

# NHSGGC Mental Health Improvement Team

## OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19: JULY 2020

No one could have anticipated the last four months as we faced one of the most significant public health crises of our time, COVID-19. Lives transformed unimaginably, everyday life as we know it was disrupted, for many working and living in the same place and living with the unknown and uncertainty of the future. As we are beginning to see a lift on restrictions and we emerge from lockdown, our Team has paused for some reflection to share a snapshot of our work during COVID-19.

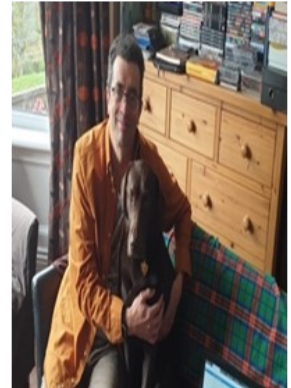
### OUR TEAM

Like many, working from home became the new norm for our team. We have become the masters of zoom calls but suffer with zoom fatigue. We struggle trying to balance home life with work and learned to accept that we are not working from home but trying to work at home in the midst of a pandemic. As demands on our NHS grew, we saw colleagues from our team deployed into other temporary roles. Greg Usrey, Health Improvement Lead, a registered nurse continues to work in the Barr Street Assessment centre, along with our admin support Donald Boyle. Jane Kelly Health Improvement Senior (Mental Health Training), supported the staff rest and recuperation hub at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital and returned to the team on June 1st. As a depleted team with increasing demands placed on us and the fast paced environment we found ourselves in, it was difficult at times to say the least. However as a team we pride ourselves on being creative, flexible and adaptable to meet demand and as always we embraced the challenge and worked extremely hard to respond to the mental health needs of our population during these unprecedented times.

A final note, rainbows have been a fitting symbol of hope and recovery during these times as we often see them after a rainstorm when the sun breaks through the clouds. COVID-19 has been a relentless rainstorm, showering us with unimaginable grief, worry and uncertainty. However the beautiful rainbows that have emerged from the storms have been both breathtaking and humbling, stories of love, kindness, our clap for carers and communities coming together to look after each other. COVID-19 has touched us all and it is difficult to predict what the long term impact the pandemic will have on the mental health of our population, but lets use this experience to build on the acts of kindness and compassion that has helped us all through these difficult times and keep them at the core of everything we do. From everyone at the Mental Health Improvement Team, keep safe, healthy and connected.

If you would like to discuss any of the content in this report, please contact [Heather.Sloan@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Heather.Sloan@ggc.scot.nhs.uk) or [Trevor.Lakey@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Trevor.Lakey@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)

Prepared by Michelle Guthrie on behalf on the NHSGGC Mental Health Improvement Team



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*“These resources are outstanding and exactly the type of “one stop” for information that my counsellors are always looking for – many thanks for sharing”*

(WEEKLY BRIEF)

*“Your updates have been really helpful for us and a lot of the people we support”*

(WEEKLY BRIEF )

*“Always a pleasure to read your weekly brief and always brings a smile to my face, so thank you. Thank you also for the sharing of some fantastic resources which I have shared with a few colleagues new and old across the city”*

(WEEKLY BRIEF)

*“Some great resources, keep them coming”*

*“I really like these updates. They have a really nice and positive tone to them!”*

(WEEKLY BRIEF )

## Across the Life Course

In an attempt to take stock of the rapidly evolving picture of mental health needs and responses drawing on the multiple sources local, national and international public mental health evidence, our team prepared a [paper](#) to propose an approach to coordinating the public mental health response within Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The paper recognises and aims to build on the tremendous response to the current and anticipated mental health needs of our population as a result of COVID-19.

Social distancing, isolation and shielding are terms that we all have become too familiar with. We know that social connections and relationships are protective factors for mental health and we found ourselves like many of you, having to use digital platforms more and more to keep connected and up to date. At the beginning of lockdown, we made a decision to move away from our monthly mental health snippet to a weekly themed [COVID-19 brief](#). This was to maintain connection during a time when it initially felt like a time of disconnect. The briefs have been extremely well received reaching over 700 partners and organisations across Greater Glasgow and Clyde, from Health, Housing, Police, Social Work, Education and Third Sector. Each week we have themed our brief around different topics including loss and grief, sleep, loneliness and isolation and many more all sharing a range of helplines, supports, e-learning and digital opportunities.

## DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

**[Aye Mind](#):** The use of digital platforms has never been as important to our team during these times. Our [@AyeMind99](#) twitter account accumulated over 500 new followers over the months as we use our twitter feed to share up to date information on a broad range of mental health topics and resources. The Aye Mind website is currently being retooled and will now be aimed at adults who are working with and supporting young people. A soft launch of the website will be happening very soon, watch this space.

**[Team Website](#):** We continue to update our website, using it to host our weekly briefs and a range of resources and information to support mental health across the life course.

