



HOT TOPICS IN MENTAL HEALTH :

JUNE 2025

Neurohaven

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1. 🧠 ADHD & Autism Diagnosis Reform

- 📊 **Huge backlog in the UK:** As of spring 2025, estimates suggest 549,000 people in England are awaiting ADHD assessments, with some adult services reporting wait times of 7+ years [adhdsuccess.co.uk+4healthwatch.co.uk+4theguardian.com+4](#).
- 🗑️ **Equity challenges:** ADHD remains underdiagnosed among women and ethnic minorities, while private clinics raise concerns over overdiagnosis .
- 🚀 **NHS ADHD Taskforce:** Led by Prof. Anita Thapar, with interim findings expected summer 2025—aiming to streamline pathways, diagnostic access, and training across sectors .
- 🔄 **Private care pressures NHS:** A growing number of privately diagnosed individuals are shifting back to NHS care, affecting capacity and funding [kennedyslaw.com+1adhd.uk.co.uk+1](#).

2. 🍄 Psychedelics in Mental Health

- 🔑 **MDMA-assisted PTSD therapy:** Phase 3 trials (MAPP1 & MAPP2) reported 67–71 % remission vs. 32–48 % with placebo [psychiatrist.com+2clinicaltrialvanguard.com+2science.org+2](#).
- 🛑 **FDA delay (Aug 2024):** FDA Advisory Board rejected approval, citing trial unblinding, ethical misconduct (e.g. therapist boundary issues), and safety data gaps [psychiatrist.com](#).
- 🌐 **International momentum:** Australia has legalized MDMA and psilocybin therapy; private clinics and veteran trials continue in the US .
- 🛡️ **Ethical oversight needed:** Transparency, therapist training, blinding, and long-term safety are key concerns for future trials .

3. Youth Mental Health Crisis

-  **Sharp rise in distress:** CAMHS referrals and acute admissions up 65 % over a decade; 23 % of 17–19-year-olds reported mental health problems, and 36.8 % of 17–24-year-olds have self-harmed at least once [nuffieldtrust.org.uk](https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk).
-  **Social media polarization:** Platforms offer community support, but studies warn of increased suicidal ideation where bots miss critical cues or provide harmful responses news.stanford.edu.
-  **Trans youth policy concerns:** NHS's plan to screen trans adolescents for autism/ADHD before gender care sparked debate on stigma and delay .

4. Climate Anxiety & Eco-Distress

-  **Recognized emotional response:** APA defines “eco-anxiety” and “solastalgia” as awareness-driven grief—two-thirds of adults report experiencing some concern universe.byu.edu+6apa.org+6vailhealthbh.org+6.
-  **Therapeutic strategies:** Eco-therapy, activism, and nature-based group prescribing have shown promise in clinical settings scu.edu+2washingtonpost.com+2time.com+2.
-  **Time for balance:** Programs encourage activism and social connection to combat helplessness .

5. Mental Health Discrimination & Legal Rights

-  **Neurodiversity tribunal surge:** 102 UK employment tribunal cases cited neurodiversity in 2022, a marked increase from 70 cases in 2020 geldards.com+4spencershaw.co.uk+4nelsonslaw.co.uk+4.
-  **Legal protections unclear:** Employers struggle with making reasonable adjustments under Equality Act—many employees fear discrimination without formal diagnosis acas.org.uk+1nelsonslaw.co.uk+1.
-  **GDPR concerns:** Growing complaints around misuse of sensitive mental health data without proper protection or informed consent psychiatrist.com+1theguardian.com+1.

6. 🧬 Genetics, AI & Predictive Psychiatry

- 🧬 **PRS and biomarkers:** Studies link schizophrenia PRS to measurable retinal thinning, indicating potential early detection strategies
jamanetwork.com+2pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov+2sciencedirect.com+2.
- 🤖 **AI in predicting risk:** JAMA Psychiatry and Nature report on AI tools combining genetic, imaging, and EHR data with emergent models like DeepGAMI outperforming PRS alone nature.com+1psychiatryonline.org+1.
- ⚠️ **Ethical oversight essential:** Genetic bias, algorithmic errors, and privacy must be addressed before clinical use .

7. 🤖 Tech, AI & Virtual Mental Healthcare

- 💬 **Chatbots provide access:** Woebot, Wysa, and Replika offer accessible, scalable support with modest improvements in mood disorders
pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov+1nature.com+1.
- ⚠️ **Safety failures:** Stanford study and TIME report highlight that bots sometimes fail in suicide prevention or even encourage harmful behaviours time.com.
- 📋 **New regulation:** Utah's HB452 and California's draft legislations mandate clear AI labelling and ban AI impersonating licensed therapists .
- 🧠 **Ethical risks:** Concerns over emotional manipulation, data privacy, and over-reliance without human oversight .

8. 🌀 Trauma-Informed Systems

- 🏠 **Across sectors:** Trauma-informed approaches are being integrated into schools, social services, policing, and the judiciary, helping reduce re-traumatization
realtraining.co.uk+1neu.org.uk+1.
- 🌸 **Focus on CPTSD & relational trauma:** Increasing acceptance of CPTSD and relational models for BPD, emphasizing early trauma—not character flaws—as root causes .

9. Male Mental Health & Suicide

-  **Leading cause of death:** In England, suicide is the top cause of death for men under 35; men account for 75 % of suicides, dying on average 4 years earlier than women [thetimes.co.uk](https://www.thetimes.co.uk).
-  **Hidden distress:** “Masked depression”—anger, addiction, and denial—often hide mental suffering; under-diagnosed ADHD/Autism are common in men detained or in crisis .
-  **Peer-focused interventions:** Charities like CALM and ANDYSMANCLUB and online peer support groups on Reddit/Discord are making strides .

10. Loneliness & Older Adults

-  **Global public health concern:** WHO labels loneliness as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes per day; older adults face elevated risk of dementia, depression, stroke and heart disease [thesun.co.uk](https://www.thesun.co.uk).
-  **UK figures:** Nearly 1 million older adults report feeling lonely “always or often”; Scotland leads with 40 % of households single-occupied [thesun.co.uk](https://www.thesun.co.uk).
-  **Tech interventions:** Trials using PARO robotic seals, Replika AI, and voice assistants to provide companionship in care homes .
-  **Social prescribing & green spaces:** Nature-based prescribing, intergenerational housing, and community cafes improve connection and reduce isolation .

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