

Compassionate Distress Response Service Revised Standard Operating Procedures 13.09.21

Introduction

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde [Multiagency Distress Collaborative](#) (April 2016 to March 2019) defined distress as “an emotional state, not an illness, which is expressed and comes to our attention when a person’s internal capacities and external supports cannot contain something”. The Collaborative recommended an alternative, non-clinical response to people experiencing distress. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde commissioned Glasgow Association for Mental Health to deliver such a response in January 2020. The Compassionate Distress Response Service (CDRS) opened to out of hours referrals on 25th May 2020, funded to support action 15 of Scotland’s [Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027](#). The service was extended to referrals from General Practice on 7th September 2020 as part of Glasgow City HSCP’s [Primary Care Improvement Plan](#). An enhanced pathway for 16 to 25 year olds will be in place from late September funded by [Community Mental Health Supports & Services Framework](#).

Overview of service

CDRS provides a listening service for people experiencing acute emotional distress. Contracted by Glasgow City HSCP, the service provides support to people aged 16+ from 9am to 2am Monday to Friday and 5pm to 2am Saturday and Sunday. Access to CDRS is via a range of referrers including staff in General Practice, first responders¹, and services within the HSCP. CDRS provides an immediate response² to alleviate distress with follow up support in place for up to one month following. Over 3000 people have engaged with CDRS to date (September 2021).

The aims of this document:

1. Establish standardised processes for access to CDRS’ three pathways;
 - a) Primary Care Pathway
 - b) Out of Hours Pathway
 - c) Young People’s Pathway
2. Establish standardised processes for escalation from each of these pathways
3. Provide information on the governance of CDRS, including reporting and information sharing.

¹ Police Scotland, British Transport Police, Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS24

² within 1 hour for people presenting in the out of hours period and within 24 hours for people presenting in hours

Referral pathways

Primary Care Pathway

GPs and their multi-disciplinary teams can refer people aged 16+. This is via SCI Gateway or telephone, 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday. Referrals made out with these times will be processed the next working day. CDRS Distress Response Workers will respond to individuals referred within 24 hours.

Routine feedback to referrers is not provided however can be requested by the referrer and provided with the consent of the person referred.

Out of Hours Pathway

First responders, Mental Health Assessment Units, Urgent Care Resource Hub, Out of Hours GP services, Emergency Departments at QUEH and GRI and Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work Services can refer people aged 16+, Monday to Sunday, 5pm to 2am via telephone or email.

Young People's Pathway

Mental Health Assessment Units, CAMHS, Youth Health Service, agreed contacts in secondary schools, further education and higher education institutions, Social Work Services staff and third sector organisations* can refer 16-25 year olds, Monday to Friday from 9am to 2am and Saturday and Sunday from 5pm to 2am.

Risk management

For anyone who is identified as being at risk to self or others

1. Escalation to emergency service police/ambulance, as required.
2. Referrer is notified.
3. Individual discharged if not appropriate for service. Individuals *may* continue to get service in exceptional circumstances.
4. CDRS Service Manager completes an internal Incident Form.
5. AP1 Child/Adult Protection referral is made if an individual is identified as at potential risk, in line with GAMH Policies and Procedures.

Reporting

NHSGGC's mental health services for Glasgow City are the contracting department for the service and at least one representative from mental health services forms the contract management group along with a rep from Health Improvement (on behalf of primary care). This group provides ongoing support to the delivery of the CDRS contract. Quarterly monitoring of the contract is primarily from this group with wider stakeholders invited to attend quarterly reporting meetings. This includes, but is not limited to, representatives from the referring bodies and funders.

Data collection and monitoring

CDRS use a secure case management system which initiates a new case when information is provided by the referrer. This is then added to by CDRS staff as the service is provided. Following the end of support any other information identifying the service user will be retained for a period of 3 years after which it will be deleted from all electronic databases and all hard copies will be destroyed safely. A guidance checklist is provided to staff to ensure information has been destroyed and deleted from all potential storage sites within GAMH systems.

Data is shared with the contract management team for monitoring purposes and to ensure equity of access to the service. People engaged or referred are anonymised but information on referrers is provided to support monitoring of pathways. Sharing of information between NHSGGC and GAMH is supported by an Information Sharing Agreement and Data Protection Impact Assessment.

Serious adverse events

CDRS staff will follow GAMH's internal processes when a serious incident occurs. If GAMH or the contract management team become aware of any death by suicide following engagement with CDRS then this will be reviewed by the HSCP's Specialist Services Incident Review Group in partnership with representatives from the contract management group. This will apply where the individual is not known to HSCP services and will therefore not be part of any HSCP initiated review process.

The aim of the Compassionate Distress Response Service (CDRS) is to support people who do not require a medical or specialist psychiatric assessment in their period of emotional distress. Our team of Distress Response Workers and Coordinators will provide a listening ear to those referred into the service and support them to develop a plan of action to help alleviate their feelings of distress. If agreed with the individual we will follow up with a telephone calls or face to face support. Individuals can be supported for up to a month and longer depending on individual circumstances. We will provide onward referral if required. Individuals will be contacted within **24 hrs** if referred during the day and **1 hr** if referred to our OOHs service.

Referral criteria

- Person aged 16+
- Individual is currently within Glasgow City HSCP area
- Individual cannot be supported within your setting
- Individual does not require immediate medical attention
- Individual gives consent for CDRS to be contacted

Primary Care Pathway

16+

GPs and their multi-disciplinary teams can refer people aged 16+. This is via SCI Gateway or telephone, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Referrals made out with these times will be processed the next working day. CDRS Distress Response Workers will respond to individuals referred within 24 hours.

9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

Call: 0141 406 0901

Or use SCI Gateway (if within general practice)

Out of Hours Pathway

16 +

First responders¹, Mental Health Assessment Units, Urgent Care Resource Hub, Out of Hours GP services, Emergency Departments at QUEH and GRI and Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work Services can refer people aged 16+, Monday to Sunday, 5pm to 2am via telephone or email.

5pm to 2am Monday to Sunday

Call: 0141 406 0900

Email: cdrs@gamh.org.uk

Young People's Pathway

16-25

GPs and their multi-disciplinary teams, First Responders, Mental Health Assessment Units, CAMHS, Sandyford Sexual Health Service, Youth Health Service, agreed contacts in secondary schools, further education and higher education institutions, Social Work Services staff and third sector organisations* can refer 16-25 year olds, Monday to Friday from 9am to 2am and Saturday and Sunday from 5pm to 2am.

9am to 2am Monday to Friday

5pm to 2am Saturday and Sunday

Call: 0141 406 0899

Email: ypcdrs@gamh.org.uk

*trial period Jan-March 2022

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