

Executive Summary

In 2013, Norwich MIND conducted a set of interviews with those attending the mental health first aid program in Norwich and North and South Norfolk. A database of responses was created in October 2013. 61 sets of interview notes were provided for this analysis.

The interview was divided up into three sections, asking questions on service awareness, patient experience and expectation and need.

Service Awareness

- The Wellbeing service in Norfolk and Waveney was not known to >78% of service users, prior to using the service.
- Service users heard about the service through their GP. Printed material, and 'word of mouth' were other main sources of information.
- Greater than 83% of users found the service easy to access with the majority doing so by telephone. However, some experienced problems and delays in getting a response.
- Service users would like to be able to self refer to the service using the telephone. However other forms of contact are also preferred, including GP referral, internet and face to face contact.

Patient Experience

- Courses are generally well received and highly regarded by service users. However, there were some issues. There were concerns about the suitability of the course for the individual and the quality of the course provided.
- There are high levels of satisfaction with the service and with the staff.
- There is a preference for one to one counselling and more service options being offered.
- The two main concerns are poor communication with the service and long waiting times for a response from the service and to attend what is on offer.
- 70% of service users felt the service helped improve their wellbeing. 14% were unsure or felt the service helped a little. 16% felt the service did not help improve their wellbeing.
- While service users reported that their condition was under control, others felt that more and ongoing support was needed.
- Improved communication, increased contact and reduced waiting times were the three main themes that would have made the experience better. Improved courses and more serviced options were also suggested.
- The group sessions and individual counselling sessions were regarded as the most helpful services. The staff were also considered particularly good. Other factors mentioned were the printed materials provided and continuing support.

Expectation and Need

- Service users would expect to see a service that was specific to their needs. They would also like a quick response and longer access to the service.
- The main treatment service users would like to receive is counselling (one to one). They would also like to attend specific support groups.
- 8 out of 10 service users would recommend this service to their family and friends.

1 Background

MIND is The National Association for Mental Health in the United Kingdom.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a two day course provided by MIND for anyone interested in learning coping skills and how they can help themselves and other people.

In 2013, Norwich MIND conducted a set of interviews with those attending the mental health first aid program in Norwich and North and South Norfolk.

A database of responses was created in October 2013. 61 sets of interview notes were provided for this analysis.

The interview was divided up into three sections, asking questions on service awareness, patient experience and expectation and need.

2 Process and Outputs

A First Stage Analysis focuses on coding the responses to the interview questions. The Second Stage Analysis provides a summary of coded response sets organised into themes. The first and second stage analysis documents are working documents and may contain personal information. Therefore, these are not available to the public except on request. This final report has been drafted using the analysis and can be made available to the public as all personal or identifiable information has been removed.

In the interviews respondents were asked two types of question ('rating' and 'open response'). The final analysis of these responses has been presented in the order they appear in the questionnaire.

This report has been written in the first person – that is, in the voice of the respondent using as far as possible the words and phrases of respondents as recorded by the interviewer. Text in *italics* is quoted directly from the feedback.

The themes with the most open-ended responses are discussed first followed by the next in descending order.

None of the views expressed are those of the author or any organisation for whom the author may work. Every attempt has been made to report the feedback provided for each of the respective questions, therefore there is some repetition.

3 Service Awareness

3.1 Question 1

Did you know that there was a Wellbeing Service in Norfolk & Waveney before needing to use it?

Response

13 Yes

48 No

3.2 Question 2

How did you hear about it?

Response

Via a GP or Doctor or Family Doctor or Nurse referral. And additionally I called to make first contact with service. I have a good relationship with GP so made all the difference. A GP referral may have followed after a friend recommended it. Where the GP did not make a direct referral, they may have provided leaflets or made a suggestion and the service user made a call or contact.

Printed media was also a source of information in the form of a leaflet which was available at the library and the community centre or picked up at an event or provided by Age UK. Alternatively advertising such as an advert in local paper or a poster. Printed information was also sent to service users.

Alternatively, the service user called to make first contact with service or was called with regard to getting an appointment.

Other forms of information included recommendation by a friend or other service users including friends who used the Wellbeing service or the internet, workplace, Mencap, through the NHS or from attending an anxiety workshop.

3.3 Question 3

Was it easy to access the service?

Response

51 Yes

7 No

3 Unable to say

Contact was made through GP and telephone call with the service user calling the number, then an appointment was made - very easy and straightforward and questions weren't evasive. The lady was very helpful, all went smoothly and someone got back to me fairly quickly. It was easy to talk to someone.