***All resources and information mentioned can be accessed via our [website](#)***

***Follow us on twitter [@Ayemind 99](#)***

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## PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH (PNMH)

Our Perinatal Mental Health Network continues to connect virtually, sharing information and practice. We promoted Maternal Mental Health Awareness week in May using social media to get the message “supporting mums during difficult times” across. We also used the opportunity to promote PNMH resources available to anyone working with new and expectant parents. These included the NHS Education Scotland e modules, Understanding Maternal Mental Health and Maternal Mental Health: the woman’s journey and our staff [Perinatal Mental Health Guide](#). The guide has been shared with over 3500 staff across GGC including 300 community pharmacists. The Scottish Government’s PNMH third sector funding was released in May 2020 and we are delighted to see several of our partners from the network have applied for this. We hope all partners will be successful in their bids to allow them to continue provide vital mental health support to parents during the perinatal period.

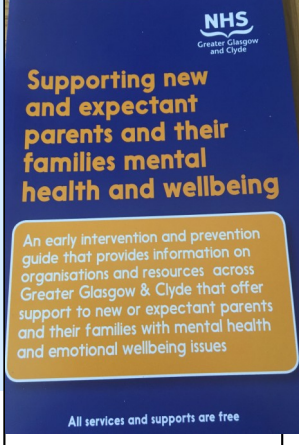
## CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

With face to face access to services at a minimum during these times, it is important that children and young people and those supporting them are aware of the range mental health digital supports, resources and helplines available to access during these unprecedented times. Our team pulled together a comprehensive [Resource](#) that provides information on supports ranging from those for general mental health concerns like anxiety and stress to bereavement, young carers, asylum seekers/refugees, domestic violence, disability and long term conditions. The resource allows each of the 6 Health and Social Care Partnerships to populate with their own locality supports and resources and share with partners.

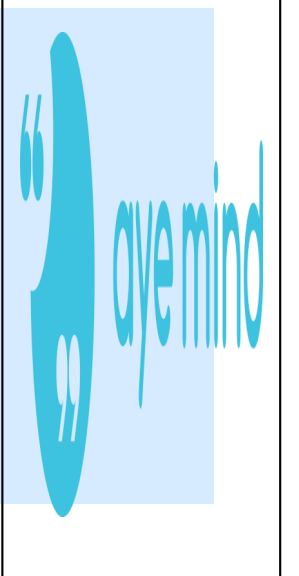
## ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

We have been working with the Glasgow City Primary Care Mental Health and Wellbeing Group to commission and co-ordinate bereavement training for primary care staff. Childhood Bereavement UK (CBUK) were scheduled to deliver face to face training across the City during April and May this year but unfortunately we had to cancel due to the pandemic. We are in discussions with CBUK to explore alternative ways of delivering the training in the coming months. In addition to the training, we have produced a resource guide to highlight the range of supports and resources to support bereavement across the life course. These will be distributed to GP practices across the City to provide staff with information to have conversations about bereavement and grief and where to signpost for support if needed.

### PNMH STAFF GUIDE



### A YE MIND



### BEREAVEMENT RESOURCE



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## SUICIDE PREVENTION

In recognition of the context of COVID-19 and its impact on the public in terms of possible increases in both mental health concerns and numbers of people experiencing increased distress and/or suicidal thoughts, our team produced a [suite of resources](#). The resources comprise of a leaflet and poster aimed at the public and an 'ALERT' pathway briefing and prompt sheet for use by staff in health, social care and helpline situations. To accompany these resources we also produced a directory of mental health support organisations for staff to signpost and refer people to.

## TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

With face to face training at a minimum, we had to explore ways in which colleagues and partners could still access opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding of mental health. We have been working with our commissioned service, Scottish Association of Mental Health (SAMH) to adapt the Board wide mental health improvement training programme from face to face to online training. SAMH have also delivered mental health and well being sessions to NHSGGC COVID 19 Contact Tracing staff as part of their induction process. We are now piloting this training model with call handlers working for Glasgow Centre for Voluntary Sector (GCVS) and for Glasgow City Council Shielding Helpline Staff. Delegates will learn about; Maintaining Well Being and Building Resilience. The pilot will allow us the opportunity to gauge how staff respond to the online training, make any necessary changes if needed and roll out to staff working in a variety of roles across GGC. We are also trialling some online awareness raising around Suicide Prevention with SAMH with a tentative view to offering out from August 2020 onwards. Our team also produced a resource to share a selection of [online learning](#) mental health training opportunities available from other sources.

## RESOURCES

**Healthy Minds:** we are currently working on two new sessions to be included in our Healthy Minds Resource, Stigma and Discrimination and Loss and Grief as a result of COVID-19. Healthy Minds is a flexible resource that can be adapted to suit the needs of the audience, and we are currently in the process of producing guidance to support use of the resource on line.

**Healthy Minds Pocket Guide:** we produced a credit card size concertina resource that provides a contact for a mental health support organisation in each of the 6 Health and Social Care Partnerships. It also provides top tips for looking after your mental health and wellbeing, useful contacts and what to do if you are concerned about an individual who is distressed or in immediate danger.

*"These are great and will support staff when dealing with calls"*

*"We will use these as part of staff training"*

*"The helplines and websites are really useful, some we didn't know about them coming"*

(SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCES)

*"Just wanted to say that the list of online learning resources is ace! Really great options there, thanks so much for pulling it all together."*

(ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCE)

