

Community Living Well

Issue 11



In this edition

Refer yourself for
mental health support



Stay informed, not
alarmed



Advice, information
and local services



Community
LivingWell

Working together for your wellbeing

Contents

Special Features

How can I get support? - **pg. 4**

Stay informed, not alarmed - **pg. 6**

Coping with loneliness - **pg. 8**

Wysa: An AI app designed to support your Wellbeing 24/7 - **pg. 14**

Helpful resources - **pg. 25**

Wellbeing Services

Peer Support

Connecting people through shared experience - **pg. 12**

Navigators

Cost-of-living support - **pg. 16**

Employment

Employment support Q&A - **pg. 18**

Clinical Services

Talking Therapies (IAPT)

Groups and webinars - **pg. 10**

In the spotlight: Chris's story - **pg. 22**

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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader,

I'm pleased to welcome you to the 11th edition of Community Living Well magazine.

We received some very positive feedback on the last edition. People felt it was a good mix of informative stories and practical information and advice, so I hope to continue with this, especially as many of us are facing rather difficult times.

Watching or reading the news every day can be daunting at the moment. It can cause us to worry a lot more than usual. We've included an article with some tips on how you can stay informed with what's going on, without feeling overwhelmed by it.

Other big worries at the moment might be about our jobs or our financial situation. Our Employment Support team have answered some common questions that they are asked about wellbeing at work and what to do in certain situations. Our Navigators have given some advice on how to manage your worries about money.

Throughout the magazine, you will also find all the contact details you need for Community Living Well services, like NHS Talking Therapies (IAPT) and Peer Support, as well as other organisations that can help support your mental and physical health and wellbeing.

I hope you find the information useful. If you have any suggestions or feedback about the magazine, please contact me at stewart.gillespie@kcmind.org.uk.

Take care,

Stewart Gillespie – Marketing Coordinator

How to Refer

You can refer to the Community Living Well service quickly and securely by completing the form found here: communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/. Alternatively, you can ask your GP to refer you.

After we have received your information, we will be in touch within 5 working days. If you have any questions about the referral process or other parts of Community Living Well, please contact us on **020 3317 4200**

Community Living Well

Eligibility

Community Living Well is your community mental health service for Kensington & Chelsea, Queen's Park and Paddington. It is a service that offers you, or anyone involved in your care, a different kind of support for your mental health needs.

It brings people together from your local NHS, voluntary sector, local community groups and specialist mental health care in one service, which will work alongside you and your GP to help you access the support you need.

Our model of care aims to:

- work as one integrated service with a focus on your recovery needs and goals
- work with the GP at the centre as the accountable clinician responsible for each person's treatment and care

Our Partners

Central and North West London

NHS Foundation Trust – Talking Therapies (IAPT) Services

Kensington and Chelsea Mind

– Peer Support Service

SMART (St Mary Abbots Rehabilitation and

Training) – Navigator and Employment Services

Kensington and Chelsea Social

Council – Self-Care Services

Find out more information and whether we can help you on our website:

communitylivingwell.co.uk

Wellbeing Support

Employment – Advice and guidance on looking for work, staying in work, and improving employability skills. You can refer yourself to this service.

Navigators – Advice and guidance on a range of issues including benefits, debt, housing and signposting to specialist support services. You can refer yourself to this service.

Peer Support – Groups, social events and activities bringing people together to support and learn from each other. You can refer yourself to this service.

Self-Care – Support and activities that help you to take care of your own mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Clinical Support

Talking Therapies (IAPT) – Talking therapy or counselling that can help you if you are feeling stressed, worried or low in mood. You can refer yourself to this service.



How can I get support?

IF YOU ARE struggling or living with a mental health problem, you can access support quickly and easily in different ways. Take a look at the services available, see which ones meet your needs, and find out how to get referred.

NHS Talking Therapies (IAPT)

Talking Therapies (IAPT) provides a range of support if you are:

- experiencing difficult emotions such as low mood, worry or stress
- feeling overwhelmed by anxiety
- struggling with depression, or
- having trouble sleeping because of intrusive thoughts.

You can learn ways to improve your wellbeing and have the space to think about your difficulties and find ways to manage them better.

Talking Therapies (IAPT) can also help if you are living with a long-term physical health condition by finding ways to better manage the practical and emotional aspects.



You can refer yourself to this service...

- **complete the online form at communitylivingwell.co.uk**
- **call 020 3317 4200**
- **or speak to your GP**

Peer Support

Peer support is when people use their own experiences to help each other. It can help you to feel less isolated and increase your confidence. It gives you a chance to:

- develop self-management of your mental health
- get or give support
- talk to others with similar experiences who understand your mental health problems.



 You can refer yourself to this service...

- complete the online form at communitylivingwell.co.uk
- call 020 3317 4200
- or speak to your GP



NHS Community Mental Health Hubs

Community Mental Health Hubs give you access to specialist mental health support. The Hubs bring together a range of mental health specialists, such as GPs, nurses, therapists, peer workers, social workers, pharmacists, employment support and navigators, who will work closely together to help you on your journey to recovery.

 **Speak to your GP or health professional about referral to your local Hub**

Other Community Living Well services...

You can also refer yourself to these services quickly and easily...

- Navigator service
- Employment Support service
- Self-Care service

Simply complete the online form at communitylivingwell.co.uk
call 020 3317 4200
or speak to your GP.



