

## Mental Health

It's well reported that physical activity can have a huge impact on wellbeing. Whether you're running targeted mental health sessions or running open sessions, it's important to be aware how mental health can affect any participant.

### THE BARRIERS

Below are some key barriers identified by Mind's Get Set to Go research:

- Low motivation
- Lack of confidence
- Psychological barriers
- Cost of attending
- Lack of time



### Breaking the Barriers

- Provide a phone and email contact so that participants can contact someone before the session to discuss what will be involved and ask for any support
- Ensure newcomers receive a positive greeting on arrival and are not left hovering at the door – adopting a buddy system might help newcomers settle in
- As with any condition, make sure you provide an opportunity in advance of the session for someone to tell you they have a mental health condition

- Speak to participants about what support they might need if they feel unwell during the session, and have set procedures in place
- Although you don't need to have extensive knowledge of mental health to run sessions, you should be supportive of people's needs and be happy to talk openly about mental health if needed

**“ Sport in Mind's table tennis sessions have played a key role in my recovery. I've had severe depression for 6 years... but playing table tennis has provided me with that positive focus and motivation to go out – it really has saved my life**

*- Sport in Mind table tennis participant*

Please note this is just a guide and not an exhaustive list of barriers or ways to overcome barriers individuals may face. It's most important that you speak to your participants to see how you can support their individual needs. For additional support, please contact [diversity@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:diversity@tabletennisengland.co.uk)

### INSIGHT

Mind's [Get Set to Go Programme Evaluation Summary](#) states that 70% of people with a mental health problem say their mental health prevents them from taking part in sports.

