

Report to Charterhouse Accountants July 2022

Introduction

The UK is facing the biggest mental health crisis on record. And locally, Harrow endured the UK's highest Covid-19 deaths in first-lockdown, alarming increase in local suicide-rates and 40% increase in mental-health hospital-admissions – resulting in 60% increased demand for our services. Moreover, the supposed return to 'normality' especially for those already impacted by poor mental health has been rocked again by the Cost of Living Crisis.

In such tumultuous times – we really cannot thank you enough, for supporting us as your charity of the year – for not one, but two years from June 2021 to May 2023. Through Charterhouse's philanthropic donations of £333.33 over 24 months and your wonderful skydive we have received a grand total of £8566 to support our work - particularly our Mental Health Helpline and to train volunteers through our Volunteering Programme.

The report below provides an insight into what you have helped us achieve.

Mental Health Helpline

Your support has literally helped keep this vital service running. Our Helpline not only provides telephone support 5 days a week, but also provides service users who are experiencing more complex issues with dedicated 1:1 support and guidance.

The Helpline offers emotional and mental health support, information and advice about a wide range of services, including how to: support mental health and wellbeing, manage finances, join social groups, look for work, start a course, access help with housing or welfare benefits, apply for a personal budget, meals on wheels or care at home.

The Helpline is well used – especially by older service users who may lack confidence with technology. They appreciate being able to pick up a phone and speak directly to another person, rather than having to worry about going "online" or other "digital technologies". Our Helpline is complimented by our online and regularly updated Information Directory. Many service users, including older service users who may have initially approached us through the Helpline, have specifically commented how favourably our Helpline and complimentary Information Directory compares to other information services they have tried to use which lack clarity. With your support, over 2000 people have accessed our Mental Health Helpline & Information Service to gain support to better mental health and wellbeing.

Volunteer Training Programme

We run the ONLY local Volunteer Programme to help people experiencing poor mental-health and acute isolation.

With your help we have been able to recruit, train and support volunteers to meet the unprecedented local demand for mental health support. We have recruited, trained and supported over 30 volunteers since the pandemic– and your assistance has been instrumental in our being able to do so. Every volunteer has completed 6 training-sessions to deliver one of 4 life-saving projects; our (i)confidential Mental-Health-Helpline and Online-Mental-Health-Directory (ii)Befriending (ii)being an advocate or representative for service-users including meetings with mental-health professionals and Harrow NHS or (iv)one of our young-volunteers helping children and young-people aged 11-25 get the mental health support they need.

Each training session has been delivered by expert and experienced trainers assured by the Mind-Quality-Mark and includes mental-health-awareness, listening-skills, crisis-calls, safeguarding and knowledge about local-services.

And we know our volunteering programme makes a lasting difference. 8/10 volunteers have “lived experience” of mental health. Sharing “lived experience” is integral to our volunteering-approach and service-users repeatedly tell us this “peer-support” makes a lasting difference to their lives.

Indeed, recent 1000-strong evaluation reveals that with the support of Mind in Harrow and our team of volunteers (i)88% of service-users experience reduced isolation and improved mental health (ii)82% report “timely mental-health help in the aftermath of Covid” AND (iii)80% say it improves their capacity to cope.

“I would like to say as a person with mental health-issues, my first port-of-call is Mind in Harrow. The Helpline-Volunteers and my Befriender-Volunteer understand where I am coming from and gave me the confidence to finally reach out. You make me feel so much more confident in myself. I feel safe with you.” Aneka, Service User (2022)

Thank you to everyone at Charterhouse Accountants. You helped make this possible.