Stay informed, not alarmed!

There's a lot going on in our world right now. These events and news stories can leave us with immense feelings of stress, anxiety and worry. There are some things you can do to help manage these feelings.

Stay informed but not alarmed

You might like to keep up-to-date with news from around the world, however, tuning in to every single development can easily become overwhelming. To stay informed but not alarmed, try the following:

- **Get your information from reliable news sources** - don't rely on opinions on social media where people are venting and voicing their concerns. This can increase your own distress.
- **Focus on developments locally rather than globally** - this helps you to be appropriately concerned rather than get caught up in anxiety.
- **Limit the amount you read or watch** - set yourself a time to catch up on the latest headlines. Lunchtime might be best – first thing in the morning may spoil your mood for the rest of the day, and at night may affect your sleep. Don't read every article or listen to every bulletin, just find out the latest and then switch off.

Be kind to yourself

Focus on you, your life and your surroundings. You should never feel guilty about putting your own mental health and wellbeing first. Try some self-care like breathing exercises, mindfulness or meditation to help you relax.

Practising self-kindness and compassion is a great way to improve your emotional wellbeing.

Planning can be helpful

If you're nervous about catching public transport or meeting up with friends, planning can help you feel more in control. Try and travel during off-peak hours or plan a quieter route and plan out how long it would take. You could also write a list of things that you would need to take with you on your trip, such as, a mask, hand sanitiser and your wallet.

While things may seem uncontrollable during this time, it's important to remember that there are things that you can control.

Don't forget to breathe

Take things one moment at a time and remember to breathe. It may sound simple but when we experience anxiety and stress, our breathing gets faster and shallower. When you feel yourself getting worked up, breathe slowly and deeply into your belly to override your stress response so that you feel calmer.

Meditating before leaving the house can help you relax and find a sense of calm. There are lots of apps available to download that can help with mindfulness, meditation and relaxation.

Talk to other people

Many people are probably feeling the same way as you, so talk to a friend, family member or colleague about how you're feeling. Sharing your experience can help reduce the worry.



Find out more about
Community Living Well

Community Living Well services can help to support you with symptoms of anxiety and stress.

Talking Therapies (IAPT) provides a range of support for when you experience difficult emotions, such as low mood, anxiety and stress.

Peer Support connects you with people who have similar experiences to you, and can help you develop skills and strategies to manage and maintain your emotional and physical wellbeing.

Speak to your GP or go to
communitylivingwell.co.uk



Coping with Loneliness

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he theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week was loneliness. Many of us have experienced loneliness at some point throughout the last couple of years, and it can have a huge impact on our physical and mental health. Here, we share some information about loneliness and how you can manage it.

What is loneliness?

Everyone's experience of loneliness is different as the feelings of loneliness are so personal. Some people may choose to live alone and have little social contact with others, and some may find this a very lonely experience.

You might have lots of social contact with other people, be part of a family or friendship group, and you could still feel lonely if you feel the people around you don't understand you or don't care for you.

Loneliness is not always the same as being alone.

How to combat loneliness

Take your time

If you have been having feelings of loneliness for a long time, it can be scary to think about connecting with people, even if they are people you know well. Don't rush into anything you are not ready for. Take small steps. Reach out to one person first – send a text message, make a phone call – whatever you're comfortable with. Just having that initial connection can help reduce some of the feelings of loneliness.

Try peer support

Kensington & Chelsea Mind runs the Peer Support service as part of Community Living Well. It allows you to connect with other people who share similar experiences with their mental health. The Peer Support team run groups and activities - some are in person, some are online. You don't even have to share anything about yourself if you don't want to, you can just listen to what others have to say.

If you don't feel comfortable with this, you can start with Mind's online peer support service, Side by Side. This is an online community which provides a place to listen and share with others who have similar experiences. It is available 24/7, it's free and you can access it wherever you are. Search 'Mind Side by Side'.



Make new connections

There are many local organisations in Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster that run programmes to help you connect with your community. The Community Champions have coffee mornings, parent and baby groups and more. The Volunteer Centre can help you find volunteering opportunities, and The Venture Centre runs exercise classes. These are just a few examples – check pages 25-27 for more.

Try Talking Therapies

Working with a therapist can help you to explore and understand your feelings of loneliness. They provide a space for you to discuss any emotional difficulties that might make it hard for you to develop relationships. They can also help you develop ways to manage and overcome these difficulties.

If you need additional support...

You can refer yourself for Peer Support or Talking Therapies (IAPT) quickly and easily.

Just call us on 020 3317 4200 or complete the referral form online at communitylivingwell.co.uk

Or scan the QR code with your smartphone:





Groups and webinars

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HE NHS TALKING Therapies (IAPT) team run a range of groups and webinars focusing on specific needs. Most groups run online for a course of 4 to 6 weeks.

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy

Mondays 5:30PM - 7:30PM via Zoom

This 9-week Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) group is an evidenced-based treatment for recurrent depression. MBCT can help us to learn ways to reduce the impact of difficult thought patterns and can increase our mental wellbeing.

In the group you will learn a range of meditation practices and cognitive

"The therapists themselves listened carefully and were clear minded and compassionate toward my anxieties without generalising."

Anonymous user, Boosting Self-Esteem group

therapy techniques. The approach is not about learning simple relaxation or becoming detached from painful experiences. It is being able to cultivate a gentle and compassionate curiosity to our moment-to-moment experiences. The approach works best through a daily practice that is established outside of the group time.