Contact was sometimes prompted *only because of GP and a discussion we had or booked place on course via GP*. Alternatively service users spoke to their GP and used the website or accessed the service and self-referred on the website. Contact was also made directly with the service.

In other cases service users *had to wait a while (1 week or so) to get through to someone or for someone to ring back or get back to them. The wait after accessing the service was incredible it took a long while*. In one case a service user made several attempts to contact on telephone - *no one got back to them. The number called took them through several people. It was not very clear about how to access. The way you did this changed part way through.*

Some service users *don't like using the internet and it was hard to actually get hold of someone. Those who are not very good on phone or computer would have like to see someone. I was unaware of the service.*

Alternatively, *they called back really quickly - within a week. I went on the stress workshops within a few weeks of calling. It was fairly easy to make contact.*

Once onto a program *it was very hard to walk into a room full of people and service users couldn't face going into this with a group of that size. I accessed the service but had to go to City College and sit in a room of 30 people which was very hard.*

Workshops in my area made it easy to go to, it was close to where I live which was good.

3.4 Question 4

How would you have liked to access the service?

Response

Phone call was perfect, good and fine, – it was ok for me but only if they return your calls. Over phone to begin with as social situations are difficult for me. I didn't want to use the website. A direct line to make an appointment with someone is preferred. Had to go through a lot of hoops to get to speak to someone.

Self-referral worked well for me. I liked it and didn't mind referring myself. It means I wouldn't have had to wait to be referred. Self-referral if I'd have known it was there - I didn't realise I could self refer. Self-referral would be easier but I only knew about it through my doctor.

Only through GP - would not have felt confident calling or using website. Doctor called for me. Doctor/GP can refer when needed. I wish my GP had made me aware of it.

For people more anxious than myself maybe via internet. Online as I get anxious calling people. Online website was good for me.

Would be nice to have a drop in centre in Norwich to access. Prefer to see someone 1:1. Speak to someone initially face to face to find out more about the service - didn't mind where this happened. Maybe start by meeting one person - not 40! I was told to access counselling I would have to do a workshop. I wanted 1:1 counselling without have to do this.

Just one way and any way. It's too soon to say. I didn't actually access the service, and know very little about it and what it offers. I'd prefer something closer to home.

Advice of GP was to perform at my own pace was just fine.

3.5 Service Awareness Findings

- The Wellbeing service in Norfolk and Waveney was not known to >78% of service users, prior to using the service.
- Service users heard about the service through their GP. Printed material, and 'word of mouth' were other main sources of information.
- Greater than 83% of users found the service easy to access with the majority doing so by telephone. However, some experienced problems and delays in getting a response.
- Service users would like to be able to self refer to the service using the telephone. However other forms of contact are also preferred, including GP referral, internet and face to face contact.

4 Patient Experience

4.1 Question 5

What have been your experiences of the Wellbeing Service?

Response

Workshops have been useful, good and very helpful and informative - meeting with other people in the same position. It gave me some helpful ways to manage my anxiety and stress management has improved my understanding. I got a lot out of the workshops. Overall good, I liked stress control workshops - very useful and have used medication CB regularly. MHFA course was really useful, I think about it often, it changed my mind and helped me move on and deal with my anxiety. The stress workshops and the 2 day course - I've learnt a lot about myself. All helped me over time. Workshops helped a bit - I did take a few things away from the courses (e.g. some useful coping skills) and I loved meeting people.

I've learnt a lot but the workshops were too general and a bit repetitive, drawn out - very generic for me - I really needed to focus on my issues. Good theory. Slow delivery. Course was good for what it was but it didn't address my problem.

Not good, wasn't keen - the classes seem to be geared towards people who are quite ok. I also found the "school" set up wasn't great. I didn't like group workshops. We were spoken at for 2 hours and then went home. I had to bring my partner a few times because it was just too overwhelming and intimidating. The organisation was a bit hit and miss. I left the anxiety class after the 3rd session as the person running it had forgotten the paperwork. I had to take time off work to attend the class and it just felt a waste of time.

I felt quite anxious with that amount of people. I found my anxiety got worse due to the stress or sitting in a room full of people and no one spoke to each other and one guy had to leave because it was too much. Made me a little anxious. Why have an anxiety class where people feel more anxious? Smaller groups please. Too many people - quite large groups. I needed more personal help and advice.

