

Physical Health Screening – Information for Consumers

Background information

Looking after your physical health is important and can be difficult. People with a mental illness often find looking after their physical health particularly hard. This can be a result of several factors including the symptoms of the illness, side effects from medication and the fact that sometimes your physical health can get overlooked when the focus is on your mental health.

Looking after your physical health, as well as your mental health, can assist your overall sense of wellbeing and may result in you having fewer health problems in the future. Lifestyle changes that combine exercise, dietary advice and health promotion are an important part of the recovery process and show promise in helping people with a mental illness to lose weight and reduce risk factors associated with heart disease.

What is health screening?

Health screening is a way of asking you how you feel about your physical health and wellbeing. It can assist you in identifying potential health problems early and allow you to have more control of your health. This is done through asking you some questions to help you think about your physical health and wellbeing. If there is something that you and your worker decide needs attention then a referral can be made to your doctor, a local community health service or other service for further assessment and advice.

What happens with this information?

The information will help us to identify other health needs you may have. A copy of your health screen will be stored in your file and a copy will also be provided to you to take home. A referral to another service will only be made with your consent. If you wish for your health screen to be sent to assist another service with your care this can be done with your consent.

Can I refuse a health screen?

Yes, you can refuse to undertake a health screen. You can also request that it be completed at another time. If you are happy to undertake a health screen but do not feel comfortable answering particular questions just let your worker know.