

Primary Care Mental Health Team

This is an information leaflet about the mental health service offered within your GP practice area. We hope that the information in this leaflet will answer some questions you may have.

What is Mental Health?

Mental health is about how we think, feel, perceive, respond and act, especially when faced with the challenges and stresses that life can bring. It is about physical and emotional well-being and living life with the ability to give and take in friendships and relationships.

If you feel you are not able to cope positively with life events or are experiencing emotional turmoil and distress this is the time to request help from your GP and Primary Care Mental Health Team.

Who is the Primary Care Mental Health Team?

The Primary Care mental health service consists of a variety of Mental Health Practitioners who are experienced professionals from social work, occupational therapy, and nursing backgrounds. We also have Support Time & Recovery workers (STR) to work alongside these roles and support your recovery. As a team we provide specialist local mental health support and are able to advise GP's and other practitioners in the assessment and treatment of mental health within primary care. We are based within your GP practices as part of your local Primary Care Network.



Our aim is:

- To improve access to prompt advice and support
- To enable you to receive help in a familiar setting
- To help deliver a more joined-up approach to your care
- To provide holistic care with appropriate evidence-based interventions.
- To ensure the right treatment in the right place at the right time from the right person based on your needs.

How we do this?

We aim to promote a person-centred approach to physical and mental health. Your social care needs are also considered as part of this process.

Our service primarily delivers assessments of your mental health either face to face, via online video appointments (using Attend Anywhere), or via the telephone. Outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Signposting to other services or organisations
- Advice on treatment
- Brief interventions to help you manage mental health challenges
- Onward referrals to other services or organisations



The Mental Health Practitioner may consider that you might benefit from support from our Support Time and Recovery (STR) workers. An STR worker will help you to focus on your strengths and potential to enable you to move towards mental and emotional wellbeing.

This may include:

- Brief one-to-one interventions
- Guided self-help
- Problem solving and coping skills
- Support with practical problems
- Relaxation techniques
- Referrals to other organisations
- Engaging you with activities in the community

We will support you to focus on your goals and to access your local community resources.



We want to empower you on your recovery journey and as such if it is appropriate for you to self-refer to a service that we think could be helpful to you, we will fully encourage you to take this step.

Your consent

Your consent to our input with your care is paramount and should be obtained by your GP before they make any request for our service involvement. We may also ask for your consent to refer you to other services. Similarly, consent to share information with these services will be requested.

We will only share information with those involved in your care. You may withdraw your consent at any time.

How can I access the Primary Care Mental Health Service?

All requests for our service come via your GP practice, alternatively you can request an appointment via your GP practice receptionist. Once the request has been made, we will contact you and either provide telephone advice or offer an assessment.

It is helpful for our team, if you have a personal answer phone message on your mobile or landline. We will be calling from a withheld number and are unable to leave a voicemail if there is not a personalised voicemail. Consent to contact you via text SMS messages will be requested by your GP.

We are available between the hours of 9am - 5pm* Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays. We are dedicated to keeping waiting times to a minimum.

The service is available to people 18 years* and over - who are registered with a North Staffs/Stoke-on-Trent GP practice.

For some people information and support from the Mental Health Practitioner may be all you need to get back on track.

Where will I be seen?

You will usually be seen either at a GP practice, at your local health centre – or your initial appointment may take place over the phone.

Where possible face to face assessments take place in a GP surgery to provide a familiar environment and to help you feel comfortable. You will be greeted by one of our practitioners for an assessment. Together you will come up with a plan for your care and consider the next steps to take.

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, however, this will be discussed and agreed as part of your treatment plan.

Your care

Consider if you would like information about your care plan to be discussed with someone other than yourself - this could be arranged towards the end of your appointment.

This consent will be recorded in your records as without this we cannot disclose any information.

*In some practices appointments are available for under 18's - please check with the receptionist at your GP practice.

What if I have special or additional needs?

We aim to accommodate special needs or other requirements. Please inform the GP reception / practice when requesting the appointment.

How you can help

We are dedicated to keeping waiting times to a minimum. To this end we may contact you if a cancellation becomes available and offer you a telephone assessment, face to face or online video assessment at short notice. If you cannot attend an appointment, it is really important that you let us know as soon as possible. This will let us offer the appointment slot to someone else.

Privacy and confidentiality

Sessions are held confidentially but a general summary will be provided to your GP or health professional. If we have any concerns about the safety of yourself or others, we have a duty to share information.

What if I require urgent help?

We are not an emergency service.

If urgent help is required please contact the Access Team at our Crisis Care Centre – they are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



0800 0 328 728 (Option 1)

Where else can I go for support?

Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline



0808 800 2234

Free and confidential emotional support (Lines open 2:00pm-2:00am every day of the year)

Samaritans



116 123 (24 hours a day) – Freephone service

NHS Direct



0845 46 47 (24 hours every day)

North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust is a leading provider of mental health, social care, learning disability and substance misuse services in the West Midlands. We are on an ambitious journey to deliver our vision to be outstanding – in all we do and how we do it.

www.combined.nhs.uk

Find support on a range of Mental Health topics from the Combined Wellbeing Portal which can be found at combinedwellbeing.org.uk or scan the QR code below.

