Mental Health Crisis Sanctuaries- Draft Model

Mental health sanctuaries are places people can go when experiencing an emotional or mental health crisis or are at risk of developing a crisis (as defined by the individual).

The sanctuary will aim to provide practical and emotional support in a safe, warm and welcoming environment and may provide an alternative to attending a hospital.

The service will be open access, ensuring that there is a move away from a model where people are deemed too ill or not ill enough and the support given is based on individual need and there is no wrong door. People will be able to self- refer, turn up/drop in.

The sanctuaries will provide support and guidance to reduce the crisis; supporting attendees in navigating any further support required and will help support service users' responses to future crises. It is important that the sanctuaries are places that people can go to talk and to be listened to.

Follow up support will be provided where needed. This might mean people coming back again, further phone calls or supporting a person to access other services and support as part of an overall plan.

The number of sessions per week delivered across Nottingham/Nottinghamshire will need to be determined based on the need within each Integrated Care Provider (ICPs).

The service will develop robust pathways for working with other service provision including but not limited to secondary care mental health services, IAPT, housing related support, benefits advice, and other factors that may improve the crisis situation.

Publicity and awareness of the service is important and should be undertaken in a variety of ways.

Staffing

Peer Support Workers (patients with lived experience) will be key to the staffing model to help those who attend discuss the nature of their crisis, identify the triggers to it, and ultimately help them identify strengths and coping skills they might use to reduce their distress in order to successfully manage similar situations in the future. The model should also include skilled professionals with strong links to wider support services such as housing, tenancy support, debt advice and substance misuse services to ensure the sanctuaries contribute to preventing further crises.

The sanctuaries will be therapeutic rather than clinical with access to clinicians to safely refer in other mental health services when required.

The service will have direct links to Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Teams.

It is important that the sanctuaries ensure continuity of staff who are familiar and so those who attend can see the same person where possible.

Location

The sanctuaries should be in existing community venues or services in the community, with a homely, safe environment. They should be easily accessible and in a variety of fixed locations.

Culture

The sanctuaries will have an ethos where there are no barriers to accessing – too ill/not ill enough which look to build resilience within communities strengthening existing pathways.

The sanctuaries and cafés will need to be delivered in a way that takes into account equality and diversity in all aspects of the provision ensuring they are accessible and welcoming to all which will be reflected in the environment, the diversity of the workforce and the culture.

The sanctuaries will involve and work with families and wider social networks in supporting those attending, including providing information to carers.

Opening times

The sanctuaries will be predominantly available out of hours to coincide with the times of highest attendance at A & E, for those experiencing a mental health crisis. Stakeholders rated this as 5pm to Midnight and 6pm to 1am. Local data indicates 6pm- 1am is the time of highest attendance. This may be adjusted based on local demand as further developments take place across the mental health urgent care and crisis and community mental health pathways .

Ongoing collaboration

The sanctuaries will continue to be developed collaboratively with people with lived experience, their carers and Nottingham/Nottinghamshire stakeholders through the established collaborative.

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