

Travel by persons with mental health conditions

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Mental health conditions

These include:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Agoraphobia
- Schizophrenia

Their effects include:

- Lack of self-confidence
- Difficulty making decisions
- Panic attacks

Why look at mental health?

According to the Health Survey of England 2014:

- 26% of all adults in England have been diagnosed with one or more mental illnesses;
- A further 18% say they have experienced a mental illness without being diagnosed.

The survey

- On-line survey with link distributed by 18 organisations plus 3 individuals
- 42 questions covering the characteristics of the respondents, bus travel, rail travel, walking, cycling and driving and the effects of having a mental health condition on travel
- Survey carried out in May, June and July 2018
- 385 useable responses received

The mental health of the respondents

Mental health condition	% of respondents with this condition
Anxiety	90
Depression	68
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)	22
Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)	18
Agoraphobia	14
Bipolar disorder	8
Other	22

Number of respondents: 385

Average number of conditions per respondent: 2.6

	% of respondents
What other people think about me	69%
Feeling out of control	67%
Having to mix with strangers	67%
Feeling claustrophobic and unable to escape	58%
How other people behave	52%
Feeling disorientated	48%
Failure of the bus, train or car	47%
Having to talk to staff such as bus drivers	46%
Finding suitable toilet facilities	40%
Getting lost	39%
Having to take decisions about where to go	37%
Not being able to obtain help	35%
Remembering where I am going to	20%
Using ticket machines	18%
Handling money	14%
Something else	14%
Number of respondents	381

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Interacting with other people

- *'I was in a station and the noise and crowds made me feel very anxious and disoriented - I felt like I was trapped and couldn't see away out - I ended up crouching on the floor and crying'. [Male aged 41-50].*

And:

- *Train became severely overcrowded at Clapham Junction. Caused a massive panic attack. I was crying, sweating, shaking etc. Someone kindly offered me a seat when my legs buckled. Someone else gave me a bottle of water'. [Female aged 41-50].*

Dealing with strangers

- Strangers can be helpful:
'I've had panic attacks when travelling which leave me exhausted, embarrassed and confused. I've needed to rely on the help of strangers to help me and get me home'. [Female aged 31-40].
- However, they can also take advantage of a fellow traveller:
'I have offered people money to give up their seat for me. Last time it cost me £30'. [Female aged 41-50].

How often having a mental health condition prevents people from going out

	% of respondents
Frequently	35
Occasionally	33
Rarely	25
Never	8
Total	100

Number of respondents = 384

% of respondents prevented from buying rail tickets in advance because of their mental health condition

Yes	No	I do not travel by train
54	32	14

Number of respondents: 379

Euston to Manchester Piccadilly [Choose another journey](#)

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Source: Virgin Trains email sent 2 November 2017