

Patient Stories January 2024

Hull and East Riding Community Mental Health Transformation

The Impact of Transforming Community Mental Health Care on those accessing Mental Health Support within our Communities

Once again, we would like to share some of the most recent patient stories from those who have recently accessed mental health support through local Primary Care Mental Health Networks (PCMHN). This most recent bundle of patient stories was collated between October - December 23. These stories are collated to identify areas for improvement so that we can improve support alongside those accessing the service to ensure that the support provided is meeting individual needs. These stories also demonstrate the positive impact that Community Mental Health support is having on individuals and families across Hull and East Riding. This is a direct result of the hard work and commitment of staff from the PCMHNs, Primary Care, Secondary Mental Health Services and Partner Organisations across Hull and East Riding, all working together to make this possible. Community Mental Health Transformation work is changing the face of our Mental Health Services, meaning individuals can get the support they need sooner, preventing those in need of mental health support from falling through gaps between Primary and Secondary Care.

Mental Health Support and Surviving Domestic Abuse

"It's taken me a long time to accept things. I was in an abusive marriage for a long time. It was more coercive and controlling than physical abuse. I lived far away from my family with three children, I'm disabled and have had chronic arthritis for 23 years. I didn't go out much because it was easier to be isolated than to explain everything and make excuses, but when the lockdown lifted I didn't want to go back to pretending to anymore.

Things came to a head when my daughter emigrated. My husband's behaviour escalated. I had no money or anywhere else to go, I never thought he would be violent, but he attacked me, I couldn't defend myself because of my arthritis. I rang the police and they came and I spoke to him and they came into house with me and I got coat and bag and went to stay with my brother, and the flood gates opened.

I got an appointment with doctor about my breathing problems. You try and keep everything in and the minute someone shows you empathy it becomes real. The GP gave me medication for my nightmares. The dreams were so vivid and violent. She referred me to a mental health nurse from the Primary Care Mental Health Network. When I saw her, I started crying and I couldn't stop. I had so much guilt. If I hadn't have

health nurse, I hand on heart don't think I would be having this conversation now. My health was failing, I was diagnosed with COPD and I didn't want to burden my daughter and the kids. I stuck with him for years because I don't want them to choose between us.

I saw the mental health nurse fortnightly for a year. I felt like a lot of stuff was my fault, I felt guilty and she helped me find a way through that I wouldn't have found on my own. She helped me see that my children are adults and they didn't need my protection any more like they did. She organised for me to see a prescribing nurse in June and she prescribed me Sertraline. I felt overwhelmed by the medication, and I was forgetting to take it so we decided the medication wasn't right for me because I was already taking so much for my physical health problems.

I felt quite emotional when I last saw the mental health nurse. I can't sing her praises any higher, she's given me information about groups I can go to but I worry about going in case anybody knows my ex. I have the crisis number but I don't think I'll need it again now.

The work the mental health team do is amazing. It's not just that she listened and helped me see thing differently and that the guilt doesn't lie with me, she gave me self-belief and I don't think I have ever had that before. She felt like a friend and she sent me a lovely message at Christmas. I'm glad she dd because it ended that chapter for me. She gave me the tools I didn't have to be able to navigate my way through that time. No matter how old or strong you are, no one could have got through that without any help. She was so calm. They are so underrated for what they do, unless you have had to use mental health services, you can't fully comprehend how much they're needed. I am so grateful for everything they did, I can't praise the mental health team enough."

Support from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach has meant that I can see my grandchildren again

"I had a bad fall at home 5 months ago where I was hospitalised and nearly died. I had treatment but I was drinking heavily. I was married for 11 months in a very difficult relationship, when I came out of hospital, I couldn't get up and down the stairs. I was in a bad place. The hospital put me in touch with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach in the Primary Care Mental Health Network. She's been brilliant. Talking and listening, not counting you as a number and treating you as human, a person with individual needs. I've done everything I was asked to do and for 153 days I haven't had a drink. It's people letting you know there is light at the other end that is helpful. She was always at the end of the phone. She was always there if I needed something, the advice was great but having someone to talk to really helped. She helped me see the problems and find my place. She helped me put things behind me and now I've got my grandkids back. If ever I felt like having a drink we would think about what had caused this and we found the root of it. I have come out of it a different person. We have thought that the marriage that I had which was really difficult maybe is what caused everything to turn around in my life, there is sometimes a reason for the things that happen. My 7 year old grandson said to his mum can I call him grandad – the help I have had from the mental health and wellbeing coach has helped me to see that I have a life to live."



Support from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach helped me recover from Domestic Abuse

“My story is very special to me, even though it destroyed me at the time, it has eased with the correct support and care, but there will be many victims of abuse out there who have not been as lucky as me. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach from the Primary Care Mental Health Network is someone who lived it herself and I believe this made all the difference and made it all so much easier for me to chat and open up because she totally understood me, but yet always remained professional and had a positive outlook.

I was referred to the Primary Care Mental Health Network in Feb 2023 when I was almost killed. I had been in a very abusive relationship, and I never admitted this to myself or anyone until my son and I was in a very dangerous situation.

After a while and police involvement and involvement with DVAP I was moved into a safe house for about 7 weeks till they arrested my Ex. When I came back home is when it all sank in, I was luckily referred to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach. When I first met her, she came to my house to carry out a home visit, and I remember been in a very bad place mentally, emotionally and physically. I could not stop crying, I had a very raw broken heart, and I couldn't see a way out ever.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach was and still is amazing, she is a true asset to the NHS. I could talk for hours about how she saved my life. She helped me massively as she understood me so well, with her living domestic violence herself and also been a domestic violence champion. She always made me instantly feel better and listened and very much supported, and I never ever felt judged or integrated, just felt heard. She gave me hope, when at that time in my life I didn't believe in such thing. She supported me for around 9 months, through talking, being at the end of a phone, and through worksheets to help me, she also recommended a meditation app.

She spoke to the police and referred me on to the correct team and recognised I have severe symptoms of PTSD. She spoke many times with my G.P also and my DVAP worker. She still now always goes above and beyond her job role, she has helped me apply for a council house as I struggled and panicked. She is one of life's angels, and she always remains so professional and amazing in her job role. When my appointments came to an end, my 13 year old daughter even sent her a card - to thank her for making her mum better. If I was not referred to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach, I would definitely not be here now.

