

Mental Health Task Group
Basic Survey – summary of responses

7 organisations responded to the survey:

1. Signpost
2. The Living Room
3. YC Hertfordshire
4. Hertfordshire Mind Network
5. Guideposts Trust
6. New Hope
7. Watford Mencap

Of these, 71.43% were affiliated to a national/county-wide organisation or one with branches outside Watford. 28.57% were not.

Organisations outlined the purpose of their organisations:

Signpost	To provide mental health counselling for young people between the ages of 11 and 25 years of age who live in Hertfordshire. Counselling sessions are 1:1 and last up to 12 weekly one hour sessions and for longer dependent on need. Mental issues range from anxiety, self-harm suicidal attempts/thoughts, abuse (domestics, physical, emotional and sexual) as well as gender identity and gender issues.
The Living Room	To help people living in Hertfordshire to become (and remain) abstinent from their addiction to drugs, alcohol or addictive behaviours.
YC Hertfordshire	To provide youth work projects and programmes, information, advice, guidance, work related learning, outdoor education and support for young people aged 11-19 (to 24 for young people with learning disabilities). For young people leaving care, support is provided to the age of 21. YC Hertfordshire is part of Hertfordshire County Council. Its Personal Advisers and Youth Workers are professionally trained to provide the highest level of support and work closely with partners to provide counselling, mentoring or access to other services.
Hertfordshire Mind Network	To deliver essential mental health support in Hertfordshire, providing a diverse range of services from our seven Wellbeing Centres and other venues across all ten districts of the county. Funded locally, our services are available to all residents in Hertfordshire over the age of 18 and we offer dedicated services for 15-18 year olds. Our aim is to create opportunities for individuals experiencing mental ill health to make choices, find their solutions, build resilience and manage their whole life and wellbeing. All our services are based on the principle of self-help with a strong emphasis on prevention, personal development, self-management and improving health and wellbeing. We work with people,

	providing opportunities for individuals to access support to enable them to recover from or live with mental ill health.
Guideposts Trust	To provide a supportive, safe space for people with mental health issues to improve their mental wellbeing, reduce social isolation, and provide a purpose in life. We provide a range of group activities, skill based training, and one-to-one support.
New Hope	To serve individuals who are homeless or vulnerably-housed in the local area through the provision of accommodation and opportunities to transform lives.
Watford Mencap	To support people with lifelong learning disabilities such as autism and Down's syndrome to reach their full potential. We also support their carers and family members

Organisations outlined their main strengths:

Signpost	Our main strength is early intervention preventing crisis for children who are younger than 13 years of age and do not qualify for CAMHS. Thus averting or preventing a crisis. Signpost also provides emergency support while a young person is waiting for services or on other waiting lists. For example the gender clinic waiting list is 12 months. Signpost is able to help at unbelievably difficult times. In addition, CAMHS (which Signpost is contracted to deliver) finishes after 12 weeks. Signpost is able to give long term counselling if required.
The Living Room	Our core values: We are caring to clients and each other. We are customer focused when prioritising our work and activities. We support and serve our community. We ensure we are competent in performing our duties. We value our integrity as professionals.
YC Hertfordshire	YC Hertfordshire has a wide range of youth work projects across the county in which young people are encouraged to get involved. Through these projects they meet new people, learn new skills and take part in challenging opportunities. They are encouraged to develop their personal and social skills by taking part in activities including sports, drama, dance, music, workshops, outdoor education, DofE, forums, residential and volunteering. YC Hertfordshire can help young people with the issues which are important to them such as jobs, careers and education, relationships, sexual health, confidence, self-esteem, substance misuse, staying safe, housing and independent living skills.

Hertfordshire Mind Network	We offer a diverse range of services, from 1-1 support, to groups, outreach services, wellbeing and educational courses as well as a counselling service. We pride ourselves that the majority of our staff have their own lived in experience.
Guideposts Trust	We have good links with CMHT. We provide support for people who have long-term more complex mental health issues. The clients support each other a lot. We also involve the clients a lot in decision making to ensure they have a say in how projects develop. We also have clients who run their own groups to develop new skills and confidence.
New Hope	It is the way New Hope engages with and supports those who are homeless or vulnerably housed who can present with multiple needs (e.g. mental health, physical health, no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and substance misuse). It is also the partnership work with Watford Borough Council, CGL, HYH, YMCA, CAB, Meadowell and Watford job centre.
Watford Mencap	We are innovative and willing to try new ways of working. We also provide a wide range of services from after-school clubs and LEGO clubs through to residential care. We have something for everyone aged 0 – 99.

The main challenges identified by organisations were:

- Securing adequate funding and resources for their activities in an increasingly business like charity sector
- Attracting and recruiting qualified volunteers
- Maintaining the levels of support required for people with mental health issues
- Working with a range of organisations to address complex needs including mental health issues
- Overcoming social stigmas.

Between them, these organisations cater for all age groups in the local community. All allow for self-referral with other arrangements also in place, particularly for under-18s.

Organisations have assisted between 200 and 1,500 people each over the past 12 months, with half of respondents stating that this was more than the previous 12 month period.

Just over half had heard of Watford Borough Council's mental health champion.

Apart from funding, the following forms of assistance were suggested from the council:

- advertising and promoting the groups' services
- helping to make contact with other agencies and charities in the area that might work with clients who have issues around addiction
- providing guest speakers to groups.

Other best practice suggestions included:

- encouraging safeguarding training to help identify when a young person is anxious or troubled in companies – as well as adopting it in WBC – to help mental health well-being in the workplace
- work holistically – work on the root cause of the problem and do not just deal with the symptoms. Be accessible to as wide-a-section of the community as possible - consider a crèche to allow single parents easy access
- adopt an LGBTQ+ champion
- allow people with mental health issues to volunteer for short periods of time at the council to gain work experience
- consider Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) and Trauma Informed Care training – adapting services to become more PIE, in the way they are designed and in the way officers interact with service users.