Consider your image selection when communicating about mental ill-health

Using diverse images, seeking permission before using images of a person with lived experience, and using images that are hopeful and encourage help-seeking is recommended.

Preferred	Problematic
✓ Images that empower the person receiving or seeking support	✗ Repeated use of images that present someone with mental illness as a victim, as powerless or as needing saving as this can reinforce stereotypes of power imbalances
✓ Images that reflect hope, help-seeking and trust of professionals	✗ Images of treatment that deliberately sensationalise or scare viewers (e.g. 'horror movie' techniques) can discourage people from seeking help
✓ Images that reflect the diversity and differing experiences of people living with a mental illness	✗ Images of people dressed in provocative or submissive ways that sexualise individuals can reinforce negative stereotypes of people experiencing mental ill-health
✓ Balanced use of images that show hope, connection and support	✗ Only using images that demonstrate struggles (e.g. people clutching their heads or in the foetal position) can reinforce stereotypes and stigma around mental ill-health