

# Loneliness and Social Isolation Resources guide



## Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation

Creating connections to tackle loneliness and social isolation



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## Introduction

Studies have shown that 25 million people feel occasionally, sometimes, or often feel lonely in England, equating to 45% of the adult population [1]. Research has linked social isolation and loneliness to higher risks of a variety of physical and mental conditions including high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease and even death. Loneliness can have a massive impact on people's health, and you are more likely to experience poor health and limited prospects if you are lonely [2]. A review of published research identified that loneliness was significantly associated with later suicidal thoughts and behaviours with evidence to suggest that this may be particularly pronounced in young adults and females [3].

The fear of being lonely often motivates individuals to seek out social connections but for some people, their personal circumstances such as physical isolation, moving to a new location, grief, or ageing can lead to feelings of loneliness, separation from others and remoteness from the social world. These feelings can often be attributed to internal factors such as low self-esteem and are particularly challenging for people experiencing mental illness and for those with learning disabilities or long term health conditions.

Supporting people to be involved in things that are important and meaningful to them leads to improved mental and physical health. This especially matters for vulnerable people in society – children and young people; perinatal mothers and fathers, people with learning disabilities, unpaid carers, older people, and others who may be living alone or restricted in socialising for reasons including retirement, caring responsibilities, limited mobility, or ill health.

## Role of education

The aim of this guide is to provide learners with a comprehensive list of available resources that can be used to support loneliness and social isolation upskilling, training, and development. This resource document is to support the current Loneliness and Social Isolation training that can be found on the elearning for healthcare (elfh) website\*.

Looking after those who are vulnerable and most at risk of being lonely in our society is how we measure our success in a truly social world. Pressure on the NHS is increasing and the demand on nurses and medical staff is growing to deliver care. Loneliness is not a diagnosable illness, but feelings of isolation can be detrimental to mental health. Human beings are essentially social and want to connect with others so feeling alone can significantly affect some people's wellbeing and quality of life.

A digital version of this guide will be made available on elearning for healthcare (elfh) and any comments and feedback can be sent to [enquiries@e-lfh.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@e-lfh.org.uk)

## How to use this guide

This guide is organised into different categories of information to help you navigate to the correct resources for what you require. There is a variety of different links which can take you

to a policy, training resources, useful contact information or articles/blogs that may be helpful to you.

These resources can be useful for any role that is looking to increase their knowledge regarding loneliness and social isolation but can also signpost to useful contacts and support mechanisms that you may be able to offer in your working or personal life.

This information should help to inform your decisions when dealing with loneliness or social isolation and help recognise the signs and symptoms of this.

## Loneliness and social isolation resources

Elearning for healthcare resources	
Link	Description
<a href="#">*Tackling loneliness and social isolation elfh training</a>	A training session that has been developed for health and social care workforces addressing loneliness and social isolation.
<a href="#">Tackling loneliness and social isolation webinar recording</a>	A webinar featuring an expert panel discussing loneliness and its adverse impact on healthcare.
<a href="#">MindEd Suicide and Self-harm prevention training</a>	A training session designed to support knowledge and understanding of how to prevent suicide and self-harming in others.
<a href="#">Wellbeing and Mental Health resources</a>	Sessions of bite-sized elearning to provide health and care professionals an overview of topics including key evidence, data and signposts to trusted resources to help prevent illness, protect health and promote wellbeing.

Policy resources	
Link	Description
<a href="#">HM Government - A Strategy for Tackling Loneliness - Strategy</a>	The UK governments loneliness strategy published in October 2018 that outlines the social change the government are delivering.
<a href="#">HM Government - Government's work on tackling loneliness</a>	The UK governments objectives set out in the 2018 loneliness strategy with recent updates and reports included.
<a href="#">House of Commons Library: Tackling Loneliness</a>	The House of Commons library tackling loneliness briefing paper published in June 2021.

