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Refer Yourself for NHS Talking Therapy (Counselling)

Counselling (talking therapies)

Talking therapies can be very helpful if you are experiencing stress, low mood, depression or anxiety. Around one in five people suffer from anxiety or depression every year, and talking therapies provide people with support and treatment to overcome these difficulties.

Depending on your problem and where you live in the UK, you may be able to access:

- Consultation and advice.
- Courses, workshops and groups.
- Guided self-help.
- Individual counselling and psychological therapy.

What to expect

You can find out all about what to expect from talking therapy, how it works and how it might help you, from our leaflet called [Cognitive Behavioural Therapy \(CBT\)](#).

If you refer yourself for counselling, the next step will depend on where you live. You will often have an assessment with a counsellor first. This may be in person or over the phone. The counsellor will find out more about you and can advise you on which form of help would suit you best.

If you think you are depressed, it would be very helpful if you filled in a questionnaire before you speak to the counsellor. This questionnaire, called the PHQ9, will give your therapist a better idea of what your problems are and what help you need. We suggest you complete the questionnaire which [you can find here](#) and keep a copy for your appointment.

Find out more

You can find lots of information about [depression](#), [anxiety](#), [stress](#) and other mental health disorders from our leaflets. You can also find advice on some ways of managing stress, [loneliness](#) and low mood, such as [mindfulness](#).

The self-referral services on this page are not crisis services. If you need urgent help, you should contact your GP, go to your local A&E department or contact the Emergency Services by dialling 999.

If you are having thoughts of self-harm, you can find out more about help which is available and how you can help deal with these thoughts [from our information leaflet called Suicidal Thoughts](#).

How do I refer myself?

You can refer yourself to your local talking therapy service using the links below if you know which city or Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) your GP practice is in.

If you are not sure which CCG your GP practice is in, you can find out by [entering your practice's postcode in this tool](#).

Please be aware that self-referral is not available in every part of the UK. Please [search the NHS website](#) or contact your GP if you cannot find your area below, or if any of the links are not working.

Local talking therapy services in England

[Ashford Kent](#)

[Basildon and Brentwood Essex](#)

[Barking and Dagenham Essex](#)

[Barnet London](#)

[Barnsley Yorkshire](#)

[Bath Avon](#)

[Bedfordshire](#)

[Berkshire](#)

[Bexley London](#)

[Birmingham](#)

[Blackburn with Darwen](#)

[Blackpool](#)

[Bolton](#)

[Brent London](#)

[Bristol Avon](#)

[Bromley London](#)

[Buckinghamshire](#)

[Calderdale West Yorkshire](#)

[Cambridgeshire and Peterborough](#)

[Camden and Islington London](#)

[Central London \(Westminster\)](#)

[Chorley and South Ribble Lancashire](#)

[Cornwall and Isles of Scilly](#)

[Coventry and Warwickshire](#)

[Crawley, Sussex](#)

[Croydon Surrey/London](#)

[Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley, Kent](#)

[Derbyshire](#)

[Devon](#)

[Dorset](#)

[Ealing London](#)

[East Kent](#)

[East Lancashire](#)

[East Surrey](#) or [details of all local counselling service providers](#)

[East Sussex](#)

[Enfield London](#)

[Fylde and Wyre Lancashire](#)

[Guildford and Waverley CCG Surrey](#)

[Gloucestershire](#) (or for services in South Gloucestershire see [Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire](#))

[Greater Preston Lancashire](#)

[Greenwich](#) London

[Hackney](#) London

[Hammersmith & Fulham](#) London

[Haringey](#) London

[Harrogate and Rural District](#) Yorkshire

[Harrow](#) London

[Havering](#) London

[Herefordshire](#)

[Hillingdon](#) London

[Horsham](#), Sussex

[Hounslow](#) London

[Isle of Wight](#)

[Kingston](#) London

[Kirklees](#) (including Huddersfield) West Yorkshire

[Lambeth](#) London

[Leeds](#) Yorkshire

[Leicester City](#) Leicestershire

[Leicestershire and Rutland](#)

