

# Important messages from your Safeguarding team

## Eating Disorders

The term eating disorder is used to describe any of a range of psychological disorders characterized by abnormal or disturbed eating habits. This can involve eating too little (Anorexia Nervosa), too much (Binge Eating Disorder), and eating, but then purposely vomiting or abusing laxatives (Bulimia).

It is estimated that around 1.25 million people in the UK have an eating disorder; those living with such a disorder could be facing an exceedingly difficult time during the current Coronavirus outbreak. Routines surrounding meals and exercise often play a key role in eating disorders and the current restrictions may have made it more difficult to stick to these routines. In addition, for those in recovery from an eating disorder they might find that medical appointments have been disrupted. These factors among many more, combined with the lack of social interaction, means that those living with an eating disorder are facing an extremely challenging time.

## What should you do if you think someone is struggling?

If you are concerned that someone has an eating disorder there are things you can do to support them:

**Let them know you are there**, that you're listening and that you can help them find support. Let the person know they can talk to you when they are ready.

**Try not to get angry with them.** They will probably already be feeling guilty about how their behaviour is affecting you. Try to stay as empathetic and patient as possible.

**Don't make assumptions.** People sometimes assume that eating problems are mainly about body image, or that you can tell what eating problems someone has from their appearance. But this not true. And if you interpret someone's eating problems in a particular way – without really listening to the person themselves – it could add to their feelings of helplessness. It could also make them less able to share their difficult emotions and seek support.

Useful links:

[BEAT Eating Disorders](#) [NHS- Eating Disorders](#) [Mind-Eating Problems](#)

Email us at [safeguarding@gloscol.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@gloscol.ac.uk) (Monday to Friday, 08:30-17:00)