

MENTAL HEALTH HUB FOR NORTH SWINDON

The Kelly Foundation is a community mental health support charity based at Pinetrees Centre in Pinehurst, Swindon. (www.4kelly.org.) We receive no statutory funding so all the work we do with those in despair is paid for by generous donors and by us running fund raising events and concerts. We don't just provide therapeutic support but assist with practical problems including debt, substance abuse, benefits advice, housing matters and even advocating in legal matters. We call this holistic support. We have also opened and successfully operate a therapeutic café, Kells Kitchen at Pinehurst, ensuring those recovering from mental illness have a supportive and compassionate environment in which they can regain self-confidence and build self-esteem in their journey back to mainstream work. At any time we will be supporting between 50 and 60 individuals in the local community. Our services are always free and we aim to keep our waiting list as low as possible, although currently we have 26 people awaiting support, as we do not have the funding available to help these individuals.

WHY ARE WE CONCERNED

- Swindon has a higher than average suicide rate than the national average (10.8 per 100,000) (ONS)
- 1 in 5 people have Suicidal thoughts (MIND)
- 1 in 3 Suicides could be prevented if adequate treatments were provided before crisis point. (SANE)
- 78% of suicides in Swindon between 2018- 2020 were male. (JSNA)
- The highest rate of male suicide for Swindon is in this area (VCSE, SBC)
- We have intervened with a number of male service users with suicidal ideations over the last 12 months with preventative measures and mostly good outcomes. Sadly in August we were unable to save Luke Cresswell, who we had supported for a year, but who ended his life at South Marston.
- In the last 2 weeks there have been 2 male suicides in Swindon and one attempt this week.
- No organisation at a community level in North Swindon is focussed on this problem.

SOCIETAL EFFECT

Evidence clearly shows that general mental health and specifically men's mental health issues are spiralling yet, there remains hesitation in men to openly discuss their feelings and the tendency is to "soldier on" and not seek timely support. In failing to communicate or to find support, the outcomes can often be tragic. High rates of suicide, especially amongst men, drive additional challenges in Human and Financial terms.

Every individual loss is a tragedy for the family and friends they leave behind and the loss of a sometimes breadwinner can be especially destructive for families. Such traumas in themselves will drive further mental health problems for all those affected, putting further strain on an already overburdened system. It was recently established by the Borough Council Wellbeing Board that every suicide directly affects 135 people meaning over 15000 local people were affected by suicide between 2020 and 2023

The impact on first responders and other support services is massively detrimental. Witnessing such incidents and/or dealing with the physical aftermath, is traumatic for those involved. Costs associated in managing suicide attempts and/or actual suicides are huge and include road and rail closures, disruption to transport networks, medical and hospital costs, Coroner costs, funeral pressures on poor families etc.

The Mental Health Hub Project

Our plan is to offer mental health outreach and well-being support specifically targeting those in suicidal crisis via a proven, safe and effective therapeutic intervention. We plan to engage with family and friends in the care of those we see and to support individuals experiencing suicidal crises to find a new sense of hope and well-being.

This will be a unique service locally as, despite a number of other organisations seemingly involved, nobody is specifically targeting this problem in North Swindon. Those discharged from GWH after an attempt on their lives are told to see their GP. Many organisations offer online courses or group sessions which are often not appropriate or not taken up. Our plan will alleviate the pressure on hospital admissions either one-off or repeated admissions at GWH. The cost of an individual going to A&E ranges from £91-£445 and the estimated average cost of an ambulance trip is £417. Ambulance callouts which don't require an A&E referral are estimated at £287. We are expecting new GWH data this week.

Project Overview

We will offer 102 hours of support weekly with mental health outreach workers available daily from 9 AM until 11:30 PM. All individuals in crisis, in the participating parishes, will be offered a face-to-face appointment the following day without fail. A dedicated team of mental health outreach workers will provide initial contact services on a rotating schedule, crafting personalised support plans based on individual needs. Therapy options will include counselling, psychotherapy, hypnotherapy and will be provided by qualified professionals rapidly after initial contact. We will also continue our holistic approach which means we will try to establish the causes of the suicidal ideations and try to put in place actions to ameliorate those pressures on the individuals.

