

Health for Health Professionals Wales

Question and answer briefing for the enhanced service in response to COVID-19.

Q. What does the service aim to do?

A. It aims to provide a free, tiered model of psychological and mental health support for frontline NHS Wales healthcare professionals and healthcare students working in Wales during and post the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is envisaged that the need for such a service will grow over the coming years. It will need to provide support for those with acute symptoms such as those feeling overwhelmed, distressed and developing symptoms of anxiety, depression and longer-term effects such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Q. Who can access the service?

A. The service offers support to:

Doctors, nurses, dentists, paramedics, pharmacists, optometrists, physiotherapists, dietitians, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, midwives and operative department practitioners working on the NHS Wales frontline.

Healthcare students from the professional groups outlined above who are working on the NHS Wales frontline can also access the service.

The service will also support returning retired staff and healthcare professional students who are volunteering to assist in response to COVID-19 through the COVID Hub Wales.

Q. What will the service provide?

A. The service will provide:

- A 9 – 5pm weekday service.
- HHP Wales is not an emergency service
- The service can be accessed via an informative website, an online self-referral form and a helpline phone line.
- The website also sign-posts to self-help materials, virtual groups, emergency services and Out-of-hours services.
- On completion of an online referral form clients will be emailed within 24 hrs with an appointment to speak to a doctor advisor at a mutually convenient time, usually within 48 hours.
- The doctor advisor will discuss the callers concern(s) with them and jointly agree the best action to take. The doctor advisor will sign-post the client to one or more of the following services:

Self help

Various materials, platforms, mobile apps, self-help guides and virtual groups are available through NHS Wales, Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) and NHS Practitioner Health / NHS England.

Peer Support

This will give access to volunteer Peer-support providers offering emotional support. Doctors and medical students will be directed to the services run by the BMA. Other Health Professionals will be directed to a HHP Wales service. There are also virtual peer support groups that the caller can access through the NHS Practitioner Health site

Guided Self-Help

Offered via Silvercloud and other appropriate apps and resources.

Virtual face to face consultations

Access to up to 8 sessions of Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) from an accredited therapist. All HHP Wales therapists are accredited by the British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP).

Access to the NHS Wales PTSD service

This will be accessed by consultation and managed via the National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH)

Where appropriate (in high risk cases only) HHP Wales doctor advisors will be able to access expert clinical advice from a psychiatrist. Local crisis teams and GP practices across Wales have been made aware of the extended service HHP Wales is now offering. All GPs have been asked to respond to healthcare professionals who have been in discussion with HHP as a matter of urgency.

Q. How can I get in touch?

A. The service is available by:

- visiting <https://www.hhpwales.co.uk/>
- for self-referrals:
 - complete the self-referral form from the website - [LINK](#)
 - or email HHPCOVID19@cf.ac.uk
- for general enquiries email HHP@cf.ac.uk
- by calling 0800 058 2738,

The service works 9 – 5pm weekdays with out of hours support being offered by NHS England and Samaritan services for non-medics and the BMA for medics and medical students.

Q. How long will it take to get to talk to a GP Doctor Advisor?

A. Doctor advisors will contact clients by telephone at the time of their agreed appointment. The service is open Monday-Friday 09:00-17:00. Outside of these hours our response times will be slightly longer.

Q. How long will it take before I get a session of CBT?

A. The urgency of starting therapy sessions will depend on a number of factors, including the underlying reason(s) for accessing the service. Typically, we expect the client to make contact with the therapist within two weeks. From this point a course of 8 sessions of CBT can vary significantly in length.

Q. Can I use this service if I work in social care?

A. Although we fully appreciate the similarity in the needs for healthcare professionals working in social care, HHP Wales is currently commissioned to provide support to healthcare staff. Much of the self-help material HHP Wales sign-posts is available to social care staff.

Q. Can I use this service if I work in hospital administration, hotel services or portering?

A. While we recognise that everybody working in the NHS and social care do important jobs and that individuals working in these areas may also experience difficulty at this time; administrative, portering and hotel services staff aren't part of the group HHP Wales has been commissioned to provide a service for. All NHS staff can access support via their occupational health departments and wellbeing teams; or access other resources available through HEIW, NHS Practitioner Health and Public Health Wales services.

Q. If I am unable to use this service where can I go for help?

A. If you need immediate support out-of-hours Text FRONTLINE to 85258. This is free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help.

You can also telephone the Samaritans on 116 123 or visit www.samaritans.org

For non-urgent support there are a number of options available:

Please visit our website and follow the links to self-help material. This includes links to numerous mobile application and other self-help platforms which may be of use. Otherwise you can go direct to HEIW, Public Health Wales and NHS Practitioner Health websites.

Local Health Boards are also providing additional support via their occupational health departments and wellbeing teams for staff groups at this time and we would encourage you to visit your local intranet or contact the wellbeing teams.

Q. Can I use this service if I live outside of Wales?

A. This service has been commissioned by the Welsh Government for staff working in NHS Wales. The NHS Practitioner Health service offers support for healthcare staff working in NHS England. <https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk/>