I had some very helpful CBT sessions. Online CBT was useful but I didn't gain a lot from it and it didn't lead anywhere. Very de-personalised. How does this help if people do not leave their homes?

It has been helpful and I do feel better. Brilliant, fantastic, excellent, great service, very good and OK - it's been continuous - good to know its here. Workshops and counselling have really helped me get through a difficult time - helped me deal with partner's death. Although my problems haven't gone away I can handle my physical illness (Parkinson's) better. Have been looking after me for a year now - and have been paramount to helping me back on track. I don't self-harm anymore and I know what to do if I get stressed now. It was good to talk to a neutral party once a week.

On the whole, overall, it has been generally good, very helpful and positive for me – it is helping me to understand how to change my thinking. I started off going to stress control with the option of further support. I recommended my partner use it and he did.

I enjoyed working with the staff. She was great, lovely and very nice. He helped me sort out my thoughts. They are kind friendly people - very helpful advice. You have obviously employed talented people. When I have spoken on the phone, very polite and helpful.

Counselling face to face was excellent and really good. It really helped me.

Although the service has been useful I was confused about what service was on offer. It felt like workshops were the only real option. I thought someone was going to contact me about counselling but no one did. I had to chase up my help. There was no follow up call and no report given to myself or GP that was promised. Slow progress but getting there now. It remains to be seen how successful it all is.

Experience has been not great, it hasn't helped me - hit and miss contact long waits for information and not intermediate support whilst waiting. 14 weeks to be told I had to wait longer. Have just been offered a phone appointment after long wait. I had 1:1 with a staff member who went off sick and I was left for weeks. It's been dragged out, everyone is waiting for everyone else to do something. The waiting times are laughable - slow getting back to me.

I didn't bond with my counsellor, the cultural differences made the sessions very awkward interfering with my treatment.

The service helped very little. Its not shown me how to put into practice the techniques. - it didn't target my precise problem. Follow up limited and no clear route for other interventions. Only 2 of the sessions really helped. I needed more in-depth help with my depression - I am now working with 80 St Stephens. I was left with no further support - set off into the sea really. I was told to have a break but I didn't want to stop.

I've had support talking to a counsellor over the telephone. Telephone counselling was not that great. It isn't really helping - difficult to connect with someone over the phone

Handbooks were really useful - literature good.

4.2 Question 6

Do you feel the service helped improve your wellbeing?

Response

43 Yes

10 No

2 Don't Know

1 Hopefully

3 50/50

1 A little

1 Maybe

Definitely, absolutely, it helped, panic attacks have stopped. My confidence is so much better and I got a job. Made me self aware, helped manage mood, I learnt a lot about myself. I know how to look after myself now and my triggers. It made me realise I need to put my health first. I cope much better. It made me more aware of emotions and feelings. I was able to identify what makes me stressed out and feel anxious. Especially MHFA project. Talking to professionals helped.

To a degree - marginal, maybe, a little, a bit, not sure - not how I anticipated. It helped me understand my feelings more but medication has helped. Currently ongoing - the problem is still present - I need some more support. I want some counselling thank you - only the counselling helped me. I don't know, its not been long enough to tell.

No – not as yet, not at all. More about education and awareness and very general. At times made it worse. I just take pills now and get by. It made me more aware but not helped with my particular problem. I stopped because of the counsellor. I continue to manage my problems myself. I am still finding things difficult. I wanted counselling and wait was too long so I went to a low cost service.

4.3 Question 7

What could have been better about your experience of the Wellbeing Service?

Response

More and better communication. It wasn't always easy to get hold of someone and not always easy to contact anyone. Didn't feel I could tell anyone about problems I was having - no one to tell. When I called I started to get letters inviting me to do workshops, CBT etc. but I didn't know why because I didn't come via my doctor. It was all a bit confusing. The only thing I would have liked is a follow up session / call to see how I was and if I needed to use the services again. I had to chase up my appointments a few times. If I know I have to wait just tell me. The process /service wasn't explained very well to me. More organised contact / admin. Inclusion of family a little more. Wasn't made clear about access to counselling. Would like to know more about what it is and what is available. Preferred to have spoken 1:1 in room, rather than over a phone. I was passed between 3 people and had to contact you several times to find out what was going on. There was a long delay in getting contact and waiting for someone to get back to me. Too many forms. Being able to change my counsellor.

