

Meeting: Health and Wellbeing Board - Reading

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Title of Paper	Update Report on the Breathing Space (Mental Health crisis cafe) for Berkshire West
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Paper Type	Information only

1. Executive Summary

This aim of this paper is to inform the Health and Wellbeing Board members of the progress made in setting up a Breathing Space in Berkshire West and a brief description of what will be offered.

2. Background

Mental ill health is widespread and can affect people from all walks of life. One in four adults and one in 10 children experience mental illness, and many more of us know and care for people who do (NHSE 2019). People can recover from mental illness if they receive timely and appropriate treatment and support, but many people struggle to access mental health services when they need them. In Berkshire West it is estimated that 14% of the population suffers from a common mental health condition.

A review of mental health crisis services for the population of Berkshire West of all ages was initiated due to:

1. Increased number and associated cost of out of area hospital placements
2. Revised Section 136 legislation
3. In preparation for transformation to meet the ambitions in the Long-Term Plan (2019)

The review took place from July 2019 to March 2020 resulting in a final report which recommended a 14-point implementation plan. This was approved by the Mental Health and Learning Disability Programme Board (MHLDB) in April 2020 and previously reported to this board. Through this plan, the Board is committed to deliver and pursue the most ambitious transformation of mental health crisis care for Berkshire West community. One of the recommendations was to set up a Breathing Space for people in Crisis.

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4. Links with the Long Term Plan

The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health (FYFV) and NHS Long Term Plan (LTP) set ambitions to achieving a crisis/acute alternative provision in all areas of the country. Our proposed Breathing Space service will address these requirements by providing a safe and homely space for people in a Crisis as an alternative to A&E and other emergency services. Visitors will be helped to access community resources such as the recovery colleges or secondary care mental health services, and it is hoped this service will provide better and timely support for people experiencing mental distress, as well as help ease pressure on the hospital's Emergency Department (ED) and other emergency services.

5. Why we need a Crisis Café and our co-production work

The elements of the Berkshire West Mental Health Crisis Review (2020) have been and continue to be co-produced with partners, stakeholders, service users and carers. A series of events and opportunities to share suggestions and feedback was organised by Berkshire West CCG and partners such as the Recovery College and the Local Authorities. These events culminated in a service user engagement event in February 2020 where findings and plans for the breathing space were shared and discussed. Some of the main drivers for the need of a service such as the Breathing Space were factual:

- 58% of MH crisis services not commissioned to accept referrals from anyone / don't accept self-referrals (adults) (NHSE audit, 2018)
- Only 14% of people report positive experience of crisis care (CQC, 2015)
- Fewer than half of community crisis services are 24/7 (NHSE audit 2018)
- CRHT highlighted as a priority service to focus on suicide prevention (NCISH)
- Even the NHS Choices website has no option but to advise people to call the Samaritans or Mind if experiencing mental health crisis.
- Data shows need for a service to support people in the event of a mental health crisis

These facts were corroborated and amplified by the extensive co-production work carried out by Berkshire West CCG which collated service user experience, along with their carers and families' views. People with experience of mental health problems advocated for the need of a one stop signposting service with more face-to-face interaction at times of crisis and that support should be provided when needed in a space free from judgment where staff and peers understand the circumstances that can lead to a crisis.

The consultation has provided us with feedback on why this service is needed:

"I am desperate and need urgent support with sorting my debt; accessing food bank; writing an application for benefits; arranging my housing; getting to my appointments but where do I go out of hours – my only options seem to be my Mental Health trust or A and E?"

"My daughter has just turned 18 - how do I get support she previously got through CAMHS, we feel desperate?"

“It was midnight and I was told to take my child to A and E because she is in distress and threatening to harm herself – I don’t want to do this, I want to just talk to someone who understands”

“If there was somewhere I could go where people listened I wouldn’t feel so desperate – my only option seems to be A and E”

6. Development of a pilot Breathing Space delivered by Voluntary Sector and local provider (BHFT)

Based on data, gap analysis, evidence and feedback highlighted above, the Breathing Space was co-designed in partnership with people who will use the service and with the support and advice of Mental Health professionals. A service specification for the pilot site of the Breathing Space service was drafted and approved in the health governance arrangements.

Our Reading based Breathing Space will be the first pilot site in Berkshire West with ambitions to have two more over the next 5 years across all localities. Further proposals will need to be finalised and brought through the relevant governance at a later stage.