Boosting Mood and Motivation

Tuesdays 10:00AM - 12:00PM via Zoom

This is a 10-week online course for people who experience low mood and depression to help understand how the problem developed, identify unhelpful patterns of thinking and behaviour to break the vicious cycle of negative mood.

Long-Term Health Conditions

Tuesdays 1:00PM – 3:00PM via Zoom

This is a 10-week group aimed at those with a long-term health condition. Drawing on ACT, CBT and CFT concepts, this group aims to support people to improve their self-management and improve their quality of life with their condition. Content includes: identifying what's important when our health limits us, recognising patterns of activity and thinking and finding ways to manage our emotional distress, knowing when to problem solve and when to let go of the struggle with our health and finding ways to communicate with loved ones and professionals about our health.

This group is run in partnership with Westminster IAPT.

Boosting Self-Esteem

Wednesdays 1:30PM – 3:30PM via Zoom

The Boosting Self Esteem Group is a 10 week CBT course (2hours each week) focusing on understanding Low Self Esteem and how to overcome it. It covers aspects of both Depression and Anxiety. We cover how to manage unhelpful thoughts and behaviours through various discussions, exercises, techniques and experiments. We also focus on building self-compassion and planning how to continue to build on learning after treatment.

Living with Loss

Mondays 5:00PM - 6:30PM via Zoom

A new 8-week online group for people who are struggling with bereavement and grief – focusing on normalising grief, processing grief and loss (by bereavement), unblocking grief process, facilitating mourning, providing emotional support and sharing, helping you in learning to live with loss.



How to register for groups and webinars...

Talking Therapies (IAPT) is for people aged 16 and over who are registered with a GP in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, or the Queen's Park and Paddington areas of Westminster.

To be considered for any of the groups you must be registered with the Community Living Well Talking Therapies (IAPT) service. To refer yourself for an assessment with Community Living Well, where all therapeutic options offered can be explored, complete the form online at communitylivingwell.co.uk or call 020 3317 4200.



Connecting people through shared experience

Our Peer Support team runs a full calendar of groups and activities every week. The activities provide opportunities for people to come together to reduce isolation, make friends and give and receive support based on the personal experience and a shared understanding of mental distress.

Specialist Support Groups

We've recently introduced four new online groups to bring people together to give and receive mutual support in a peer support setting. Groups include an art support group, and sessions specifically for women and the LGBTQIA+ and BAME communities.

These structured self-help peer support groups aim to bring people together who can share their experience of mental health. They give members a chance to talk about their mental health, an opportunity to learn about how others in similar situations manage their symptoms, and connect with people who know what it's like to feel the way you do.



In your own words

Peer Support Worker, Elliss, asked one member about their experience of the Art Support Group...

In the Art Support Group we explore our feelings through creativity - how has this been for you?

"Great, I am loving the sessions. Initially I was excited that finally I was going to re start painting and drawing. I did not stop to think that it would be therapeutic. I felt 15 again because that's when I stopped drawing. Thereafter, I embraced every theme that was set each week, it became important to me to see my progression, and how I've evolved mentally and spiritually."



We have a different theme each week, which theme has been your favourite and why?

"All of them have challenged me, I love being challenged. If I had to choose one subject it would have to be "emotional body". Exploring the relationship between my emotions and my body has been sensitively powerful and healing, especially as a cancer survivor."

What would you say to somebody who was thinking about joining but weren't sure?

"Do it! You have nothing to lose. I love it. I look forward to it like a child waiting for Christmas to come. Great group, you grow not only through your own work also through the discussions within the group and their work."

Other Peer Support news...

New service for Complex Emotional Needs

We have also been expanding our service to offer peer support for those with complex emotional needs. This peer support service can support people who experience long-standing emotional and interpersonal difficulties associated with a diagnosis of personality disorder. Recently launched, look out for our special feature in the next issue.

If you think the Peer Support service could help you...

To refer yourself to the Peer Support service, please fill out the form available here: communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/ or call 020 3317 4200.

Peer Support Training – updated for 2022

Our peer support training is up and running again. Our peer trainers have spent some time working with the Mind network to review and update the content.

Our 8-week Peer Support Training course gives people with experience of mental health the opportunity to learn and build skills to help others. We'll go through topics on how to build trusting and safe relationships, how our values and beliefs impact how we connect with others, how to negotiate boundaries, and group facilitation skills.

To find out more, go to: www.kcmind.org.uk/how-we-can-help/peer-support/



Wysa: An AI app designed to support your Wellbeing 24/7

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ysa is an AI (Artificial Intelligence) chat bot that provides mental health support when you need it, any time of day. Wysa is working with Community Living Well to develop a version for use in IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) services.

AI Support

This Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) will be the first conducted in the NHS, exploring the role of AI in the mental health care pathway. We are exploring multiple factors to enable us to better understand how continuous conversational support affects outcomes. This includes exploring the impact on mental health outcome measures, users' reported experience of the service and the cost implications of AI support.



Access to Wysa

Patients will be randomly placed into either a test group or a control group. Patients in the test group will gain immediate access to the Wysa app where they can complete AI guided questionnaires, chat to Wysa, complete Wysa's recommended evidence-based therapy exercises, and can be signposted to emergency support as needed. Users will continue to have access to this support throughout their time with the service and beyond discharge – up to 12 months in total. Participants in the control group will be offered the app after 12 weeks.

