

Detailed Description of Services and Alignment with Existing Support

This document is intended to provide more information about each of the new service offers that have been commissioned to support mental health during the Covid-19 outbreak. The new services will be available alongside existing mental health services to provide people with a range of options depending on their needs. NB this document includes details of alignment between new services and existing county-wide commissioned services and therefore does not include all additional local offers available through Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector. This document includes the services that have been commissioned for adults. A separate briefing covering children and young people services will be circulated shortly.

Adults

Tier 1 Support

Qwell - Digital mental health and wellbeing platform including self-care resources, peer support and access to online counsellors for adults aged 18+ (accessible now)

Detailed description of service

- Qwell is an online platform that any adult in Gloucestershire can access without a referral. Accessible on any web-enabled device, it is available 24/7, 365 days a year. Once registered, users will have access to a range of self-care resources, forums including peer support and online counselling. Qwell is anonymous at the point of registration, but users will need to provide some non-identifiable information to create an account.
- It is an early intervention/prevention focussed service, providing an early response to low level, mild and temporary emotional wellbeing and mental health problems, for adults in Gloucestershire.
- Immediate access to professional support, by providing early response, preventing mental health issues escalating and reaching crisis.
- Online counselling and support service is available 7 days per week, 365 days per year, from 12noon-10pm, Monday to Friday and 6pm-10pm Saturday and Sunday.
- Counselling is anonymous as individuals are encouraged to register under a pseudonym. If a counsellor is concerned for an individual's safety, they would encourage the individual to disclose their details to help safeguard that individual. If the individual choose not to disclose information, the Counsellor would continue to work with the individual on safety planning, strategies to stay safe, and protective factors. . Qwell could share limited information if available with local police/ local safeguarding teams and would be transparent about this with users.
- Qwell is a BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy) accredited service.
- Counselling can be 'drop-in' (i.e. unscheduled) where adults can speak to a readily available counsellor. There is a messaging function for individuals to contact the counselling team 24 hours a day. Individuals are also able to schedule counselling sessions with a named counsellor on a regular basis if they choose to do so.
- Qwell's counsellors deliver an integrative counselling approach, drawing on brief solution-focused, behavioural, coaching, CBT, Gestalt, humanistic, person centred and systematic therapy approaches.

- Qwell uses GAD7 and PHQ9 clinical outcome measures.
- A range of fully moderated forums are available, offering facilitated peer support.
- Information, activities, self-care tools and signposting is also available.
- All content posted on Qwell is pre-moderated, i.e. it is approved by a member of the Qwell Team before it is posted on the forums and visible to all users.

Alignment with other services

- The support provided by Qwell is designed to be quick, short term, prevention/solution focussed, focussing on low level/mild issues. Users can access support as and when they need it, based on their need. This can be as anonymous and unstructured or structured. It is not designed to provide longer term counselling for more complex issues.
- It is intended to provide a universal offer that is open to any adult living in Gloucestershire.
- It is suitable for adults who are waiting referral/treatment from Adult Mental Health Services such as IAPT/Let's Talk, or as a step down support for individuals exiting these services.
- IAPT/Let's Talk, GPs and any other service working with adults to support their mental health can signpost to Qwell. No referral is necessary. It is not intended to replace any of these services but rather complement their provision.

Tier 2 Support

Funded counselling sessions provided by Gloucestershire Counselling service (launching June 2020)

Detailed Description of Service

- Funded counselling sessions provided by Gloucestershire Counselling Service, for adults whose mental health has been more severely affected by Covid-19, for example by worsening existing mental health issues, changes in family or financial circumstances, or because of a bereavement.
- It is not an open access service, individuals must be referred by either a GP, the Community Wellbeing Service, Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Advice Liaison Mental Health Service or their own Occupational Health Team.
- It is intended for individuals who would not be able to pay for counselling themselves. It is hoped referrers would have a relationship with the individual being referred so that they are able to make a judgement about whether counselling would be suitable and whether the individual would not be able to self-fund.
- Up to 12 sessions will be offered initially including initial assessment.
- Gloucestershire Counselling Service offer psychodynamic counselling and brief solution focussed therapy drawing on psychodynamic principles. Psychodynamic counselling is intended to take place over a longer period and GCS offer open ended counselling for those who are able to self-fund. For any individuals receiving funded sessions where deeper rooted issues are identified which would benefit from additional sessions after the initial 12 sessions have ceased, this will be assessed and offered on a case by case basis. It is anticipated that most issues will be resolved within a 12 week period.
- GCS monitor outcomes using CORE IMS, a nationally recognised clinical outcome measure, to independently demonstrate our clinical impact.

Individuals must meet the following criteria to be referred:

- Over the age of 18.
- Resident in Gloucestershire and registered with a Gloucestershire GP.
- Experiencing ongoing adverse impacts on their mental health and/or emotional/psychological wellbeing linked to the Covid-19 outbreak (through for example exacerbation of existing mental health issues, change in family or financial circumstances, or bereavement); which is having an adverse impact on their ability to manage; and their ability to function in everyday life and/or relationships.
- Personal circumstances or vulnerabilities which mean they would not usually be able to access counselling and self-fund it.
- Able to benefit from and commit to a programme of counselling.

The following guidelines are provided to help determine if counselling would be suitable for an individual:

Indications towards counselling being suitable:

- client wants counselling and has some idea what they want from it
- client has a personal support network
- client is functional in daily life
- client is amenable to counselling via video link/phone (during Covid-19 lockdown)

Contra-indications for individual adults:

- indications of psychosis
- serious substance-abuse impacting daily functioning
- client is currently suicidal or seriously self-harming and would benefit instead, from a referral to the crisis team.

Alignment with other services

- The support provided by GCS is aimed at individuals whose mental health has been more severely affected by Covid-19, for example by worsening existing mental health issues or because of a bereavement.
- This service can offer more in depth and longer term support than Tier 1 offers, as outlined above.
- This service is intended to be additional capacity at the Tier 2 level, to support any increase in mental ill health/emotional distress during the covid-19 outbreak, for presenting issues relating specifically to the impact of covid-19.
- This service sits alongside other tier 2 offers such as IAPT and is not intended to replace any other service. Referrers should consider which type of therapy is most appropriate for the individual based on presenting needs, support required and capacity to wait for treatment.
- GCS funded sessions should only be considered where the referral criteria above applies.
- This service does not currently have a waiting list and at present can work with individuals straight away.
- For individuals whose distress is not specifically related to covid-19 or where other aspects of the referral criteria are not met, funded and subsidised counselling sessions are available from GCS. This could be an option for example while an individual waits for treatment from IAPT.