6.1 Procurement

Following South Central and West Commissioning Support Unit (SCW CSU) advice 5 main procurement steps were recommended:

1. Hold a market stimulation event
2. Prepare tender documentation and questions
3. Publish the procurement notice to invite applicants
4. Evaluate applicants and award the work to a provider
5. Issue contract and complete mobilisation ready for delivery

A CCG commissioner and a Project Manager worked with the SCW CSU Procurement team to support and drive forward the steps according to procurement law and regulations. The Procurement process was completed in May 2021 with the evaluation of 4 bids. The evaluation team was a partnership team led by the CCG.

The contract, an NHS short form contract for 3 years with the possibility of a 1 year extension, was awarded to the winning provider, *Together for Mental Wellbeing*, a national charity which Berkshire West CCG already commission to provide local services at Berkshire West Your Way, working alongside people with mental health issues to help them lead fulfilling and independent lives.

The CCG team is currently working on the contract build which should be signed in early July. The contract will start at the end of July with the service doors opening in early September, due to a slight delay in awarding the contract caused by the standstill period required during local election (purdah).

6.2 Where should the service be based?

It is important that the service is fully accessible and therefore it was clear in the tender specification that its premises should be based within 15-minutes’ walk from Reading

Mainline train station, creating good transport links and accessible facilities that are secure and safe for all.

The provider has obtained ideal premises in Friar Street and they are in the process of furnishing them. They will invite people with lived-in experience to do a walkthrough of the premises for feedback before opening doors to the public and are hoping to use some artwork which was produced by the Reading Recovery College Compass students in their promotional material.

6.3 When will it be available?

The Breathing Space will be open each Friday to Monday in the evening (Operational hours 5pm -11pm) including Bank Holidays, offering short term crisis support to people who have been advised to attend by a professional or who want to get in touch directly. It will provide a safe, supportive, inclusive, and homely environment where people can talk to others who have had mental health problems, and gain support by sharing their experiences.

6.4 Who is it for?

The Breathing Space is for all adult population of Berkshire West residents of the 3 local authorities – namely Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham registered with a Berkshire West GP. There is however a ‘no wrong door approach’ to access, which means that any young person (under 18) accessing the service will be offered immediate support according to operational protocols and signposted to appropriate Children and Young Persons services.

6.5 Workforce and delivery – How will it be run?

There will be a minimum of three non-clinical staff at all times at the premises, including a Team Leader and two Peer support workers. The service is open to and encourages additional volunteers. The staff will have direct access to Crisis Line and Mental Health Practitioners at Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT). This post is currently being recruited by BHFT and should be operational by September.

Meanwhile BHFT are supporting the provider with the setup of the service and arranging the necessary joint working and to access clinical notes and support, including managing of risk.

The model will use a recovery approach, which encourages self-care and well-being. It will offer 1:1 therapeutic support for all service users including a Digital offer for remote areas. There will be refreshments available, and people can also use the space to have a break from the outside world when all becomes too much, with volunteer peer supporters, who have all had their own experiences of mental health crisis available for support and to listen.

6.6 Key deliverables & reporting

The CCG will collect and use qualitative feedback and quantitative reports to improve the service and understand the impact this is having on the wider crisis response and the demography and social make-up of people accessing the space, to aid our future planning and interventions.

Data collected will include:

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- Stakeholders Feedback – qualitative & quantitative
- Reporting to CCG & NHSE
 - Crisis Avoidance Activity numbers & demography
 - Themes and patterns of activity
 - Interventions & resolutions delivered
 - Include virtual/digital delivery
- Share Good practice & opportunities

The aim is to support a 15% reduction in Urgent Mental Health. To aid this outcome, the service is expected to have around 5000 contacts/year and to resolve 90% of contacts within the Breathing Space, with 75% of users offered safety plans/immediate interventions. Some of the data collected will be part of the Mental Health Crisis dashboard currently in development at Berkshire West CCG.

The provider has been invited to be an active member of the Crisis Review Implementation Steering Group and will be updating the group of progress and feedback from service users once the service is up and running, later in the year.

6.7 Communications and Engagement

Together for Mental Wellbeing are working with the CCG on a communications and engagement campaign to publicise the opening of the service. Mindful of the current Covid restrictions the provider will not be able to hold an open doors event and are considering options on how to have a similar engagement either in groups or remotely.

The provider are working on a website, informative leaflets for the public and other communication materials in collaboration with the CCG team and other stakeholders and they will be holding targeted comms/engagement opportunities with services which will be referring to them, to ensure referrals will start flowing as soon as the doors are open.

The CCG comms team have issued a press release this week (w/c 28th July) to describe the service and will be following up with others, once the opening day is confirmed, sharing more detail about where/when/how to access. Provider and CCG will be sharing/contributing to each other's comms and aligning programmes so that the same information is shared while promoting the main events and publicising milestones with bespoke pieces of comms.