Integrated service

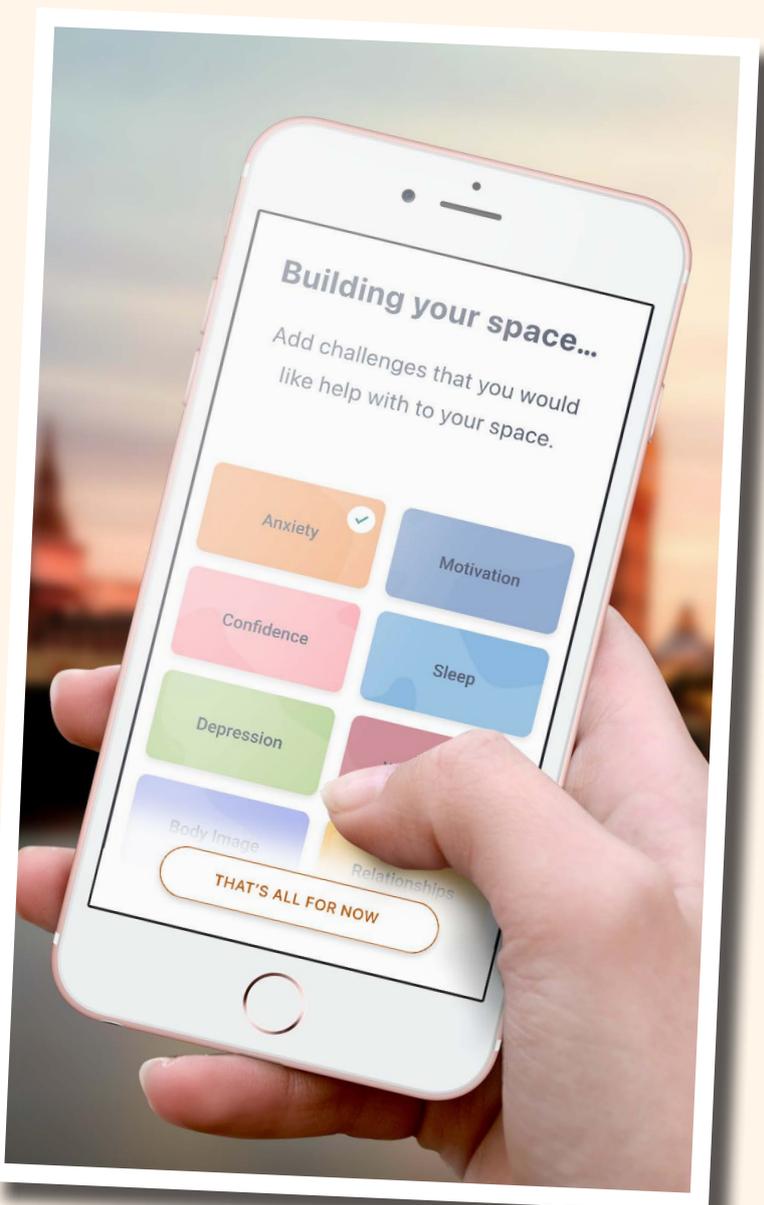
Wysa is integrated with the IAPT electronic patient record which allows for information including outcome measures, tools used and SOS incidents to be pulled into the progress notes, while patient's conversations with Wysa will remain private. Clinicians will be able to use these notes within sessions to guide treatment, or to simply reference what the patient used to manage their mental health that week.

Am I eligible?

To be eligible for the study, and therefore be one of the first to test out this digital tool, you must have been referred, or self referred for talking therapy, to the Community Living Well service, and have been accepted for treatment with the service. This could be either Guided Self Help (GSH), CBT or groups.

For more information

If you are interested in participating and trying out this newly developed tool, or for more information, please get in touch with the Community Living Well service on **0203 317 4200**, or email the service's designated team on cnwl.clw-wysa@nhs.net





Cost-of-living Support

As we are all too aware, from the news and our own finances, there has been a sharp rise in the cost of living in the UK. In order to support people with this significant increase, the Government announced they would provide a collection of measures to help relieve the cost of living pressures.

Cost of Living Payment

One of these measures involves a one-off Cost of Living (tax-free) Payment to the most vulnerable households in the UK. The £650 payment will be paid to households who receive means-tested benefits (awarded based on your income) in two lump sums - £326 paid in July, and £324 to be paid in the autumn. For those who have a joint benefit award, the two lump sum payments will be paid to the one household. Qualifying low-income or means-tested benefits include Universal Credit (UC), Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance (IR-ESA), Income-Related Job Seeker's Allowance (IR-JSA) and Income Support (IS).

People in receipt of Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit will also be eligible for the £650 payment, which will be paid in two lump sums at slightly different times.

There are specific rules around the eligibility criteria including how long claimants have been in receipt of these benefits, so it's worth checking this further: www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment#disability-benefits

People who receive Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for adults and children, and Attendance Allowance (AA) will also be entitled to a Disability Cost of Living Payment. A lump sum payment of £150 will be paid from September 2022 by the DWP.

There is also a Pensioner Cost of Living Payment for those who claim winter fuel payments where they will receive a one-off payment of £300 on top of the winter fuel payment.

