

**Struggling with low mood,  
stress, anxiety and coping with  
difficult times? Want to worry  
less, enjoy life more, and feel  
more relaxed?**



A free, confidential NHS Talking Therapies service for adults in North Cumbria.



If you are struggling with how you are feeling, you are not alone.

In 2019 - 2020 there were 1.69 million referrals to services like **First Step** in England.\*

Depression and anxiety disorders affect the lives of around **16%** of the population at any one time.\*\*



**First Step** received **93,956** referrals for people in North Cumbria. (August 2009 - April 2021)

First Step warmly welcomes referrals from students, adults over 18 of all genders, sexual orientations and ethnicities, as well as people with a learning disability or difference, and/or autism.

\*NHS Digital, 2020

\*\* McManus, Bebbington, Jenkins and Brugha, 2016

**We all feel low or worry from time to time, and usually these feelings fade away on their own. When they don't go away or if they start to interfere with your day to day life, First Step can help you get back on track.**

**People can get stuck in lots of ways, such as:**

- Feeling sad, low or depressed
- Worrying about things
- Having flashbacks or nightmares about a traumatic incident
- Having to perform tasks over and over again, or in a certain way to feel better
- Avoiding places or situations that cause you to feel anxious

All of these problems can prevent you from enjoying life to the full.

**Do you want to:**

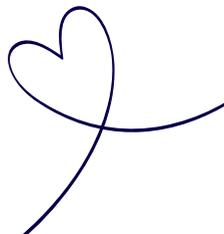
- Learn ways to overcome low mood and depression?
- Cope better with traumatic memories of things that have happened to you?
- Overcome panic?
- Feel more confident in crowded places or travelling on public transport?
- Worry less, feel more relaxed and enjoy life more?
- Free yourself from obsessive behaviours such as excessive checking or washing?
- Feel less anxious around people?

**First Step can help**

First Step can support you to make changes that will increase your confidence and ability to cope. During your assessment we will talk about the most suitable therapy options for you.

We offer a range of options including:

- Support using self-help workbooks
- One to one Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Short-term counselling
- Computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CCBT)
- EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing) specifically for PTSD



## Employment support

During therapy you may also be able to access support from an Employment Advisor for problems related to:

- Unemployment
- Searching for and preparing for work and interviews
- Struggling to cope at work or looking to return to work

## The appointments we offer are available

- Face to face
- By telephone
- By online video call

**“ Without the support of the advisor I would have struggled to return to work. He gave me the information, support and confidence to address the issues. \* ”**

Many people have found that the therapy approaches that First Step offer can help them to cope with the issues that are interfering with their day to day life.

Our aim is to help you get your needs met and First Step may not always be the most suitable service. In that case we may be able to direct you to other more suitable services.

**“ ... my practitioner really, really helped me, I preferred the telephone consultation as I didn't feel as anxious and opened up more. \* ”**

**“ I was feeling worthless and stuck in a rut and couldn't see a way out. First Step helped me find the right direction without judging me. \* ”**

## How can you get help from First Step?

There are three main ways to get help from First Step.

**Via your GP** – if you think we can help, ask your GP if they think First Step is right for you. If they agree they will refer you to us by sending a completed referral form. Once we have received this form we will write to you to ask you to contact us to arrange an appointment.

**Via online self-referral** – visit our website and click on the link available to complete a short form. Once the form is submitted, it will be reviewed by a First Step clinician. After the form has been submitted online please allow three working days then ring **0300 123 9122** during normal working hours to book a telephone assessment appointment.

**Via paper referral** – if you are unable to access the form online and want to refer yourself, then you can ring First Step on **0300 123 9122** during normal working hours and ask for a paper self-referral form to be sent to you in the post.



**“ It took me a long time to refer myself. I think if someone I knew had recommended First Step to me I would have done it sooner. \* ”**

Visit our website at:

**[www.cntw.nhs.uk/firststep](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/firststep)**

or phone **0300 123 9122** to request a referral form

\* Feedback from people who have used the First Step service

## Useful organisations

### Unity - Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service

- Cumbria, Carlisle and Eden **Tel:** 01228 212 060
- Whitehaven **Tel:** 1946 350 020
- Workington **Tel:** 01900 270 010

### Stepchange – Expert debt advice

**Tel:** 0800 138 1111 **Website:** [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

### Relate – Relationship support

**Tel:** 0300 003 0396 **Website:** [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

### Citizens Advice – Confidential advice on a range of issues such as benefits, housing, work, law and courts, immigration.

- Carlisle and Eden **Tel:** 03300 563 037
- Allerdale **Tel:** 01900 604 735
- Copeland **Tel:** 01946 693 321

**Website:** [www.citizensadvicecumbria.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicecumbria.org.uk)

### Cruse – Bereavement support

**Tel:** 0300 600 3434 **Website:** [www.crusecumbria.org.uk](http://www.crusecumbria.org.uk)

### Victim Support – Support for victims of crime

**Tel:** 0300 3030157 **Website:** [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

### Carers Support Cumbria – Support for unpaid carers

- Carlisle **Tel:** 01228 542 156
- Eden **Tel:** 01768 890 280
- West Cumbria **Tel:** 01900 821 976

### Gamcare – Advice and support for anyone harmed by gambling

**Tel:** 0808 8020 133 **Website:** [www.gamcare.org.uk](http://www.gamcare.org.uk)

## Useful resources

Mental health self help guides [www.cntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp)

Relaxation techniques [www.cntw.nhs.uk/relaxation](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/relaxation)

## Interpreter

We will book you an interpreter if you need one.

## What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

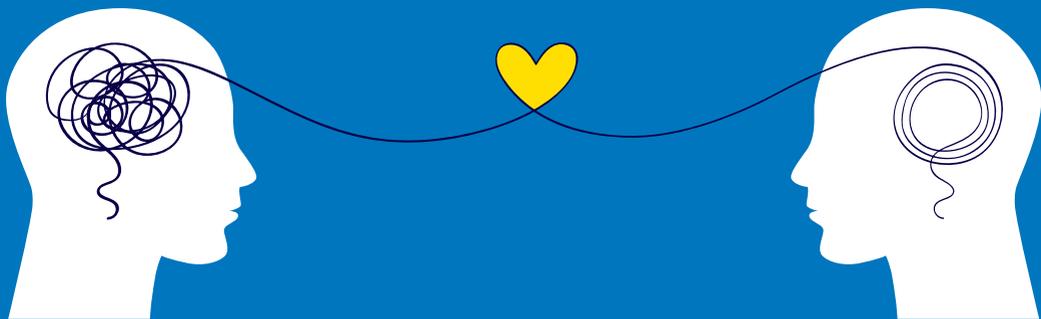
If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website [www.cntw.nhs.uk](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk) (click on the 'Contact Us' tab)
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- email [complaints@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@cntw.nhs.uk) Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk

We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

- the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at [www.cntw.nhs.uk/poy](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/poy)
- complete a Points of You survey, available from staff.



Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this booklet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, BSL, easy read or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre  
Tel: 0191 246 7288

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