



Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub Phase 1 – an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

06 January 2022

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Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment**

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1. NHS 24's Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments

If you would like us to consider producing this report in a different format, please contact us by:

Phone: 0800 22 44 88

Email: enquiries@nhs24.scot.nhs.uk

NHS 24 has a legal duty to show due regard to the elimination of discrimination, the advancement of equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The relevant protected characteristics are:

Age

Disability

Gender reassignment

Pregnancy and maternity

Race

Religion and belief

Sex

Sexual orientation

Marriage and civil partnership (relates to the elimination of discrimination only)

Socio-economic status

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments consider the impact that changes to our services, policies or functions will have on people with the relevant protected characteristics.

The recommendations made in this report seek to improve equality of access and to help meet the specific needs of people with the relevant protected characteristics, where possible.

It is appropriate to highlight that the impact assessment also considers if the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub service has the potential to impact on an individual's human rights.

Where appropriate, health inequalities are also considered. Health inequalities are disparities in health outcomes between individuals or groups. Health inequalities arise because of inequalities in society, in the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age.

Health inequalities are influenced by a wide range of factors including access to education, employment and good housing; equitable access to healthcare; individuals' circumstances and behaviours, such as their diet and how much they drink, smoke or exercise; and income levels.

This report is a summary of the process used to undertake the impact assessment. It includes the minimum background information on the particular policy, service or function being assessed. If after reading this summary report you would find it helpful to have access to additional information, please contact:

nhs24.engagementteam@nhs24.scot.nhs.uk

2. An Introduction to NHS 24

NHS 24

NHS 24 is the national provider of digital and telephone based health and care services for Scotland. We provide people with access to information, care and advice through multiple channels including telephone, web and online.

We work in collaboration with partners, the public and our people to co-design services using technology and a digital first approach to sustainable service development and delivery.

Our Services

111

NHS 24 is best known for providing care and advice when GP practices and pharmacies are closed. People across Scotland can call NHS 24 using the free phone number 111. This gives people access to help and advice if they cannot wait until their GP practice reopens.

From 01 December 2020, people are now being asked to call 111 - day or night - if they feel they require urgent care treatment. The purpose of this new pathway is to support those people who turn to Accident and Emergency Departments across Scotland for healthcare advice and treatment to receive the right care, at the right time and by the right healthcare professional. Additionally, this new pathway will help keep people and staff safe from the COVID-19 virus, by reducing the numbers of patients in Accident and Emergency waiting areas.

Health Information and Support Services

NHS 24 provides access to evidence based health information and support through a range of different services including:

- NHS inform
- Care Information Scotland
- National smoking cessation service Quit Your Way

NHS inform hosts a Self Help Guide and Scotland’s Services Directory to signpost to other relevant services.

Scottish Emergency Dental Service

This service delivers advice and support on dental health and dental services to the people of Scotland during the out-of-hours period. Patients who contact NHS 24 with dental symptoms are assessed by Dental Nurses, the Scottish Emergency Dental Service (SEDS) booking Hub then direct the patient to the relevant dental care pathway.

Mental Health Hub

In March 2019, the Mental Health Hub was established and fully trained expert Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners joined the workforce at NHS 24 to provide Psychological Triage Assessments to the public in need of this support. Continually evolving and expanding the service, the Mental Health Hub is now also working closely with the Scottish Ambulance Service and Police Scotland to support them when dealing with vulnerable people.

Breathing Space

Breathing Space is a confidential phone and web based service for people in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. Breathing Space offers a listening and signposting service for people experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety about issues such as family and relationship difficulties.

NHS Living Life

NHS Living Life is an NHS 24 appointment based telephone service offering Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Guided Self-help (GSH) using a CBT approach.

3. Aim/Purpose of the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub

This service, comes under the management responsibility of the Director of Service Delivery.

The NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub service has been live as a test of change since March 2019 (Stage One) and aims to provide people with mental health needs with a compassionate and expert, right care, right time response.

Operational hours during the initial Test of Change were Thursday to Sunday, 6pm until 2am. Since 30 March 2020 hours have been extended to 6pm to 2am seven days per week. Stage Two, introduced in July 2020 saw further expansion to provide the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub service 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As part of the COVID-19 response, additional developments will see the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub provide a new helpline for Health and Social Care staff to access Mental Health and Wellbeing support from the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub. This provides a new dedicated route for staff into the service, separate from the main 111 route.

Also, as part of the Covid-19 response, Scottish Government also now asked NHS 24 to commence with Distress Brief Intervention. A Distress Brief Intervention is a short and supportive problem solving contact with an individual in distress. Distress is defined as ‘An emotional pain for which the person sought, or was referred for, help and which does not require (further) emergency service response’. This will be offered to people aged 16 and over. Distress Brief Intervention does not replace existing arrangements for anyone in distress who requires further medical treatment, it is an additional option for frontline staff to offer to these individuals. The Distress Brief Intervention

approach emerged from the Scottish Government’s work on the Suicide Prevention and Mental Health strategies and aims to equip people with the skills and support to manage their own mental health and to prevent future crises. It is a two-level approach.

- NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub staff trained in Level 1, which involves a compassionate response, signposting and offer of referral to a Distress Brief Intervention level two service.
- Level two is provided by commissioned and trained third sector staff who contact the person within 24 hours from referral. They provide compassionate community-based problem solving support, wellness and distress management planning, supported connections and signposting for a period of up to 14 days.

NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub Operational Model

The operational model is based on an inbound system, which means that service users, who contact NHS 24 using the 111 number, select an interactive voice response option to be put directly through to the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub during operational hours. The call is then taken and triaged by a Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner who takes the patients personal information to create a contact record, assess the patient, and endpoint the call appropriately or transfer to a Mental Health Nurse if required. Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner’s utilise floor support from Senior Charge Nurses or Mental Health Nurse Practitioners to support their decision-making.

Calls triaged by the core service as requiring a Mental Health Nurse can be transferred directly to a nurse if available, or they can be assigned to await a one, two or three-hour call back.

4. Assessment of Impact

Based on the data and information available, consideration was given to the following:

1. Who is intended to benefit from this service and in what way?
2. How people have been involved in the development of this service?
3. What outcomes are intended from the service?
4. If the service would have an adverse impact on a person because of their protected characteristics

- 5. If the service would have an adverse impact on an individual's human rights
- 6. If the service would have an adverse impact in relation to health inequalities

Recommendations intended to take account of these considerations are contained within section five.

5. Recommendations for changes to the NHS 24 111 Mental Health service

In order to meet the general equality duty, comply with the obligations of the Human Rights Act, and taking into consideration health inequalities, including socio-economic impact, the following recommendations should be implemented:

- 1. To support NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub staff in their role, staff should receive bespoke equality and diversity training. This training should highlight the challenges faced by the people in Scotland, including those arriving in the country as an asylum seeker or refugee, and Gypsy/Travellers, black and minority ethnic people, disabled people, how a person's sexual orientation and gender status can impact on their health and wellbeing and age. The impact that poverty has on people should be included within the training.
- 2. This training should also provide a focus on intersectionality, and how people's relevant protected characteristics can impact on each other, for example, age and hearing loss.
- 3. When promoting the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub, consideration should be given to producing information in alternative formats and languages. The NHS 24 Engagement Team can offer advice on the types of formats that will make the service more accessible for disabled people and the most commonly requested languages for people whose first or preferred language is not English. All promotional film clips, including BSL versions, should be subtitled and contain voice over wherever possible.
- 4. The Engagement Team to continue to develop and refine a stakeholder engagement plan that recognizes the need for effective community engagement amongst the diverse population of Scotland taking account of peoples relevant protected characteristics, poverty and geographical location.

5. The Engagement Team to facilitate an introduction of the [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#) service to the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub. The purpose of the introduction is to raise awareness between both organisations of the services that they offer and to identify and agree if any adjustments to communication will improve the experience of the person accessing the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub.
6. Explore the potential to send out relevant information on mental health wellbeing to callers to the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub by email to their personal email accounts to allow them to refer to the information as required.
7. Consider the impact of current high profile societal issues, including sectarianism, and engage with relevant Scottish Government funded third sector organisations to raise awareness amongst staff of these issues and how this can impact of a person's mental health. Discuss ways in which to de-escalate conflict and contribute to the staff member's continuous professional development.
8. Monitor and profile the caller type to the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub by age, gender and postcode and consider ways of engaging with people where an underrepresentation is identified.
9. Engage with Scottish Government funded third sector organisations to discuss and consider the steps that can be taken to improve access to the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub for Trans people, including using inclusive language and providing a focus on the reason that the person called rather than their gender reassignment status.
10. Monitor and profile the caller type by use of Language Line and language requested.
11. Engage with organisations such as 'See Me', Scotland's programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination. 'See Me' has published a [report](#) which highlights Polish men in Scotland are dying by suicide at nearly twice the average rate.
12. Through engagement within participants of the group previously known as the 'Breathing Space National Helpline Development Group', or similar forums, establish contact with other national helpline services, sharing learning, raising awareness of each other services, and developing best practice.

It is not believed the changes recommended in this section will create any new, adverse, impacts in relation to a person’s relevant protected characteristics.

6. Consultation

It was considered appropriate to allow for an 8 week consultation period. This included other NHSScotland Health Boards, NHS 24 staff, and a range of third sector organisations in Scotland representing the views and experiences of people with the relevant protected characteristics. This was done by providing consultees with a copy of draft findings, and guidance on how to frame a response. The draft findings were posted on the ‘Get involved’ section of the NHS 24 web site and flagged as available for comment. The NHS Engagement Team were available to meet with any people or organisations who wanted to discuss the draft findings before submitting any comments.

We received one formal response from the voluntary / third sector and welcomed the offer made by the responder to engage with us to better support people who have an eye condition with their mental health.

7. Monitoring and Review

Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the impact, planned and unplanned, of the Mental Health Hub will be put in place with a further equality and diversity impact assessment being considered during the financial year 2022 - 2023.

Signed	Steph Phillips
Designation	Director of Service Delivery
Date	06 January 2022

Annex A

Who carried out the impact assessment?

The impact assessment of service was carried out by the following NHS 24 staff, each of which were involved in the development or delivery of the NHS 24 111 Mental Health Hub service. Gail MacGregor, Mandie McKay, Lisa MacDonald, Charmaine Blaize, Carol Anne Scott, Jacqui Stevenson and Chloe Duffus. Davie Morrison, the NHS 24 Participation and Equalities Manager also took part and facilitated this session.