Healthy London Partnership

Resources to support hotel, hostel, NHS and housing staff working with adults who are homeless

Introduction

Homeless people have poorer health and wellbeing compared to the general population and the current situation poses a particular risk to this group. The risks of Covid-19 to the homeless population are significant, however, there are also risks to those working with them, both physical and psychological.

People who are homeless are likely to have had many life challenges including experiences of psychological and physical trauma. Our work with them needs to be psychologically informed, and that includes looking after our own wellbeing.

Staff working in homeless hotels and hostels during the Covid-19 crisis are doing a challenging job in demanding circumstances. There will be times when people feel overwhelmed with responsibility and the enormity of the situation.

We have collated some resources that may help you, your colleagues, other staff and volunteers support yourselves and each other. There are links to educational resources as well as links to help you personally.

We welcome feedback on this document. If you have any comments or additional resources you would like to highlight, please email hlp.homelesshealthcovid19team@nhs.net.

Resources

This webinar provides guidance and support on 'Supporting homeless hostels in responding to COVID-19' (29 April 2020, presenters from UCL/Pathway, Public Health England, the GLA, and Look Ahead). The full slide pack can be found here.

Aneemo has two short online courses designed to help people working with homeless clients:

> Trauma and Psychologically Informed Approaches to COVID-19 describes individual and collective responses to the Covid-19 crisis. This course aims to help you understand your own and others' responses, and provides tips to help staff themselves and the clients they are supporting to deal with their experiences.

> Staff Support & Wellbeing During COVID-19 includes advice relating to self-care, healthy routines and dealing with loss.

In addition, Aneemo provides a module on the background of coronavirus and risk in homeless populations, as well as guidance on service user care and service delivery. All courses are free and you can enroll [here](#) to access them.

The mental health charity **Mind** has put together a [guide on maintaining mental health and wellbeing for keyworkers](#).

It has also provided more [general advice about Covid-19 and wellbeing](#), focusing on self-isolation.

Good Thinking
This online service is a [source of digital mental wellbeing support](#) for Londoners. It includes resources to help with stress, low mood, anxiety and poor sleep in particular. It allows free access to a number of apps, including Be Mindful, My Positive Self, My Cognition and Calm.

Good Thinking can also guide you through a [set of useful resources to support your well-being](#) in relation to Covid-19.

Every Mind Matters
This NHS-produced resource provides [advice and tips](#) to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Public Health England
Staff Wellbeing and Support PHE have produced [guidance for the general public](#) to help support mental health during the pandemic.

The Mental Health Foundation has published [guides on looking after your mental health](#) in relation to Covid-19, with additional guides for maintaining [mental health at work](#).

National Council for Voluntary Organisations. While not specific to mental health, this site provides [useful signposts to information](#) on protecting and supporting individuals working in voluntary organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mental Health First Aid England has a [set of resources and toolkits](#) for staff and volunteers to support good mental health, including Take 10 Together, which helps open up meaningful conversations with friends, family members and colleagues about their mental health, and a toolkit on addressing stress.

Online forums to discuss issues and share views on homeless health and Covid-19

Homeless Link. The Homelessness Response Online Network is for practice sharing and discussion and to share how people are responding locally. Homeless Link members can access online groups through logging into their account on the [website](#). Non-members can request a login by emailing membership@homelesslink.org.uk.

St Martin's Frontline Network. [Covid-19 Frontline Worker Support Forum](#) allows frontline workers to share information, guidance and solutions relating to Covid-19.

FutureNHS Collaboration Platform Homeless Health Covid-19 Response. This workspace includes a range of resources, information, templates and guidance for both clinical and non-clinical colleagues working in statutory organisations and the voluntary sector. To read content you will need to register

here. An example of content is a new short online Mental Health First Aid course for staff and volunteers supporting people who are homeless.

Background learning on homeless health and Covid-19

Background information on homeless health produced by the **Faculty for Homeless and Inclusion Health** (a free to join, multi-disciplinary network focused on healthcare for homeless and excluded people) can be found here. The Faculty has also pulled together Covid-19 information and resources for clinical and non-clinical staff working with homeless people.

The **Centre for Homelessness Impact** are hosting a number of webinars that can be viewed here.

Health Education England (HEE) has a range of online information on Covid-19 for different professional groups.

HEE has also worked with Public Health England, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department of Health and Social Care to develop the Tackling Homelessness e-learning programme for the health and care workforce.

This programme offers two e-learning sessions to support the health and care workforce to understand the health impacts of homelessness, identify different forms of homelessness and gain practical steps to making a referral. It highlights ways your organisation can implement the duty effectively. The first e-learning session (All our Health – Homelessness) is open access. If you access All our Health - Homelessness via an account then you can generate a record of having completed the course.

A second session is available on the "Duty to Refer" people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. On 3 October 2018, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 introduced a new legal duty on specified public services to prevent and relieve homelessness. All NHS emergency departments, urgent treatment centres and in-patient wards have a "Duty to Refer" people they consider may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to a local housing authority. Other NHS settings do not have a legal duty to refer but are able and can be encouraged to use the same process to make referrals to the local housing authority. NHS staff can set up an account to access this e-learning module here.