Energy Rebate payment (also known as Council Tax Rebate)

Another measure is the Energy Rebate payment scheme which was officially rolled out in April 2022. In order to be eligible for the mandatory £150 payment, managed by local Councils, your property must be in council tax bands A to D. Residents who are eligible for council tax rebates should have received communication from the Council about the payment of this money. If you pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit, the payment should be credited to your Council Tax account. If the Council do not hold your bank account details, a credit will be placed on your council tax account.

If you do not pay Council Tax because you get full council tax support, you will still be eligible for the payment. The Council will contact all residents to inform them if they are eligible. There is also a Discretionary Scheme for households in other categories or property bands, so it is worth checking your eligibility.

For further information, see RBKC: www.rbkc.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-reductions-and-exemptions/energy-rebate or

Westminster: www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/documents/Council%20Tax%20rebate%20FAQs%20V13.pdf

Energy bills support scheme

The energy bills support scheme is another Government measure available to all households who have a domestic electricity connection in their home. This payment of £66 or £67 will be paid in monthly instalments over six months. Households who pay for their energy by Direct Debit will get a deduction off their bill automatically and those with 'smart'

prepayment meters will get a monthly top-up payment added to their account automatically. These are set to start in October 2022.

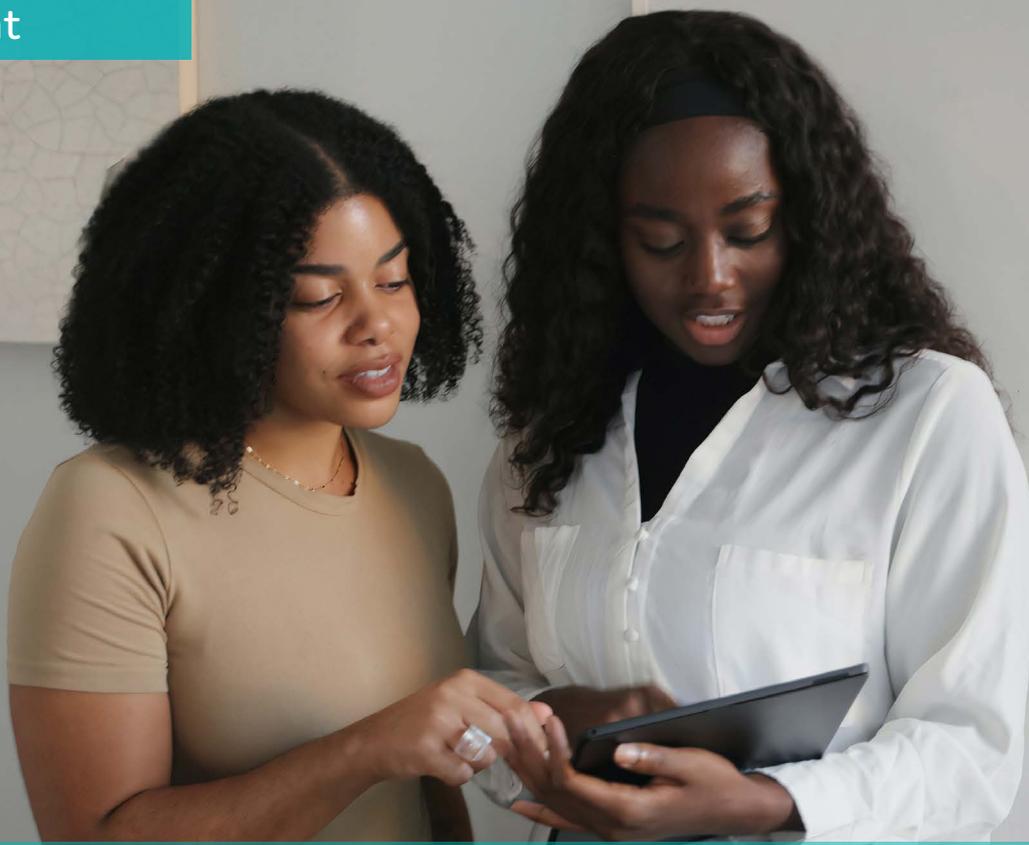
People using old style prepayment meters (ie not 'smart' meters) will not receive payments automatically. Instead customers will get paper vouchers in the first week of each month, which will be issued by text, email or post, and can be redeemed at their normal top-up points. These customers will need to ensure their contact details are up-to-date with their energy supplier, and will need to be aware that post from their energy supplier might well advise them of the financial support available to them.

Where to get further help

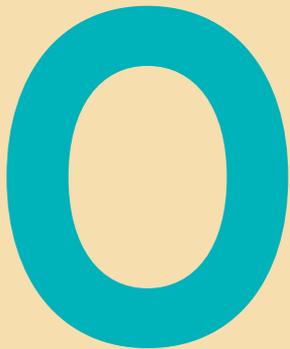
People who are struggling with their household or energy bills can contact one of a number of referral partners in their area for further support and advice:

- **Age UK Kensington & Chelsea or Age UK Westminster**
- **Citizens Advice Kensington & Chelsea (or Westminster)**
- **Nucleus Legal Advice (RBKC)**
- **World's End Neighbourhood Advice Centre (RBKC)**
- **Cardinal Hume Centre (Westminster)**

Please note: Beware of potential scammers claiming to be involved in the energy payment process – you will not be asked for your bank details during the process. If you are, do not provide this information and contact your energy supplier directly for advice.