<a href="#">World Health Organisation (WHO): Social isolation and loneliness</a>	Resources and publications by the World Health Organisation under their 'Demographic Change and Healthy Ageing' initiative.
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<b>Reports and resources from the third sector</b>	
<b>Link</b>	<b>Description</b>
<a href="#">Age UK - Loneliness research and resources</a>	Age UK's report that investigates what is driving loneliness and recommendations they have provided the government alongside resources created by Age UK.
<a href="#">Altura Learning</a>	A learning resource blog that details what factors are likely to cause these feelings and the consequences of loneliness and social isolation.
<a href="#">Be more Us - Resources</a>	Be more Us' 'HaveAChat' campaign provides methods of beginning conversations with others and how to help combat loneliness by checking in with those around you.
<a href="#">British Red Cross: Get Help with loneliness</a>	The British Red Cross' charity website with support methods and contacts for when you are experiencing loneliness and social isolation.
<a href="#">Campaign to end loneliness - Resources</a>	Campaign to end loneliness is a charity that assists people of all ages to connect and reduce the number of people feeling socially isolated or lonely. Their website includes useful information on the topic and support for those experiencing this.
<a href="#">Mental Health Foundation: Loneliness policy briefing</a>	The Mental Health Foundation's Loneliness policy briefing which includes the foundations policies and related news.
<a href="#">Mental Health Foundation: 15 things to do if you're feeling lonely</a>	Tips from the Mental Health Foundation to help if you are feeling lonely and how you can support yourself including signposting to other support methods like helplines and further resources.
<a href="#">Mind - Loneliness tips for everyday living - website</a>	A PDF that explains loneliness and the causes of this and how it can relate to mental health problems. The resource provides practical tips to help manage these feelings and other methods of support.

<a href="#">National Lottery Community Fund - Bringing people together: how community action can tackle loneliness and social isolation - online report</a>	The National Lottery's Community Fund's insights and examples from the community and voluntary sector regarding loneliness and social isolation and how they can provide support to those who require it.
<a href="#">Tackling Loneliness Hub</a>	An online community of professionals working to reduce loneliness in England by connecting with others working in this sector and share research, events and questions.

Other media	
Link	Description
<a href="#">Patient - Social Isolation: How to Help Patients be Less Lonely - online article</a>	An article designed for medical professionals to detail what social isolation is, how it can be treated and identified within a medical setting.
<a href="#">What Works Wellbeing: Loneliness resources and research</a>	A learning resource blog that details what loneliness and social isolation is and provides resources alongside infographics and a self-questionnaire to measure your loneliness.
<a href="#">Social Care Institute for Excellence: Prevention research and practice - service approaches and resources on social isolation and loneliness</a>	A series of studies posted on the Social Care Institute for Excellence's webpage regarding loneliness in the prevention records from their research.
<a href="#">Campaign to end loneliness - Podcast</a>	Multiple podcasts created by Campaign to end loneliness exploring loneliness with experts in this field and discussing different types of loneliness in detail.
<a href="#">Campaign Against Living Miserably</a>	The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) helpline that aims to tackle loneliness and provide support with celebrity ambassadors providing exposure.
<a href="#">High Speed Training - How to Help the Elderly Struggling with Loneliness and Social Isolation - online article</a>	An article from High Speed training that considers the impact of loneliness and how this is related to social isolation, particularly focusing on how this can affect older people.
<a href="#">Samaritans: Myths</a>	An article that challenges common myths about loneliness to help tackle the stigma that is often attached to it, including resources to tips if you're feeling lonely and how to recognise and provide support to others who are experiencing loneliness.

<a href="#">SupportLine</a>	<p>Supportline is a helpline particularly aimed at those who are isolated, at risk, vulnerable and victims of abuse. This article details what loneliness is and agencies that can provide help.</p>
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<b>Alternative elearning resources</b>	
<b>Link</b>	<b>Description</b>
<a href="#">Royal Society for Public Health</a>	<p>The Royal Society for Public Health's 2022 mental health Awareness week's article signposting to their LearnFree RSPH course available which explores loneliness and social isolation to provide awareness of the topic.</p>
<a href="#">Zero Suicide Alliance</a>	<p>Zero Suicide Alliance's introductory course which provides a brief introduction to social isolation aimed at anyone over 16 years of age.</p>
<a href="#">National Youth Partnership: Understanding loneliness</a>	<p>National Youth Partnership article that helps provide an understanding of loneliness in young people by including research and resources to signpost to useful information and data.</p>
<a href="#">National Youth Partnership: Resources</a>	<p>All of the National Youth Partnership resources from across their website in one place, this includes all loneliness and social isolation resources.</p>
<a href="#">NHS - Every Mind Matters Loneliness - Advice and support</a>	<p>Every Mind Matters webpage that details the advice and support that is available when dealing with social isolation and loneliness.</p>