NEURODIVERGENT COMMUNITY 
DURING THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC

These resources have been put together by members of the University Staff Disability Advisory Group, on the basis of our own experiences and those of others in our networks, as a resource that may be helpful to others.

Who these resources are for
These resources are for people with mental ill health; and for those in the neurodivergent community, including autism, ADD, dyslexia and dyspraxia, and other neurodivergent conditions. Everyone in the country is affected by the stress of the current situation, but online mental health advice does not always distinguish between the problems of neurotypical people with generally good mental health and others.

Whenever possible, we have put links to authoritative sites that are regularly updated. Where this has not been possible, we will do our best to continue updating this document.

If you have mental ill health

Government Advice

MIND advice
Useful advice, though some of it does blur the line between those with pre-existing mental health conditions and those without
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/

OCD UK, the national OCD charity
Advice on ‘wash your hands often’ and several other things:

Anxiety UK
Some useful resources
https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/

Beating Eating Disorders UK
Some useful advice and FAQs
https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/coronavirus
If you are neurodivergent

National Autistic Society advice
Advice on several aspects of coronavirus for autistic people;

Coping with the uncertainty of COVID-19
From Autistica at Newcastle University, a useful guide
https://www.autistica.org.uk/what-is-autism/coping-with-uncertainty

Business Disability Forum
This is a site for employers, but it has some useful definitions of some of the terms in Government guidance.

Impacts of COVID-19 for autistic employees
Another site for employers that you may find useful

Detail in Government guidance
You may wonder about the detail of some Government guidance. These are a few of the terms that we have found problematic.

- Guidance mentions ‘a high temperature’. But what is ‘high’? Guidance to GPs is that any temperature of 37.8° or higher is ‘high’.
- One symptom is given as a new and ‘continuous’ cough. This doesn’t mean that you never stop coughing. This means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or having three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours [1]. We will keep trying to find solid advice, but for the moment if you cough ten or more minutes total in an hour, that is probably ‘continuous’. If you are concerned, you can record how many times each hour you cough, so that you are ready to report to medical staff.
- Guidance is to ‘Wash your hands more often than usual’. How often is that? This BBC Science Focus article [2] recounts a citizen science experiment showing that washing hands 5-10 times a day made a substantial difference to transmission of viruses. The Government does indicate that you should wash your hands
  - After using the toilet
  - After changing a nappy
  - Before eating or handling food
  - After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing
  - When you return home after being out
  - Before and after treating a cut or wound