

Mental Health

In Switzerland mental and physical illness is treated equally. Basic health insurance covers treatment by mental health practitioners or in mental health clinics.

Support and Consultation

Many healthcare practitioners in Switzerland specialize and help in difficult personal or family situations. Basic health insurance (Grundversicherung) covers the treatment of mental illness by officially recognized practitioners, such as psychiatrists. Stays in clinics are covered as well. Persons experiencing difficulties may also benefit from free services while remaining anonymous. For example, Extended Hand (Dargebotene Hand) via telephone, e-mail, or chat (telephone 143, www.143.ch). A family doctor can also offer further help. If a person is in acute danger of hurting himself or others immediate action is necessary. The police (telephone 117) are helpful in such emergencies.

Children and Young People

A good first step for young people experiencing mental difficulties is to contact the youth counselling services (Jugendpsychologischer Dienst). Parents who are concerned about their children may also contact the service. Free and anonymous support is offered to children and young people through the children's hot line (Kindernotruf) via telephone, e-mail, or chat (telephone 147, www.147.ch). In case of a mental health emergency contact the central ambulatory care clinic for children and young people (ZAKJ) which is available 24 hours a day (telephone 056 462 21 20).

Addiction

Help in cases of addiction is offered through addiction counselling services (Suchtberatung ags) and the addiction counselling centre in District Baden (Beratungszentrum Bezirk Baden). These offices offer free and confidential consultation and support. Those concerned about family members or friends may also contact these offices. Services are offered in several languages. Addictions come in more forms than alcoholism or drug addiction. Help is also offered for other addictions such as gambling, shopping, the internet, or eating disorders. Questions may also be asked via e-mail.

Trauma

Persons who have had difficult experiences which they have not had the chance to process should ask for help. Trauma is a serious mental illness. In addition to consultation and support services for mental difficulties and illness there are services specializing in victims of war and torture.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

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