

## Doctors in Distress

Doctors have much higher rates of mental illness, alcohol and drug misuse than the general population. As a profession we have one of the highest rates of suicide.

Doctors are very good at caring for and looking after others but often feel guilty about taking the time to care for themselves. Common themes and fears expressed by our members are:

“I’m letting everyone down”

“I’m just making it up, there’s nothing wrong with me – I’m just lazy”

“If I admit that I’m struggling or unwell it will affect my career”

“If I get help the doctor will have to inform the GMC”

### None of these are true!

There is a lot of stigma around ‘mental distress’ within the medical profession. As well as supporting doctors we aim to reduce this stigma and improve the services available to doctors in distress.

## DSN Contact Details

### Website

[www.dsn.org.uk](http://www.dsn.org.uk)

### General Enquiries

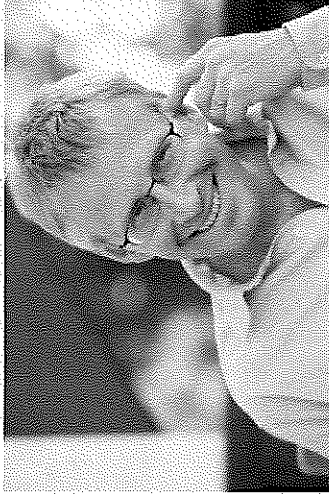
[info@dsn.org.uk](mailto:info@dsn.org.uk)

### Membership Enquiries

[membership@dsn.org.uk](mailto:membership@dsn.org.uk)



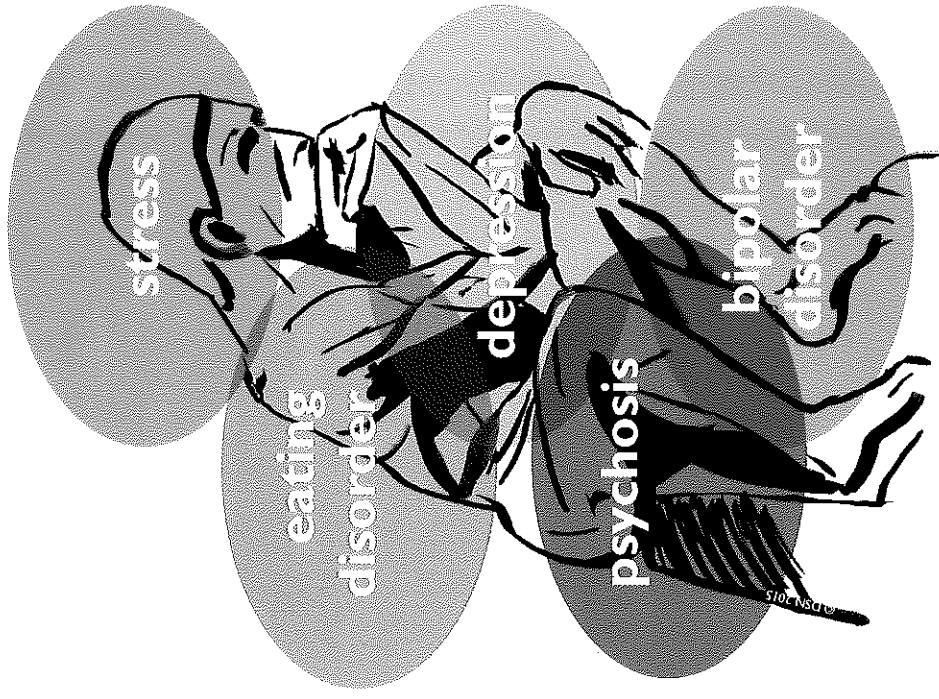
### Patron:



### Dr Phil Hammond

“I am proud to be a patron of the Doctors’ Support Network. Mental illness can happen to us all, and it is vital that doctors know where to get help and support.”

# DOCTORS’ SUPPORT NETWORK



[www.dsn.org.uk](http://www.dsn.org.uk)

Registered charity (England & Wales)

number 1103741

## Who are we?

The **Doctors' Support Network (DSN)** is a confidential peer support group for doctors suffering any degree of 'mental distress'.

Doctors in difficulty can feel extremely isolated. Contact with, and support from other doctors can be an essential part of recovery.

All DSN members have themselves been troubled at some stage in their lives. Many have made a good recovery and have returned to medicine. Some have pursued other options.

The term 'mental distress' covers a wide range of problems.

Examples include:

- stress,
- anxiety and depression,
- bipolar disorder,
- self harming behaviour,
- psychoses,
- eating disorders,
- personality disorder.

You **do not** need to be diagnosed or under the care of mental health services.

## What do we offer?

- Active 24 hour confidential online fora:
  - Support forum
  - Debate forum
- Face to Face support meetings
- Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Conference
- Medical students have their own group within DSN

## Who can join?

Anyone who is suffering or has suffered mental distress and :

- is based in the UK,
  - has qualified as a doctor, or is attending a UK medical school.
- You **do not** have to be working or working in medicine.

Joining is easy either online or by email — see the contact details on the back of this leaflet.

If you are not a doctor or have not suffered from mental distress but you support our aims, please consider supporting us by becoming an associate member. You will be welcome to attend the AGM and conference.

## What do our members say?

'Being in touch with other doctors who have suffered mental health problems. Being able to support each other, help to lift each other up and give and receive valuable advice from each other.'

'I've had invaluable support and advice over the years I've been a member.'

'Knowing that you are not alone'

'A feeling of belonging'

'It is so reassuring to know now that DSN exists as it makes me feel less alone with the problems of illness as a doctor.'

'Opportunity to talk/interact with other doctors who have gone through similar situations to myself'

'Peer support and understanding'

'Support at a time when I was very unwell with depression.'

