# January 2020

**Supporting good mental health**

The end of one year and the beginning of a new one can sometimes bring with it reflection. We may reassess our life goals and have hopes for the future.

But no year is without its challenges. Unexpected life changes and personal loss – even world news and global tragedies – can cause upset and distress. There is no universal response to these challenges. Each of us can experience the same event differently.

**Mental health support in place for you**

When the unexpected occurs, here’s a key question to ask yourself: how am I responding? Mental health self-care begins with self-reflection. Recognizing how you feel is the first step to accessing the supports, if needed, that can help.

Part of our commitment to you is ensuring you have access to the right support at the right time. Here are some resources to consider if you or your family members need support:

* **Employee assistance program:** Your employee and family assistance provider is available to provide confidential, expert support for your emotional wellbeing. The program can provide 24-hour support if you need help resolving mental or physical health issues.
* **Your benefits plan.** Your workplace benefits are available to help support your well-being. Check your plan for eligible services and supplies related to your mental health. Log on to the **my Sun Life mobile app** and **mysunlife.ca** to learn more about your health and wellness benefits and what’s available to you.
* **Lumino Health:** Sun Life’s free, online health network has a section dedicated to mental health. This includes articles and videos as well as information on new mental health-related apps and other products and services you might find helpful. Learn more at [luminohealth.ca/mentalhealth](http://www.luminohealth.ca/mentalhealth).

There may also be other free or low-cost resources available to you. Here are three that could help if you (or a family member) are dealing with a mental health concern.

1. **Local non-profit organizations:**Look into local non-profit organizations to see if any can help. Some non-profit counselling service agencies will offer 3 to 5 sessions for free or at a sliding scale fee.
2. **Government programs:**Your doctor or other health professional may be able to direct you to other mental health programs or services that your provincial or federal government funds. If your need is urgent, one place to start is the federal government’s link to crisis helplines across Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/mental-health-services/mental-health-get-help.html#Crisis_help_links>
3. **Online e-therapy:** Many mental health clinics, programs and hotlines provide e-services or phone services. For example, trained crisis volunteers at [Kids Help Phone](https://kidshelpphone.ca/) offer mental health support through a free bilingual texting service. Online mental health platforms like [Inkblot](https://luminohealth.sunlife.ca/s/asb-app/a001N00001MCrFAQA1/inkblot-mental-health-life-coaching?language=en_CA) deliver video counselling sessions with licensed therapists or counsellors at a reduced rate.

**Take care of your mental health**

Small mental health issues can become bigger ones if problems remain unresolved. If you’re struggling with mental health in any way, we encourage you to make use of the supports available to you.