

Active support for mental health issues

Personalised over-the-phone support is now available to help people with mental health issues – thanks to a £1/2 million grant to Mind Cymru from the Welsh government and the Wales Council for Voluntary Action.

The funding has enabled MindCymru to develop an Active Monitoring programme for mild to moderate mental health problems. Covering a range of issues including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and stress, it's a free, one-to-one service, to help people manage their own mental health.

And Conwymind, which rolled out Active Monitoring in mid-June, has already reported a marked improvement in the mental wellbeing of people who have accessed the programme.

The scheme is interactive, and includes five telephone sessions with an Active Monitoring practitioner, alongside self-directed workbooks.

Individuals can refer themselves, rather than waiting for a GP referral. And access to the scheme is easy: appointments can be booked on the Mind website www.mind.org.uk/AMWales. Active Monitoring practitioners will hold initial assessments with people, to ensure the service is appropriate, before commencing the 5 week course.

“This is such a difficult time for people and we know that lockdown has had a huge impact on people's mental wellbeing. Timely support is vital to make sure moderate mental health problems don't get worse,” said Denise Roberts, Chief Executive of Conwymind.

“Our Active Monitoring practitioners can make a very real difference to people struggling with a wide range of mental health and emotional problems. We provide the tools and the ongoing support to help them to take care of themselves and manage their mental health.”

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Further information from:

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Active Monitoring practitioners will hold initial assessments with people, to ensure the service is appropriate before assigning them to one of seven pathways:

- Anxiety
- Anger Management
- Depression
- Feeling Alone
- Grief and Loss
- Self Esteem
- Stress

They will then receive five telephone sessions with their Active Monitoring practitioner over six weeks, and complete self-directed workbooks.

Zoe, from Brecon, has anxiety and used the Active Monitoring service in 2018. She said: “Active Monitoring was hugely positive for me. I was given a range of tools to help me manage my anxiety, some of which I still use now.

“I’ve had help through many different services over the years, including counselling, but this has definitely been the most beneficial to me. It taught me not to be too hard on myself, which is something I really struggled with. I’d recommend Active Monitoring to anyone who feels like they need help.”

Ruth Marks, CEO of WCVA, added: “We know that the Covid-19 crisis has had a huge impact on many people’s mental health but because of the crisis, the delivery of traditional services is not possible. Therefore it is vital that those who need support are able to access help safely from their homes.

“We are delighted that funding from the Voluntary Services Emergency Fund will now help Mind Cymru to deliver the Active Monitoring programme on a larger scale across Wales.”