

Brain and Mind Statement 2024

As part of the preparation and implementation of the National Brain Health Programme, which began in 2023, the focus on the intersection of brain health and mental well-being has resurfaced. That is why the expert group has prepared a statement in accordance with the 2020 Brain and Mind Consensus Statement. We anticipate that the statement will enhance collaboration among those dedicated to advancing brain health and mental well-being.

The brain governs all human actions. It is responsible for mental functions such as emotions, information processing and behaviour. While the brain has a clear physical structure as a biological organ, the mind and its diverse functions are not as precisely defined. The mind, immersed in the brain, shapes itself through interactions with other people and the environment.

Mental health and brain health are intertwined. Brain health lays the foundation for mental health and vice versa. Both are essential components of functional capacity and overall well-being. Definitions of mental health and brain health share many similarities. They represent states of well-being and brain function that enable coping with challenges, realizing abilities, and living a full life.

Brain health and mental health can exist independently of any mental disorder or brain disease. Previously, both brain health and mental health were strongly associated with illnesses and were seen as separate entities. A more recent perspective on brain health emphasises well-being, while also acknowledging the influence of psychological and social factors alongside biological factors. A broader consideration of brain functions related to emotions and information processing bridges the gap between brain and mental health.

Everyday actions and choices have an impact on the health and well-being of both the mind and the brain. High-quality and sufficient sleep, relationships and social encounters, as well as balance between stress and recovery form the foundation pillars of brain and mental health. Things that contribute to a sense of meaningfulness, such as helping others, also strengthen well-being.

The significance of mental health and brain health in society continues to grow. Therefore, it is increasingly important to promote them. We succeed best when we recognize the new perspective emphasizing the connection between brain health and mental health. By combining resources in health and well-being promotion, we build a socially sustainable society.

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