

The LMA recognises its members work in a demanding and highly pressurised industry. They often face very public criticism and long periods away from home and family. That's why the health and wellbeing of managers and coaches is integral to the LMA's Member Services programme.

“Football management can be very stressful, and members accept that they work in a volatile industry,” explains LMA Director Lindsay Gordon.

“Approximately one in every three managers in the English men's professional leagues is dismissed every season. This inevitably challenges the mental wellbeing of managers and coaches.”

The response

The 24-hour mental and emotional wellbeing support offered to members sits under the umbrella of the LMA Wellness programme.

LMA Wellness offers access to a full range of physical and mental health services. The services focus on preventing and treating a significant range of health issues, covering both members and their immediate dependents. Each service is designed with members' needs and experiences in mind.

Early in 2019, the LMA appointed its first in-house consultant psychiatrist – Dr Allan Johnston – to provide specific one-to-one confidential advice and support. The LMA is extending this service to give members access to more psychiatrists, psychologists and therapists.

“We have seen that a number of members are more comfortable speaking one-to-one to a professional, as opposed to calling an anonymous helpline,” says Lindsay.

“So it is important that we're in a position to offer a bespoke, personal service. This knowledge is driving our plans for the entire Wellness programme.”

The LMA has invested in a medical advisory committee, bringing together leading health professionals (including mental and emotional wellbeing specialists) to guide and shape the services.



Mental health master-classes

Mental health education is a key part of the programme provided under the LMA Institute of Leadership and High Performance.

The LMA runs a variety of master-classes and workshops on mental and emotional wellbeing, which are open to all managers and coaches in the game.

Every year, as part of the University of Liverpool-accredited LMA Diploma in Football Management, students attend a full-day master-class covering Mental Toughness and Resilience. It's a compulsory module for current and future managers.

Alongside this, the LMA's one-to-one personal and career development programme, providing bespoke development programmes for members, has health and mental wellbeing at the heart of its offer.

"Mental and emotional wellbeing is the foundation on which individuals build fulfilling, successful and rewarding careers," says Lindsay.

"Through the LMA's one-to-one programme, all members have access to a team of 100 consultants, advisors and mentors including a range of wellbeing and mental health guidance and advice."

Constantly evolving services

Lindsay adds that the Mental Health Charter has helped add focus to what the LMA provides, and set a standard for the industry.

“I think that the Charter centres people’s minds,” she says.

“It allows us to assess what we’re doing and what we can do more of. We can use it to spot gaps and improve what we offer.”

Future plans include creating a series of podcasts and short videos, delivered under the LMA Wellness brand and featuring LMA members, to explore mental and emotional health and wellbeing in more detail.

Mental wellbeing support is an ongoing commitment for the LMA, and the association continues to work closely with the game’s stakeholders to educate and promote resources to professionals and people at the grassroots.

For more information, visit...

www.leaguemanagers.com/member-services/mental-health

