

Celebrating one year of Steps to Wellness

Service users in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust have embraced virtual group sessions to access timely treatment for common mental health problems.

The Steps to Wellness initiative was introduced in the Trust a year ago as a new virtual way of working to provide greater levels of education and treatment for those referred to primary mental health care.

Over the past 12 months, the service has made contact with around 1,500 people including over 600 people completing treatment and/or signposted to other services in the community and voluntary sector.

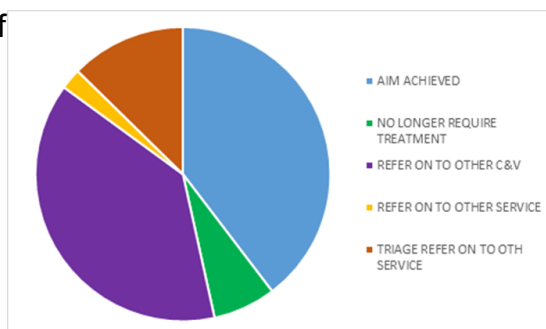
The service, the first in NI to adopt an IAPT-aligned model, provides Step 2 and Step 3 evidence based, recovery focused psychological interventions to individuals who meet the criteria and are referred to the Primary Mental Health Care.

The Trust's collaboration with East London Foundation Trust (ELFT), GP's, individuals with lived experience and how it has been received by the public has led to the success of this new initiative with improved service user outcomes.

Who we have seen and their outcomes

Since last March, we have discharged 1354 people, 600 of these were discharged due to finishing treatment and/or being referred or signposted on to community services (see pie chart).

We have had a total of 45 groups run including Group treatments for Perinatal Low Mood, Anxiety/Worry, Depression, Social anxiety, Panic, OCD, and Living Well with Long Term Conditions.



Meet the team

We have a total of 18.5 WTE staff members with another 1.0 Band 5 vacant post to fill. The team consists of a mix of CBT therapists, Nurses, Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWPs), support worker and admin staff. Staff have adapted excellently to a new way of working and their achievements have been published in a CBT Today article.



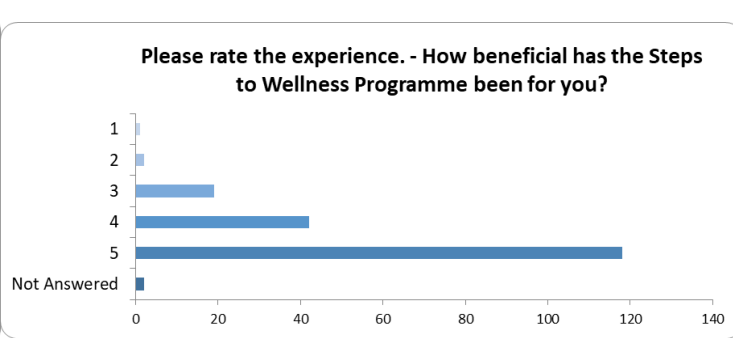
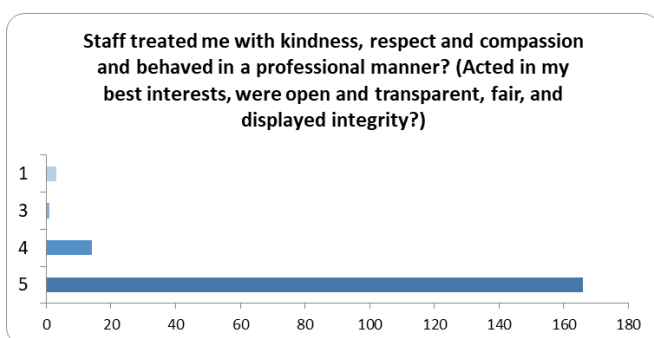
How can I access the service?

We accept referrals from GP only. They can offer advice on how Steps to Wellness may help you and they can refer to us on your behalf. Currently we are not accepting self-referrals. If you are interested in accessing the service, please discuss this with your GP.

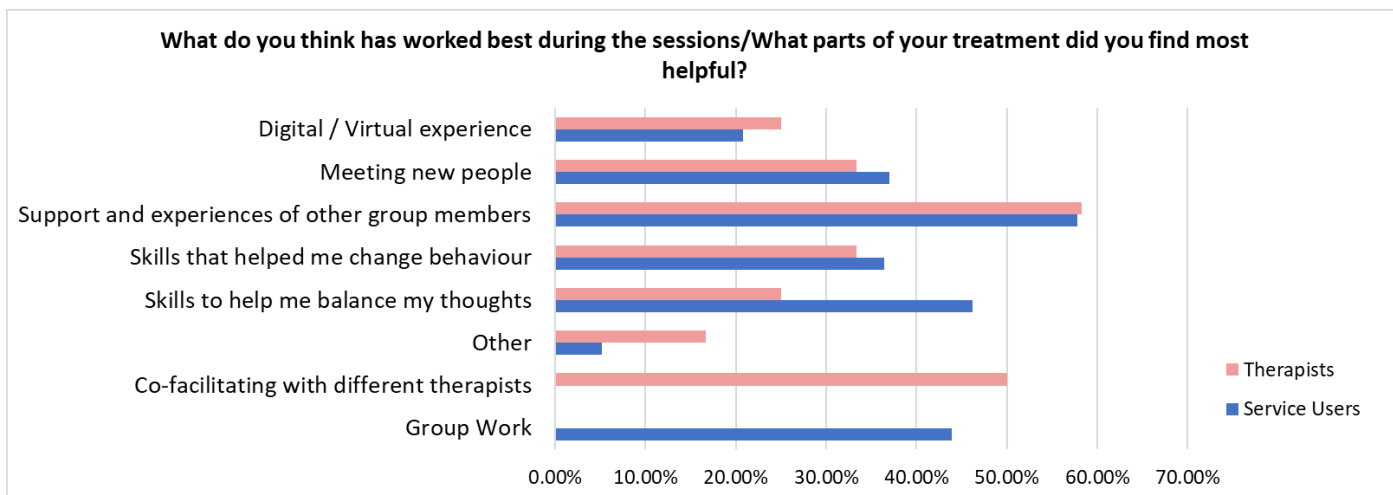
Steps to increase service user feedback

We have been gathering feedback from service users at the start and end of all treatments since the service began. So far 50% of those service users have left feedback and 28% have left qualitative feedback.

We have now started a formal QI project aimed at increasing qualitative service user feedback. The project group consists of several Steps to Wellness leads, two therapists, a QI coach and three service users. The team have attended a workshop on collecting feedback in which a service user spoke about the importance of feedback. We will share the results with you in the coming months.



Steps to Wellness therapists and service users generally agree on the most helpful elements of treatment—the group aspect.



“Sarah and Neil were very attentive to all members of the group. They spent the time on issues that mattered to the group. I would like to thank them very much because 10 weeks ago I wouldn't have believed I would be feeling as positive about myself and the future as I am now at the end of the group.”

“I found the group more helpful than I had expected”

“I had reservations about therapy as a group, but it actually really helped. Each of us had something to add for the others and take away from the others. Completely different situations but the same thoughts and feelings.”