

6 April 2020

## **FAO: Derby and Derbyshire GPs – launch of mental health support line**

Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is pleased to confirm the launch of a new mental health support line, which has been developed to provide additional mental health support to Derbyshire residents of all ages during the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The support line, which has been introduced as a temporary service, intends to provide additional support to:

- People who are currently having less contact with our mental health services as a result of changes that have been made to our usual appointments, and their carers
- Derbyshire residents who are experiencing increased distress or anxiety as a result of current events
- Individuals who indicate a need longer term help – for example by signposting to IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapy) services, currently being delivered by other providers.

The support line will also form a professional point of contact for health and social care partners, to support any individuals in mental distress.

The support line does not replace existing routes of referral for assessment. Urgent and routine referrals into the community mental health service will continue to be triaged as is usual practice. However, due to the change in level of community service being provided, the number of assessments offered at this time will be greatly reduced and will be prioritised based on our community teams' essential criteria.

The support line is staffed by experienced mental health practitioners and will initially be available between 9am – midnight, seven days a week. We intend to increase the service to be available 24 hours a day by the middle of April.

The [Trust's website](http://www.derbyshirehealthcareft.nhs.uk/coronavirus) (www.derbyshirehealthcareft.nhs.uk/coronavirus) provides more information about the new mental health support line and changes that have been made to our services during the Coronavirus pandemic. We will update this information when the support line starts to run 24 hours a day.

The mental health support line can be contacted on: **0300 790 0596**. This is a low-cost number.

Please direct any patients with mental health needs to the new support line. If you have any queries about this development, please contact [dhcft.communications@nhs.net](mailto:dhcft.communications@nhs.net)

Kind Regards

**Carolyn Green**

Director of Nursing and Patient Experience