

Wandsworth Drug and Alcohol Services

April Bulletin 2020

Due to the recent events with COVID-19 we have had to reduce our service provision to help keep the most vulnerable safe. We have temporarily had to reduce our face to face appointments to a minimum, which means that we have moved to telephone contact for initial assessment, key working and psychological therapy. We have also paused onsite groups and events. We are maintaining prescribing, needle exchange and detox planning, though we have made changes to how often people will need to travel for these services. We will keep updating you whenever we have more information, both about service provision and alternative remote support. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

New Contract Start

A warm welcome to CDARS Day Programme who have joined the Consortium to deliver substance use disorder services across Wandsworth (WCDAS) and Richmond (RCDAS). Please ask your usual key worker about the range of offers you can access around the service now, and we will update here as things develop.

Harm Reduction & Drug Treatment "Essential journey" cards

Release have created cards for you to use should you need to leave the house to pick up your medication or harm reduction equipment, or both. The importance of this is to ensure that your journey is treated as an essential one as outlined in the Government's rules around movement during the coronavirus. Ask your key worker if you require a printed version.

I am prescribed essential medication. It is vital for my health that I am able to visit the pharmacy/drugs treatment service despite any lockdown or travel restrictions due to the coronavirus outbreak.

My local treatment provider is:

[.....]

If you need advice contact Release on
020 7324 2989

Talk Wandsworth Workshops

In response to the latest guidelines around COVID-19, workshops are currently not being delivered face to face. However, Talk Wandsworth are continuing to provide wellbeing workshops through other platforms. Currently they are delivering 1-1 telephone wellbeing workshops to clients, covering stress, anger, self-care and more. If you would like to book on to these, please register via Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/talk-wandsworth-south-west-london-st-georges-nhs-trust-16811028183>

To reduce the risk of blood-borne viruses and other harms, it is essential that I am able to visit the pharmacy/drugs treatment service to collect new harm reduction equipment, despite any lockdown or travel restrictions due to the coronavirus outbreak.

If you need legal advice contact Release on
020 7324 2989

Gas & Electricity support

If clients are receiving benefits and are in crisis or an emergency they can apply for a 'crisis payment' from Wandsworth Council. It comes in the form of Sainsbury's vouchers for food, and PayPoint vouchers for gas and electricity. Applications can be made here: http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/hcwh_benefits_discretionary_social_fund. Major gas and electricity companies will also send individuals who have to self-isolate 2 weeks' worth of gas/electricity or they will top-up their smart meter if they have one.

Evictions on Hold

Due to COVID-19, all private and social housing evictions nation-wide have been put on hold for March – June.

Client Access to Breaking Free Online – online CBT self-help for substance use

Breaking Free Online are offering all our service users free access to their online CBT self-help platform. It will work on any internet enabled device – computer, phone, iPad etc.

The offer is free, and once a service user signs up their licence remains active for as long as they use the programme. Service users can also add supporters email addresses to their accounts via the ‘my settings’, should they wish to share their work and progress reports at distance.

We would encourage all service users to create an account as an additional source of support.

Please ask your key worker for your pass code.

Alcohol Availability in Wandsworth

Wandsworth Council have confirmed that off licences and corner shops selling alcohol will remain open on the basis that they sell essential items (i.e. milk, bread, cheese etc). Larger food stores will obviously remain open for the same reason and should continue to sell alcohol. We are therefore not expecting a limited supply of alcohol across in our borough, there is nothing to indicate that there will be any issues with the alcohol supply chain either.

Coronavirus and your wellbeing

The mental health charity, Mind, have prepared a list of useful resources, as well as practical advice, for people who may be struggling during the coronavirus pandemic.

This information is to help you cope if:

- you're feeling anxious or worried about coronavirus
- you're staying at home and avoiding public places, following Government advice that we should stay at home as much as possible
- you are self-isolating because you, or someone you live with, has symptoms of coronavirus.

And it covers:

- Practical advice for staying at home
- Taking care of your mental health and wellbeing
- Support for work, benefits and housing
- Checklist for staying at home

It can be found on <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

Another helpful resource for all things coronavirus (e.g. general info, support for families, support for those self-isolating, advice for businesses): <https://mypickle.org/coronahub/>

Online AA, NA, and CA meetings

These are for clients who are struggling to attend meetings, also many meetings have now closed due to Covid-19.

- Alcoholics Anonymous are now offering online meetings via the Zoom platform and can be accessed here <https://alcoholicsanonymouslondon.com/online/zoom-meetings/>
- Narcotics Anonymous are also offering online meetings via Zoom. They can be found on <https://ukna.org/online>
- Cocaine Anonymous online meetings can be accessed via <https://meetings.cocaineanonymous.org.uk/meetings/?tsml-day=any&tsml-type=ONLINE>

Richmond and Wandsworth Council COVID-19 Helpline

Telephone Number: 0208 871 6555

Email

Address: covid19support@richmondandwandsworth.h.gov.uk

How to access support

*Telephone self-referral for assessment
Battersea and Tooting*

Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9AM -11:30AM

*WCDAS Battersea: St. John's Therapy Centre, 162 St John's Hill, SW11 1SW.
Tel: 0208 8124120*

*WCDAS Tooting: 1079 Garratt Lane, London, SW17 0LN.
Tel: 0203 228 8080*

Recovery Hub: Tel: 0207 501 2615

CDARS Day Programme: 0207 498 6149

Workers linked to GP surgeries: Chatfield, Mayfield, Heathbridge, Battersea Fields, Putney Mead, Tudor Lodge, Bollingbrook, Lavender Hill, Danebury, Balham Park.

