

Self Harm Interagency Network **Information Sheet**

This information sheet tells you about a new community based service for people who have self-harmed. Please ask us if the information is not clear or if you need more information.

1. Who is this service for?

This service is for people who have self harmed, or thought about it, and who have been assessed by Mental Health Services in the Western Trust.

People who self-harm often feel that they have very little support. This service offers you support and counselling from organisations in the community and voluntary sector.

2. What will happen if I agree to use this service?

The Coordinator will discuss your problems with you and together you will decide which organisation would be most suitable to help you with your difficulties. The Coordinator will then contact that organisation and arrange an appointment for you. You will get an appointment within 10 days to begin counselling.

You will be offered 10 sessions of counselling. Many people who self-harm suffer from stress or anxiety so you will be offered two sessions of either aromatherapy, reflexology or relaxation therapy. If you do not wish to use these sessions, you may be able to have extra counselling sessions instead, if you need them.

The Coordinator will provide you with emergency numbers to contact at anytime should you feel suicidal or feel like harming yourself. You can also contact the Coordinator during normal working hours if you are in distress or need advice. (See details at end of this information sheet).

The Coordinator will also provide you with information about other organisations that can help you deal with practical problems, such as, money, housing, work-related issues, divorce/separation, legal issues, welfare rights, etc.

3. Will my GP be told that I am using this service?

Yes, we will normally send a letter to tell your GP that you are using this service. If you do not want us to do this please tell the Coordinator. However, please be aware that if we have serious concerns about your mental health, or risk of suicide, and you refuse to contact your GP, we may need to contact the doctor for you.

4. Are there any risks?

Counselling can sometimes be a difficult process and can raise issues that are painful. It's important to be aware of that.

5. What happens if I agree to take part and then change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time. If you have already started your counselling you should contact the counselling service directly or the Service Coordinator on 028 71 364175 to tell us that you do not want to continue. If you have not yet started your counselling you should contact the Coordinator on 028 71 364 175. We will be able to give you information about other services that may be able to help you instead.

If you withdraw and we are very worried about your mental health or risk of suicide, we may need to contact your GP, mental health professional or next of kin as described above.

6. What happens if I do not want to take part in this service?

If you decide not to take part, the Coordinator will give you information about other services that may be able to help you. Whatever you decide to do, it won't affect any care or treatment that the mental health team or your GP may be giving you.

7. How will information about me be used – is it kept confidential?

Yes. All your personal information used in this service will be handled confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998

In order to arrange your counselling we will need to pass on your name, contact details and some brief information to the organisation that will provide you with counselling.

We need to know whether this service prevents people from self-harming again, so staff at the Western Trust will be checking your medical records to see whether you self harm again in future.

The only other time, we would share information about you is to protect you or others-

- a) If we are very concerned about your mental health or that you might seriously harm yourself we may need to contact your next of kin, GP or mental health professional.
- b) The law says that we must pass on information if anyone's safety is at risk, particularly children, or vulnerable adults, or if you tell us that you are involved in criminal activities.

8. If I have a complaint what should I do?

If you have any complaints about the services you receive each agency has its own complaints procedures and this information will be made available to you. If however you are not happy with the complaints procedures you can contact the Public Health Agency on 028 71 860086.

Important Numbers

GP out of hours no: 0870 606 2288
Lifeline (24hr helpline).....0808 808 8000
Zest (self-harm/suicide)..... 028 71 266999
Samaritans..... 028 71 265511
Gamblers Anonymous..... 028 71 351329
National Drink Helpline..... 0800 9178282
National Drugs Helpline..... 0800 776600
Childline.....0800 1111

Other Useful Numbers

Citizens Advice Bureau (debt)..... 028 71 266081
Debtline NI0800 027 4990
N.I. Housing Executive03448 920 900
DSS Helpline (benefits problems).....0844 414 3905
The Law Society (legal advice)028 90 231614
(website: www.lawsoc-ni.org)
Gingerbread (single parents).....0808 808 8090
Labour Relations (work problems)...028 71 269639