Timescales

Following approval of funding, in the first three months we will launch digital marketing campaigns, distribute materials in community centres, public spaces, gymnasiums, public and pub toilet cubicles and a widespread focus in all local media.

In the short term, say six months, we will monitor engagement metrics, develop and enhance community partnerships and analyse feedback for forward adjustment.

In the medium term, 12 to 18 months, we will evaluate outcomes and refine strategies based on community needs and feedback and report progress in biannual reports to funders and quarterly newsletters.

The marketing strategy aims to position the North Swindon Mental Health Hub as a vital resource within the local mental health landscape. By heightening awareness and leveraging both digital and community-based marketing strategies, we will also engage with a range of other clients who may not be suicidal, but who feel their life is chaotic, in despair, or simply see no way out.

Budget Considerations and Funding

This is planned to be a collaborative project. In January we will be meeting with the National Lottery, hope to meet the following parish councils, Haydon Wick, St Andrews, Central Swindon North, Stratton, Blunsdon and Highworth and with Swindon Borough Council

We will also meet further with the largest social landlord in North Swindon, Sovereign Housing who are keen to support this initiative.

The very approx percentage split is as follows

National Lottery 70%

Sovereign Housing 8%

The Parishes together 12%

Swindon Borough Council 10% ... These numbers are for guidance only at this stage

Local funding from the organisations described, will be conditional on the National Lottery making the most significant contribution to the three year cost programme. In the event the National Lottery are not able to support the plan, we will discontinue this particular initiative but actively continue the other services in North Swindon that we presently successfully provide

Consistent with other initiatives that the Kelly Foundation offer, this will be a highly cost-effective plan with expected annual costs for access, monitoring, support administration and feedback in the region of £164,000 per annum over the three years. This is made up as follows with budget estimates and are illustrations for guidance only at this stage:

Salaries of MH Workers £120k

Follow up bought in therapy @ £20 ph £30K

Admin £6K

Media £8k

Total £164K

The Political Landscape

The new Member of Parliament is dedicated to this initiative and has publicly expressed his intention to seek to bring it to reality. He and his office will do everything possible to facilitate the programme by direct intervention and his support to potential funders. The present government has recently proposed additional funding for local mental health programmes and it's unclear at the moment how these monies will be distributed, although it's likely they will be available to local councils or to the integrated care alliance teams, but this is something that Will Stone is presently investigating. Swindon Borough Councils stated priorities in the Swindon Plan is also to address weaknesses in the local mental healthcare landscape and this initiative talks directly to those published objectives.

Measuring Outcomes

Outcomes will be measured by using qualitative and quantitative methods. Standardised assessment tools, especially the Warwick-Edinburgh mental well-being scale will be employed. Additionally, follow-up surveys with Red-Amber-Green coding will review client progress. We will focus on user feedback, collecting qualitative data via interviews and focus groups and finally we

will undertake data analysis, proven statistical methodology to identify trends and correlations between service usage and health outcomes.

Matters for Further Consideration

- a) Risk assessments will be carried out on each individual especially those with criminal convictions, currently on probation and any pending court cases. We will not have associates who can support psychotic or sociopathic behaviours and those will be referred to AWP, with whom we presently have a close working relationship

- b) The question of individuals referring who are not part of the North Swindon funding group is problematical. At the present time our plan is to undertake initial engagement in the same way as we would for all clients, but in those cases where they are not part of the North Swindon parishes, we will take urgent action to refer them to third party organisation including Ipsum, Mind or Willows, who should be able to provide support

In the Long Term

If we can demonstrate the efficacy of this project it would be our plan to expand the service into the remainder of Swindon subject to being able to identify the funding necessary.

John Astooke

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The Kelly Foundation

www.4kelly.org

Tel 07836 609369

Registered Charity Number 120038



