

Launch of New Mental Wellbeing Support Info Hub

Health partners and providers, local authorities and emergency services across Kent and Medway are working together to provide information on local support services to help people's mental wellbeing during the ongoing Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic crisis.

Information is available at www.kent.gov.uk/wellbeing for people experiencing bereavement and loss, debt and financial difficulties, pregnant women and new mums needing extra support, families looking for help with young children or teenagers.

There is support for those who might already have pre-existing mental health conditions, are victims of domestic abuse or are people in the shielded community.

The site also offers help for people with learning disabilities, people who don't use English as a first language, carers and NHS staff, care staff and other key workers. Kent County Council Director of Public Health, Andrew Scott-Clark said: "The challenging reality of lockdown is creating uncertainty and anxiety for many. The constant news can feel overwhelming and you may be adjusting to a different way of life, with children off school, many people not working or working from home, as well as not seeing family, friends and colleagues.

"This anxiety is natural, and we are all feeling it. Fortunately, there are things that we can do to protect our mental health and to support the wellbeing of our friends and family. At www.kent.gov.uk/wellbeing you can find information, advice and signposting to other great sites which can help, whatever your situation and need. This is #kenttogether."

Thanks to all of those supplying content to www.kent.gov.uk/wellbeing including: Kent County Council; Medway Council; Public Health England; NHS England; Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group; Kent Community NHS Foundation Trust; Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust; Live Well Kent; Healthwatch Kent; Kent Community Foundation; Headstart Kent; Carers UK; Kent's

Integrated Domestic Abuse Support Services; KCC Children's Centres; Citizen's Advice and Age Concern.

As part of the Release the Pressure campaign, a new text service is now available - by texting the word "Kent" or "Medway" to 85258, you will start a conversation with one of the many trained and experienced volunteers who can give support at any time, wherever you are. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Texts are free on all major mobile networks and the service is provided by SHOUT and the Crisis Text Line.

The service will run in addition to the current 24/7 freephone helpline and is funded by the Kent and Medway Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) which is a collaboration between Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust and all the NHS organisations across Kent and Medway.

Vulnerable people in Kent who need urgent help, supplies or medication are also reminded of the helpline – called **Kent Together** – which provides a single, convenient point of contact for anyone in the county who is in urgent need of help during the Coronavirus outbreak. It is a collaboration between KCC, central Government, District, Borough and local councils, the voluntary and community sector, the NHS and other partners to ensure help is at hand for vulnerable people.

If you are vulnerable and have an urgent need that cannot be met through existing support networks, you can contact the Kent Together helpline at www.kent.gov.uk/KentTogether or by calling on 03000 41 92 92. It is a 24-hour service.

The Kent Together service is a single, convenient point of contact for anyone in Kent who is in urgent need of help during the coronavirus outbreak at www.kent.gov.uk/kenttogether and on 03000 41 92 92