I felt I was getting somewhere and then it stopped. Finished course, felt like I was left hanging. I felt I was on a conveyor belt! There was nothing in-between sessions. The sessions ending so soon - I would have liked a few more or a bit more ongoing support once the programme had finished - more time to explore certain aspects. More contact and perhaps one person in particular I could contact. I still get overwhelmed and need to talk to people and have been through everything that the service provides. How to access further help if needed - a follow up call - more support when everything was over. Better contact from staff.

Not having to wait as long as I did. The time it took to actually see someone. I couldn't handle the group stuff so I had to wait 2 months, quite some time before I got any help. Quicker and

easier access to 1:1 help. I see my own doctor now because its quicker. I've had CBT which was helpful but too long coming. The waiting time was nearly five weeks which was far too long. Quicker access to counsellor, I had to wait a long time for counselling and in that time I got worse. I was in a bad place and the wait made that more difficult. There was a bit of a wait from calling to actually starting the workshop. Still waiting to do last week of stress control course. I waited 12 months to be seen. My counsellor has left the service and I am still waiting to get an appointment. To have had the phone appointment right at the beginning.

The distance I was expected to travel to get to the stress control workshops. I didn't go in the end.

The stress control workshops were a little boring so I didn't finish them. Old course - lady delivering was difficult to understand, better content needed - more interactive. Too much homework. I would have liked something particularly around post natal depression - not anxiety in general. Some of the sessions weren't relevant - help to put into practice the techniques would be more useful. The groups were too over-whelming Smaller classes and smaller groups.

I got everything I needed to work through my anxiety and stress through the workshops.

More options. When I first got in contact I was given a list of what was available, it wasn't great and that's all I got. A while later I was invited on your 2 day course. I wanted face to face counselling again or tailored support for individuals - more after care support. Access to counselling - I still have difficulty with feeling low and a bit more help would be useful I didn't want groups, I wanted to get on with my own issues in counselling or 1:1 work. Didn't find workshops helpful as I get anxious around lots of people. There isn't really anything else once you finish the workshops. Counselling more available and more information about services in North Norfolk. Offering other groups, at last session having a group Q&A or a 1:1 not in front of group if you have any questions. Only offered over the telephone and MIND First Aid.

Better counselling service. Being lectured at is not a good way to help people understand or move on. 1:1 telephone support seems more like box ticking but I have only had one session. Telephone counselling a bit awkward.

1:1 support is best - rather than group sessions. The excellent MHFA helped.

No suggestions - it was great, superb. My experience has been nothing but positive.

4.4 Question 8

Was there something particularly good about the experience you had with the Wellbeing Service?

Response

The courses/workshops (e.g. MHFA) was excellent, professional, useful, informative and great. Friendly people gained a lot of knowledge. I learnt a lot of skills and loved being able to chat in the breaks and hear other people talk about their problems and debate and share with people in the same situation or with similar issues or problems and situations helped me deal with mine. I use what I learnt all the time and at work.

The counselling and strategies sessions really helped me and I've signed up to become an associate with MIND so I can do more things with them. The 1:1 support was also good, I understand so much more - finding out how my problem first started, made me more aware of myself. It gave me some focus for a little while - having quiet time with someone. I have found the stress and wellbeing course good. Felt I was getting some help at last and not alone - made you think about things - put things into perspective. Learnt a lot. Linked me with other services like Health Trainers.

I really liked the relaxation CDs and managing my anxiety. I signed up as an associate. Started volunteering and now have a job. My life looks so different now. Hopefully get invited to some more Wellbeing Services.

Helped me realise I needed ongoing help so I pay for counselling now.

Booklets, magazine and information from workshops were really good and useful.

That its free of charge.

Same therapist so continuation of support and I didn't have to repeat myself. The locality was important. The telephone support was great, I also know I can ring back if I need to which is reassuring.

Staff. A gentleman who delivered our MHFA training told me it was ok to still be grieving. I thought I should have been over it but he gave me permission to miss my husband. The people running the courses and the counsellors were really useful, understanding, very empathetic, very good, brilliant, friendly, lovely, knowledgeable, helpful and professional, extremely supportive very kind and treated us with respect.

Having things to go on and do after the sessions end was helpful as I was worried I would be left with nothing in the way of support. The MIND First Aid and Associates is perfect for this. We also appreciated the Associates support - something to do outside of the groups.

4.5 Patient Experience Findings

- Courses are generally well received and highly regarded by service users. However, there were some issues. There were concerns about the suitability of the course for the individual and the quality of the course provided.
- There are high levels of satisfaction with the service and with the staff.