Employment support: Q&A



UR Employment Support team deal with a range of different enquiries about support in the workplace. We have some information about how to stay in employment more easily, to know how things might work, should you become ill, and to help empower you to help yourself. There are many organisations, both local and national, that can support you too.

I am on sick leave and my employer is pressurising me to return to work. I want to return to work but feel unable to get back immediately to my regular duties. What can I do?

Good practice is for an employer to keep in touch with you while you are on sick leave. Try to explain to your employer the health issues you are experiencing and how they are affecting you.

Your employer may well refer you to Occupational Health. This is a type of medical service to support employees and employers promote wellbeing in the workplace. It can be used for both physical and mental health issues. The occupational health adviser will carry out an assessment with you by phone or face to face. This can help the employer understand what you need to feel better return to work do your job, address any problems that could cause further health or absence issues including a breakdown in working relationships.

I am dyslexic and have recently been diagnosed with ADHD. This is affecting my performance at work and my manager mentioned that they are considering putting me on a performance review.

One of my colleagues at work constantly undermines me at every opportunity. I have tried talking to my manager about this but they don't seem to be interested. It's affecting my mental health and I have lost confidence. What are my options?

It would be helpful for your employer to understand how your condition affects your performance. Ask to be referred to Occupational Health. You can also contact Access to Work for support.

Access to Work is a publicly funded employment support programme to help more disabled people start or stay in work. It can provide practical and financial support if you have a disability or long-term physical or mental health condition.

Access to Work scheme can also give practical advice and guidance to employers to help them understand physical and mental ill health and how they can support employees.

For more information about how it can help you and whether you are eligible visit: www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Workplace bullying can be a serious cause of workplace stress and mental ill health. Bullying may happen face to face, by letter, email or phone.

Employers are responsible for preventing bullying and are themselves liable (not just the perpetrator) for any harassment suffered by their employees. This is known as vicarious liability.

An employer needs to demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable steps to prevent the harassment. ACAS has produced a helpful guidance leaflet on bullying and harassment, found at:

www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment

See the sections Am I Being Bullied and Regaining Control at the helpful website: www.bullyonline.org

Turn the page for more advice and a list of support services that are available...



My employer is disciplining me for poor performance. I feel this is unfair, what are my options?

A disciplinary procedure is a formal way for an employer to deal with an employee's misconduct or performance. Before starting a disciplinary procedure, the employer should first try to resolve the problem informally. This can often be quicker and easier.

You should bring to your employer's attention if you believe you have not received adequate training to undertake your role, have not been provided with adequate resources, or have not been receiving adequate regular supervision, for example, to help you to prioritise work tasks and be clear about acceptable time frames for completion of tasks.

Work Capability Issues and Mental Health

You may feel that your performance has been adversely affected by stress or poor mental health. For example, you may feel you have been under unrealistic time pressures from fielding too many demands, which has resulted in difficulty maintaining quality or accuracy in your work. Or it may be that your anxiety or depression has affected your ability to concentrate, and this has affected your work performance.

If you believe you are experiencing significant work stress, you should notify your employer that your health is being adversely affected by trying to meet the demands of your job, and you would like them to do something to help you. Try to ensure there is a paper trail of the date you notified your employer, so an email to your supervisor would be appropriate. Print it out and keep a dated hard copy, together with any subsequent correspondence. This may later be important

20 | Call Community Living Well on 020 3317 4200

if your work situation worsens and you need to prove that you brought the issues to your employer's attention, and they failed to take it seriously.

More information on the sources of work stress can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/stress/
www.jobretention.org.uk

Sources of Support

EAPs

An Employee Assistance Programme is a service provided to employees as a benefit by their employer and it can offer rapid access to counselling, therapy, and other services, depending upon the level of cover taken out by your employer.

Any information shared with an EAP remains confidential, and will not be shared back to your employer.

Useful Employment Helpline Numbers

The Equality Advisory Support Service

This service provides information about Equality and Human Rights.

equalityadvisoryservice.com

Advice line: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

ACAS provides free and impartial information and advice to employers and employees on all aspects of workplace relations and employment law.

The website has lots of useful information for employees needing help and advice on

various employment issues.

acas.org.uk

Helpline: 0300 123 1100 (Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm)

Useful Organisations

Mind

National charity providing lots of useful resources and information:

mind.org.uk

Information line: 0300 123 3393

Mental Health Foundation

Produces a useful series of 'how to' guides which can be found on their website:

mentalhealth.org.uk

Guidance for Workers with a disability

Your rights to equality at work produced by the Equality & Human Rights Commission. This link takes you to all the available advice downloads:

equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/guidance-workers

Where To Go For Legal Advice

Law Centres Federation (LCF)

Not all law centres cover employment law, though most do.

For contact details of local law centres, telephone 020 7428 4400 or check:

lawcentres.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

If there is no law centre in your local area, it is worth trying your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

Local services

Employment Support from The Clement James Centre, supports long-term unemployed people back to work with help

including CV writing, job preparation and applications, identifying job and training opportunities, IT qualifications and career and life coaching.

Tel: 020 7221 8810

Web: clementjames.org/employment-support/

Balance runs a one-to-one supported employment programme.

Eligibility: people with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities who live in K&C.