[Lewisham](#) London

[London](#)

[Lincolnshire](#)

[Liverpool](#) Merseyside

[Manchester](#)

[Medway](#) Kent

[Merton](#) London

[Mid Essex](#)

[Mid Sussex](#)

[Milton Keynes](#) Buckinghamshire

[Morecambe Bay](#) Lancashire

[Newham](#) London

[Newcastle Tyne and Wear](#)

[North Cumbria](#)

[Northumberland](#)

[Nottingham City Nottinghamshire](#)

[Nottinghamshire](#)

[Norfolk and Waveney](#)

[North East Essex](#)

[North East Hants and Farnham](#) or [details of all local counselling service providers](#)

[North East Somerset](#)

[North Staffordshire](#)

[North Yorkshire](#)

[North West Surrey CCGs](#) or [details of all local counselling service providers](#)

[Oxfordshire](#)

[Portsmouth](#)

[Redbridge London](#)

[Redditch and Bromsgrove Worcestershire](#)

[Richmond Surrey](#)

[Richmondshire Yorkshire](#)

[Scarborough and Ryedale Yorkshire](#)

[Sheffield Yorkshire](#)

[Shropshire](#)

[Somerset](#) (or for services in North Somerset see [Bristol](#), [North Somerset](#) and [South Gloucestershire](#))

[South Cumbria](#)

[South Essex](#)

[Southampton Hampshire](#)

[Southwark London](#)

[South Worcestershire](#)

[St Helens Merseyside](#)

[Suffolk](#)

[Sunderland](#)

[Surrey Downs](#) or [details of all local counselling service providers](#)

[Surrey Heath](#) or [details of all local counselling service providers](#)

[Sutton Surrey](#)

[Swale Kent](#)

[Telford and Wrekin Shropshire](#)

[Thurrock Essex](#)

[Tower Hamlets](#) London

[Vale of York](#) Yorkshire

[Waltham Forest](#) London

[Wandsworth](#) London

[West Essex](#)

[West Lancashire](#)

[Westminster](#) London

[West Sussex](#)

[Wirral](#) Merseyside

[Wolverhampton](#) West Midlands

[Wyre Forest](#) Worcestershire

Mental health help in Scotland

Self-referral for talking therapy is not routinely available on the NHS in Scotland. However, there are [options available](#) for online self-help courses, support groups, befriending schemes and self help books.

The [Scottish Association for Mental Health](#) website has an email where you can enquire about local services, and details of several local services you can refer yourself to.

[Breathing Space](#) is a free telephone helpline offering help and support to anyone suffering from mental health problems. It is open from 6 pm-2 am Monday-Thursday and 6 pm Friday-6 am on Monday.

Mental health help in Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, there is no IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) service. This means that there is no NHS self-referral option for talking therapies in Northern Ireland. All referral is through your GP.

OCD UK gives a [useful summary of the pathway](#) to follow for seeking help. Although this relates to help for OCD, the process is similar for patients with depression and anxiety, who would access counselling through self-referral in England.

[Contact](#) is a charity with an independent counselling service, based in Belfast. It aims to provide crisis counselling to anyone living in Northern Ireland.

[The Counselling Directory](#) also provides a list of private accredited counsellors and therapists.

Mental health help in Isle of Man

[The Community Wellbeing Service](#) in the Isle of Man offers a variety of treatment options for people with mental health problems.

Mental health help in Jersey

[Jersey talking therapies](#) offers free services to over 18s living in Jersey. However, it is not a self-referral service. You need to ask your GP or another mental healthcare professional to refer you.

While every effort is made to keep these details up to date, the company cannot be held responsible for links to NHS services. If you have any queries, please contact your GP.

Disclaimer: This article is for information only and should not be used for the diagnosis or treatment of medical conditions. Egton Medical Information Systems Limited has used all reasonable care in compiling the information but makes no warranty as to its accuracy. Consult a doctor or other healthcare professional for diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions. For details see our [conditions](#).

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