Housing for Rough Sleepers

Local Authorities have been asked to temporarily house all rough sleepers. If you are rough sleeping, or are aware of someone who is, please contact Street Link <https://www.streetlink.london/>

Community Hub

Elderly and/or vulnerable without support networks, who need support to access medical/care services and food supplies can get help through the Community Hub. Please contact 0208 871 6555 or email covid19support@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Remote Learning Opportunities

We have developed a resource of online learning opportunities which people can make use of at home. These include learning new languages, live musical performances, mental health and wellbeing, and physical exercise, among many more.

Please contact WCDAS if you would like to request a copy of the list.

Free Guide To Living With Worry And Anxiety Amidst Global Uncertainty

Psychology Tools have created a free guide to help people experiencing anxiety and excessive worries about the global pandemic and its related effects on everyday life. It includes a mixture of psychoeducation about normal and excessive worry, lots of normalization, and a selection of practical exercises that anyone can use to manage worry and maintain well-being in these uncertain times.

<https://www.psychologytools.com/articles/free-guide-to-living-with-worry-and-anxiety-amidst-global-uncertainty/>

How to Respond Effectively to the Coronavirus Crisis

Dr Russ Harris, author of the international best-selling self-help book 'The Happiness Trap' has created a video with tips on how to manage worries about the COVID-19 pandemic, using principles from Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmvNCdpHUYM>

CDARS Online Groups and Blogs

CDARS continues to support client through 'virtual' work on Skype, Zoom and telephone/face time work. Chris Robin is writing twice weekly blogs which can be found on <https://enigma-drugs-consultancy.co.uk/> - these look at different aspects of recovery during these times. From Monday 6th April CDARS will be running daily groups through Zoom. To find out how to access these please ring Tim Tweedy on 0207 498 6149. Stay safe, protect the NHS and access support through 'virtual' means - connection is different right now, but it still exists.

The latest blog by Chris Robin is called 'The Fox and Cravings' and can be found here: <https://enigma-drugs-consultancy.co.uk/2020/04/02/the-fox-and-cravings/>

The Recovery café is open, (Hestia)

They are providing mental health support mostly over the phone. 07794394920, Mon-Fri- 6PM-11PM and weekends and bank holidays, 12PM-11PM. This service is for Richmond and Wandsworth residents.

Domestic Violence During the Pandemic

As reported, there has been a spike in domestic violence-related incidents (25%), so Refuge and Hestia are offering telephone support on 0808 2000 247

Chems and Chemsex Resources re COVID-19

Please see the helpful resource put together by London Friend: <https://londonfriend.org.uk/chemsex-and-coronavirus/>

Citizens Advice

In the midst of the pandemic, CA have stopped all face to face services, and temporarily closed their Battersea Library and Roehampton Centres to clients. They have replaced future face to face appointments with telephone call-back appointments. (03003301169 – Mon-Fri 10-4).

They have extended their Advice line assessment service capacity and are offering call-backs to callers who need more than an assessment and have developed a [webpage](#) containing information on rights at work, and new rules on attending medical assessments, specifically for people impacted by the current situation.

Beyond Food Additional Support

The graphic is a vertical banner for Beyond Food's COVID-19 support line. It features the Beyond Food logo at the top left, followed by the text 'COVID-19 SUPPORT LINE' in large white letters on a dark blue background. Below this, it says 'BEYOND FOOD HAVE LAUNCHED A SUPPORT LINE' in white on an orange background. A dark blue section contains the text 'If you, or someone you know, is struggling with:'. The next five sections are orange with white text and icons: 'LONELINESS' (phone icon), 'MENTAL HEALTH' (head with heart icon), 'MANAGING YOUR MONEY OR MAKING PAYMENTS' (calculator icon), 'THE BENEFITS SYSTEM' (document icon), and 'GETTING FOOD OR MEDICAL SUPPLIES IN ISOLATION' (apple and pill icon). The bottom section is dark blue with white text: 'Email support@beyondfood.org.uk with your' followed by a list: name, phone number, issue, and best time to call back [9am-12pm, 12pm-4pm, 4pm-8pm]. It also says 'or visit www.beyondfood.org.uk' and includes an icon of a person with a speech bubble.

We have amassed an army of professional volunteers from a variety of fields, in addition to our own experienced staff, who will be on hand to advise and counsel anyone in need. Initially we opened this service for our own beneficiaries, but we are now extending to support anyone who finds themselves in a position of hardship during this time.

We offer five arms of support:

- financial hardship advice
- loneliness companionship
- getting food or medical supplies in isolation
- support navigating the benefits system
- mental health and wellbeing counselling (offered by vetted, qualified volunteers)

Support can be requested through our website (www.beyondfood.org.uk) or via email support@beyondfood.org.uk. One of our Beyond Food team will call back during the requested time frame and discuss the issue, matching the caller with the appropriate service and co-ordinating support.

We are partnering with other charities and organisations to ensure we can support as many people as possible in their time of need. In these strange times of isolation, we aim to provide another ear to listen, another shoulder to support, another voice to encourage. It is also important to acknowledge that it is not only those classed as vulnerable that need support during this time (or ever!), and so this service will be available to all.

Service User Hub at 229

The hub is closed during the COVID19 pandemic. We will update as soon as it is safe to re-open to resume usual business. Please contact WCDAS core sites if you require additional support while the hub is closed.