Tel: 020 7937 1611

Email: info@balancesupport.org.uk

Web: balancesupport.org.uk/

See also...

westminstercab.org.uk/advice/

cnwl.nhs.uk/patients-and-carers/employment-services/staying-work

nucleus.org.uk/

Community Living Well Employment Support

The Employment Service provides support, information, advice and guidance to assist Kensington and Chelsea, Queens Park and Paddington residents with mental health difficulties who face barriers to employment to retain their current employment or access work opportunities.

You can refer yourself on the Community Living Well website:

communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/



In the spotlight: Chris's story

Before the pandemic hit in early 2020, Chris was leading a busy life; working in a voluntary role as a board member, exercising and receiving physical therapy for an injured shoulder, and socialising with friends. However, all of this had to stop when the first lockdown was introduced. Like many of us, Chris was forced into isolation; he couldn't even go to spend Christmas with his recently widowed father.

It wasn't until early 2021 that Chris realised how much all of this had affected his mental health. He was having trouble sleeping, and if he did sleep, he found it hard to get up in the mornings. He was finding it difficult to make decisions or organise plans, and struggled with increasing pressure at work.

After talking to a friend, Chris decided to make an appointment with his GP, who suggested he consider Talking Therapy. He's recently finished a course of therapy sessions, so we spoke to him to find out more about his experience.

“ I had reached a point where I needed someone to reassure me, point me in the right direction, and just keep an eye on me. That's quite scary to accept, strange to be scared of something like that. ”

How did you hear about Talking Therapies?

It was through my GP. I had a scheduled call with him about something else. During the conversation, he asked how I was and I told him how I'd been feeling and what I'd been through recently. Afterwards, he said he thought that I was quite possibly suffering from depression.

The doctor proposed some medication and some therapy. I did not want to take more medication and wanted to try something different to tackle the way I was feeling, so he suggested I look at the Community Living Well website. I had a look through all of the options and, after completing a self-referral and talking with one of the CLW advisers I decided on CBT with Talking Therapies.

I had reached a point where I needed someone to reassure me, point me in the right direction, and just keep an eye on me. That's quite scary to accept, strange to be scared of something like that. But it was very useful.

When you started your sessions, how were these arranged?

I had my sessions online, via a video call. The first session covered all the background information, what the therapist needed to know about me, and what my approach would be to particular exercises, so that she could work out which ones to set. By the end of first session, we got onto setting some tasks for the week.

I had 6 sessions in total. You have to have sessions regularly, obviously as it's trying to re-establish a routine. It made perfect sense to have the sessions at the same time on

the same day, but they could be flexible if I needed to change an appointment because of another commitment.

Did your therapist give you any exercises or tools to practise at home?

Yes. The first one was simply keeping a diary of what I do every couple of hours. Just writing down what I did. If I'd done nothing, then that's what I wrote, and it progressed from there.

I was having issues with some of my work where problems I was trying to solve were just too big. I couldn't recognise what I needed to do in order to solve them. I should've known to break the work down into smaller tasks. It takes the knowledge of the therapist to tell you to put the brakes on and take a look at the situation.

It became clear to me in the first few sessions, 'why didn't I speak to someone the first time around?'

Keeping the diary triggered my brain to break my day down so I could manage it. The therapist also asked me to write down what I wanted to achieve from therapy, what problems did I have that I wanted to be on track to sort out myself.

I wanted relief. I wanted to get back to exercise regularly, I wanted to get out and enjoy my hobbies, re-do some of my boating courses. These were all building blocks. My first priority was to get out of a board-member role I had. I knew I had to get out as it was causing so much stress. The hardest thing for me was leaving a situation behind. But just recently I walked away from it – I'd spent two-and-half years fighting to keep it

on track for my own sense of pride. Therapy made me see it for what it really was. Ten minutes after I got home after leaving, I felt 6-feet tall. No regrets about leaving at all.

Are you still using the techniques now that your sessions have finished?

I still keep a diary; breaking tasks down – I used to do it all the time and got out of the habit. But now I write it all down. It helps to take some of the stress away from organising a task. You put it in the order it needs to be done, allocate time to each task. Then you can plan a walk, arrange to meet up with friends - it makes it all clear.

For me to accept the hole I was in was probably the hardest part of it all. I was brought up to sort out my own problems; it was a dent to my pride to realise that I couldn't. Then I realised that it's not about pride anymore; it's about relieving the pressure on yourself that you've built up in your mind.

You don't get your pride back by beating yourself up about something. You get your pride back by standing up, accepting the problem and walking away to help yourself.

I've completely rebalanced everything I do now. I make more time for myself, make sure I finish work on time and never miss my social arrangements or things I enjoy.

“ I think many more people should consider some form of therapy. It is so helpful to talk to someone about how you're feeling. ”

Would you recommend Talking Therapies?

Oh yes, in fact I already have! I know from my discussion with friends that different types of therapy suit different people in different ways. It's important to have a look, talk to someone about it. Call Community Living Well and discuss the options. I'd spoken to someone from the referrals team and was told how things would be broken down, how it worked, did this sound right for me, etc.

I certainly can't fault it, I got into it very easily. It's such a step forward to be able to self-refer. The wait time wasn't as long as I expected either, which was good. It gave me time to prepare myself for the therapy, rather than start immediately.

It was a relief to get it out in the open. I'd spoken to my GP, but it wasn't the same. To sit and talk to someone, just to get it off your chest, it takes such a weight off. And the knowledge you're going to get help, such a relief.

It's a good service; I think many more people should consider some form of therapy. It is so helpful to talk to someone about how you're feeling.

