

# It's R U OK? DAY

## every day at Eastern Health in 2020

R U OK? Day is a national day of action dedicated to remind everyone that any day is the day to ask, "Are you ok?" and support those who may be struggling with life. Taking part can be as simple as learning R U OK?'s four steps so you can have a conversation that could change a life. In 2020, we are making it RU OK? Day every day!



**1. Ask**



**2. Listen**



**3. Encourage action**



**4. Check in**

Got a niggling feeling that someone you know or care about isn't behaving as they normally would? Perhaps they seem out of sorts? More agitated or withdrawn? Or they're just not themselves. **Trust that gut instinct and act on it.** By starting a conversation and commenting on the changes you've noticed, you could help that family member, friend or workmate open up. If they say they are not OK, you can follow our conversation steps to show them they're supported and help them find strategies to better manage the load. If they are OK, that person will know you're someone who cares enough to ask.

### THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU GET READY TO ASK THE QUESTION; R U OK?

Before you can look out for others, you need to look out for yourself. And that's ok. To help you decide whether you're ready to start a meaningful conversation, ask yourself:



#### AM I READY?

- Am I in a good headspace?
- Am I willing to genuinely listen?
- Can I give as much time as may be needed?



#### AM I PREPARED?

- Do I understand that if I ask how someone's going, the answer could be: "No, I'm not?"
- Do I understand that I can't 'fix' someone's problems?
- Do I accept that they might not be ready to talk? Or they might not want to talk to me?



#### HAVE I PICKED MY MOMENT?

- Have I chosen somewhere relatively private and comfy?
- Have I figured out a time that will be good for them to chat?
- Have I made sure I have enough time to chat properly?

### HOW TO ASK

1. Ask R U OK?	2. Listen without judgement	3. Encourage Action	4. Check In
<p>Be relaxed, friendly and concerned in your approach.</p> <p>Ask questions like "How are you going?" or "What's been happening?"</p> <p>Mention specific things that have made you concerned for them, like "You seem less chatty than usual. How are you going?"</p> <p>If they don't want to talk, don't criticise them. Tell them you're still concerned about changes in their behaviour and you care about them. Avoid a confrontation.</p> <p>You could say: "Please call me if you ever want to chat" or "Is there someone else you'd rather talk to?"</p>	<p>Take what they say seriously and don't interrupt or rush the conversation. Don't judge their experiences or reactions but acknowledge that things seem tough for them.</p> <p>If they need time to think, sit patiently with the silence.</p> <p>Encourage them to explain: "How are you feeling about that?" or "How long have you felt that way?"</p> <p>Show that you've listened by repeating back what you've heard (in your own words) and ask if you have understood them properly.</p>	<p>Ask: "What have you done in the past to manage similar situations?"</p> <p>Ask: "How would you like me to support you?"</p> <p>Ask: "What's something you can do for yourself right now? Something that's enjoyable or relaxing?"</p> <p>If they've been feeling really down for more than 2 weeks, encourage them to see a health professional.</p> <p>You could say, "It might be useful to link in with someone who can support you."</p> <p>Be positive about the role played by professionals in getting through tough times.</p>	<p>Pop a reminder in your diary to call them in a couple of weeks. If they're really struggling, follow up with them sooner.</p> <p>You could say: "I've been thinking of you and wanted to know how you've been going since we last chatted."</p> <p>Ask if they've found a better way to manage the situation. If they haven't done anything, don't judge them.</p> <p>They might just need someone to listen to them for the moment.</p> <p>Stay in touch and be there for them. Genuine care and concern can make a real difference.</p>

**NEED EXPERT HELP?** Some conversations are too big for family and friends to take on alone. If someone's been really low for more than 2 weeks - or is at risk - please contact a professional as soon as you can.