- There is a preference for one to one counselling and more service options being offered.
- The two main concerns are poor communication with the service and long waiting times for a response from the service and to attend what is on offer.
- 70% of service users felt the service helped improve their wellbeing. 14% were unsure or felt the service helped a little. 16% felt the service did not help improve their wellbeing.
- While service users reported that their condition was under control, others felt that more and ongoing support was needed.
- Improved communication, increased contact and reduced waiting times were the three main themes that would have made the experience better. Improved courses and more serviced options were also suggested.
- The group sessions and individual counselling sessions were regarded as the most helpful services. The staff were also considered particularly good. Other factors mentioned were the printed materials provided and continuing support.

5 Expectation and Need

5.1 Question 9

If you needed such a service what might you expect to receive by way of treatment?

Response

Something more specific personal and direct to my needs rather than covering things that are not relevant to me or just taking what was on offer. Such as 1:1 counselling – more personal tuition actually with a person, therapy and medication review, talking to therapists other than CBT, more about depression and other conditions not just stress, help and support to get well – enable me to help myself, other forms of treatment. Advice and choice of treatment at my own pace. I did CBT counselling, stress control groups, MHFA, carers group and I was put in touch with the Pain Management Team. Better experience of counselling and be able to change if not working. I thought counselling would be more accessible.

Groups were too impersonal - the workshops weren't that relevant. I thought it would be more of a support service, I thought I'd be able to access 1:1 help. Direct support and someone for people caring for others.

Not to wait so long. Maybe quicker access to counselling - someone to talk to. A quicker response to my contact. Help to get started on helping myself asap. Assessment within minimum of 2 weeks and information given.

More contact. I thought there would be more 1:1 sessions - more counselling, ongoing support - felt it stopped abruptly. Something practical about handling the dark days.

Trusting, friendly people - helpful and understanding.

More opportunity to meet people who are dealing with the same problems.

Everything I received was fine. Pretty much what was offered. I didn't know what to expect but the service I received was exactly what I needed. I can't think of anything else I would want.

5.2 Question 10

What treatment would you like to receive?

Response

Counselling – 1:1 CBT and CAT, talking to someone face to face, person specific help more direct and targeted towards my particular issue or problem. Help with self esteem and confidence issues, social anxiety, managing pain, bereavement, to have more positive thoughts. Anything to help get well - mixture of therapy, self help. To be able to see or talk to someone within a week.

Longer sessions with counsellors - follow up call after about 6 months to see how you are doing.

Support groups - perhaps more of a chance to meet new people as it's easy to feel alone with it. Talking and connecting with people going through similar experiences or in the same situation. Networking and support groups for particular issues.

More information on other services or wider range of support. More about other mental health problems.

Smaller groups. Help with CBT. Other courses. Medication if needed. More weapons in my armoury please. Open to everything.

5.3 Question 11

Having used the service how likely would you be to recommend it to a family member or friend? On a scale of 1 - 10 (1 unlikely, 10 likely)

Response*

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number	1	1		2	5	5	9	8	9	15

Mode = 10

Median = 8

Mode = 7.7

(* Only 55 responses to this question were received.)

5.4 Question 12

Is there anything else you would like to share with us relating to your experience of the service?

Response

*It covered what I needed. I am on medication but much less and I've got a job. I've found work now and feel so different - thank you. I was grateful for the uplifting experience
Lovely bunch, it has been life changing. When I got the help it was great.*

Something particularly around alcoholism would have been good. I suffer from bipolar so I think I need more intensive help but the Wellbeing Service has been useful.

It took me 2 days to actually find the website as the words "stress control" and NHS didn't bring up anything. It's a difficult job but I feel things could have been a little easier to access.

Just because it didn't work for me it may work for other so I would recommend.

5.5 Expectation and Need Findings

- Service users would expect to see a service that was specific to their needs. They would also like a quick response and longer access to the service.
- The main treatment service users would like to receive is counselling (one to one). They would also like to attend specific support groups.
- 8 out of 10 service users would recommend this service to their family and friends.

6 Report Outcomes

This report has been developed independently using the feedback provide. All queries concerning this report can be forwarded to the author. All further correspondence should be forwarded to the Wellbeing service.



Final Report developed by
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January 2014

* Consulting the community is a research centre of academics from the social sciences. This method for analyzing feedback has been developed by colleagues from this centre. Enquiries can be made at the email address above.

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