Want to find out more about Talking Therapies (IAPT)?

Talking Therapies (IAPT) provides a range of support for when you experience difficult emotions, such as low mood, anxiety and stress.

To find out more or to self-refer, go to: communitylivingwell.co.uk

Helpful Resources

We have compiled a list of resources and organisations in the Kensington and Chelsea and Queen's Park and Paddington area that you may find useful.

Crisis support

If you or someone you know needs urgent support:

- Contact your GP and ask for an urgent appointment
- Contact **Central and North West London's Single Point of Access**. This service provides a first point of contact for people experiencing a mental health crisis and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Phone: 0800 0234 650
Email: cnw-tr.spa@nhs.net

If you feel your situation is getting worst, contact 999

Helplines

For listening support, there are a number of helplines you can contact:

- **The Samaritans**

They can be contacted for free, confidential support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:
Call 116 123 or visit www.samaritans.org

- **SANEline**

Sane is a UK mental health charity and runs an out of hours mental health helpline offering specialist emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental illness, including family, friends and carers. SANEline is open 7 days a week every day of the year from 4.30pm – 10.30pm.

Call 0300 304 7000 or visit www.sane.org.uk

- **Age UK Kensington and Chelsea or Westminster**

An independent charity working in local areas, that provides a range of services for older people, including advice, support and activities.

Kensington & Chelsea Call 020 8969 9105 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/kensingtonandchelsea/#

Westminster Call 020 3004 5610 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/westminster/

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- **Al Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre**

Al Hasaniya provide practical and emotional support for women and their families. A programme of advice, advocacy and referral helps the women to deal with their problems and access mainstream NHS and voluntary services

Call 020 8969 2292 or visit www.al-hasaniya.org.uk/

- **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Cruse Bereavement Care is a national charity for people who have been bereaved. Cruse offers support to adults, young people and children to understand their grief and cope with their loss. Cruse can offer individual and group sessions.

Call 020 8964 3455 or visit www.kchf-cruse.org.uk

- **Grenfell Health and Wellbeing**

The Grenfell Health & Wellbeing Service is a free and confidential NHS service for children and adults affected by Grenfell. They provide a range of psychological therapies and support to help you feel better if you're feeling traumatised, down, stressed or have been bereaved.

Call 020 8637 6279 or visit www.grenfellwellbeing.com

- **Help Counselling**

Help Counselling offers low cost counselling and psychotherapy to a wide range of people, mainly in the west London area. As well as their core counselling service, Help offers free listening support for people in temporary accommodation, individuals and staff groups.

Call 020 7221 9974 or visit www.helpcounselling.com

- **Hestia**

Hestia provides housing and mental health day services, including free community outreach counselling service for people who need emotional support.

Call Grove Resource Centre on 020 7221 0052 or The Oremi Centre on 020 8964 0033

Visit www.hestia.org

- **Kensington and Chelsea Mind**

A local charity affiliated to national Mind that provides advice, information and signposting to local services and recovery focused support services for people who are experiencing mental health difficulties

Call 020 8964 1333 or www.kcmind.org.uk

- **Midaye Somali Development Network**

Midaye is a registered charity providing advice, advocacy, mental health support and education services for members of the Somali community. Midaye is the co-ordinating group for Grenfell Community Forum.

Call 020 8969 7456 or visit www.midaye.org.uk

- **One You Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster**

One You offer a free healthy lifestyle and stop smoking service to residents of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. They are fully funded by local councils to help residents quit smoking, lose weight, eat well and move more.

Visit www.oneyou-rbkc-westminster.org.uk/

- **SMART**

SMART is a day service offering a range of support services located in the south of the Borough, with outreach locations in north Kensington.

Call 020 7376 4668 or visit www.smartlondon.org.uk

- **Step Change**

Step Change is a debt charity that can help you deal with your debt in a manageable way. They offer free, flexible debt advice that is based on a comprehensive assessment of your situation. They can provide practical help and support for however long it's needed.

Call 0800 138 1111 or visit www.stepchange.org

- **West London Action for Children**

West London Action for Children offers a range of counselling and therapy services for children in need, and their families. They support families under stress to develop their confidence and skills to cope with the ordinary and extraordinary challenges of family life.

Call 020 7352 1155 or visit www.wlac.org.uk

Online support

- **Side-by-Side**

Side by Side is an online, moderated, peer support forum run by Mind. Side by Side is a supportive community where people can give and gain support and share experiences with people who understand, based on their own lived experience of mental health problems. .

Sign up for Side by Side at sidebyside.mind.org.uk/

- **Easy Health**

The Easy Health website provides videos and easy-read leaflets which help people with learning disabilities understand mental health issues and mental health care:

Visit www.easyhealth.org.uk

Volunteering

- **The Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea**

The Volunteer Centre recruits, supports, manages and develops volunteers.

Call 020 8960 3722 or visit www.voluntarywork.org.uk



Community
LivingWell

Working together for your wellbeing

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Contact Details

communitylivingwell.co.uk

020 3317 4200 | cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net

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Instagram: [@CLWMentalHealth](https://www.instagram.com/CLWMentalHealth)

Scan to self-refer:



Community Living Well is not a crisis service. If you are worried about your mental health or the mental health of a friend or family member then please contact the Single Point of Access on **0800 0234 650** for help, advice or support over the phone, 24 hours a day.