

BMJ Careers Chronic illness matching scheme: Provides the opportunity for doctors who have a chronic illness or disability to receive informal careers advice from another doctor. www.bma.org.uk

Samaritans: Tel: 08457 90 90 90

Fourth Step

Perhaps as part of your worries, or maybe because of them, you may start to have financial concerns. Any doctor who has ever practiced as a GP in Somerset is eligible for help from the **Somerset Local Medical Benevolent Fund**. You do not need to have serious financial problems to be eligible, so contact one of the trustees or the Secretary via the LMC office for advice sooner rather than later .

Other sources of help include:

BMA Charities: Including the Cameron Fund. Tel: 0207 383 6142

Royal Medical Benevolent Fund: Helps GMC registered doctors and their dependents in need.
Tel: 020 8540 9194

The Royal Medical Foundation: Helps medical practitioners and or their families who find themselves in financial hardship - in particular through educational awards for their children. Tel:01372 821011
www.royalmedicalfoundation.org

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVISION FOR GPs IN SOMERSET

GP referrals to Occupational Health will follow a simple process. The New Work and Wellbeing Service (WWB) is not commissioned to provide direct access to the OH Physician or guaranteed out of area treatment provisions.

Referring Doctor / Somerset Clinician Support Service Advocate contact Service Manager WWB by phone. The WWB Service Manager acts as gatekeeper for all GP referrals to the service.



The WWB Service Manager and referring GP agrees the management plan. This may include referral onto the Consultant Psychologist from the Right Steps to Emotional Health and Wellbeing service, confidential case management by a WWB practitioner or referral on to the Occupational Health Physician or other Specialist.



Referral to an identified out-of-area Specialist will only be made when all other support mechanisms have been exhausted.



Appropriate referral paperwork is completed and submitted by the Doctor being referred (patient) and referring GP / Advocate.



The WWB Service Manager continues to monitor the case where required, to ensure appropriate interventions are offered in a timely manner and will liaise with the referring Doctor / Advocate regarding any recovery or return to work issues, etc.

**SOMEONE
YOU KNOW
MAY NEED
THIS LEAFLET**



**Sources of Help
For General
Practitioners
September 2011**

SOMERSET LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

Phone: 01823 331428

Mobile: 07824 545315

Fax: 01823 338561

E-mail: lmcoffice@somersetlmc.nhs.uk

Someone you know needs this leaflet

Most GPs are well adapted to managing their stressful jobs – or so we think. But the reality is that too many of us avoid dealing with the problems that our working lives generate. We cope by working 12 hour days, or drinking just a bit more than we should, not getting round to taking any exercise, or perhaps not giving our families the attention they need. Then one day you see a patient with an apparently minor illness in evening surgery. On your desk next morning is a fax from the Out of Hours Service : “Collapsed and died at home – coroner informed.” And suddenly the world caves in around you. Sometimes it is less dramatic. Just a slow but inexorable slide in performance. Too irritable to care, and too tired to bother. And eventually your partners notice and settle into an anxious huddle until one is delegated to come and talk to you.

What next?

Despite the way you are thinking there are a lot of people who care, and a lot of people who will help. This is not something you should deal with on your own .

Initial Step

SOMERSET SAFE HOUSE is a confidential on-line resource specifically designed to give relevant information about this kind of scenario. You can use the website to find out about: Occupational Health; burnout; Partnership problems; coping with patient demands; timekeeping and much more. In one section, it also gives full details of SuCceSS GP Advocates and offers the possibility of contacting on of them on-line, anonymously. All Somerset GPs have been sent a personal password. If yours has been lost, please apply to the LMC Secretariat to retrieve it (01823 331428 or email Jill.Hellens@somersetlmc.nhs.uk).

www.somersetshouse.co.uk

Next Steps

Call the LMC Secretary, Dr Harry Yoxall on 01823 331428 (office hours), 07796 267510 (anytime), 01823 421396 (out of hours). Your LMC subscription pays him to be there when needed.

Talk to your partners, practice manager, or other colleagues. Listen to their advice about whether you should be at work. You have an obligation to them, to your patients, and to yourself not to stay at work if either it is making you ill, or your performance is not up to required standards. If you are struggling because of work or home pressure then be open about it. Think about putting something in writing, especially if you have some thoughts about what would help you. Doctors are often surprised by the support their colleagues can and will give.

Talk to your own GP. If you are worried about confidentiality then discuss this with him or her at the start of your consultation. The LMC has a list of GPs who have experience and skill at caring for professional colleagues and we can arrange for you to register with one of these, away from your home area if necessary.

Contact Occupational Health. Somerset has an outstanding OHS for GPs and primary care staff. (see flow chart on the next page).

Further help and advice

Do you want to find further help and advice yourself? One of these may be able to help:

The Royal Medical Benevolent Fund has a very useful general site with links to many other organisations www.support4doctors.org

BMA Counselling Service: 24-hour support with immediate access to trained counsellors. Tel: 08459 200169

Doctors for Doctors- BMA: Doctors facing difficulties due to addiction and/or mental and physical health problems. Personal telephone and/or face-to-face discussion of problems.

Tel: 08459 200 169

www.bma.org.uk

Doctors Support Network: Volunteers cover the helpline 6 days per week, opening times given on the website/ answer phone as evenings only. Contact with and support from other doctors can help recovery and help those who are beginning the slow process of re-establishing themselves after a breakdown or other mental crisis. Tel: 0844 395 3010

www.dsn.org.uk

The Sick Doctors Trust: is a wholly independent and confidential organisation, established in 1996, which offers support and help to doctors and medical students suffering any degree of dependence on drugs or alcohol. Their helpline is available 24 hours/day throughout the year and they are happy to deal with anonymous enquiries.

Tel: 0370 444 5163

www.sick-doctors-trust.co.uk

The British Doctors and Dentists Group: is a mutual support society for doctors and dentists who are recovering, or wish to recover, from addiction to or dependency on alcohol or other drugs . Tel: 020 7487 4445