# Mental Health – Scotland's Transition And Recovery

- A Summary

Healthier Scotland
Scottish Government

Introduction

- The Covid-19 pandemic has affected every single person in Scotland. Many of us have been anxious or worried about our health, our family and friends, and changes to our way of life.

- Some individuals, families and communities will have found the past few months really tough. Inequalities play a significant role in this, and we know that the mental health impact of Covid-19 and lockdown will not have been felt equally across Scotland.

- We have published a plan which outlines the Scottish Government's response to the mental health impacts of Covid-19 and lockdown. It addresses the challenges that the pandemic has had, and will continue to have, on the population's mental health.

- The plan lays out key areas of mental health need that have arisen as a result of Covid-19 and lockdown, and the actions that the Scottish Government will take to respond to that need.

- Our actions cover four different types of need:

  1. **Promoting and supporting the conditions for good mental health and wellbeing at population level.**

  2. **Providing accessible signposting to help, advice and support.**

  3. **Providing a rapid and easily accessible response to those in distress.**

  4. **Ensuring safe, effective treatment and care of people living with mental illness.**
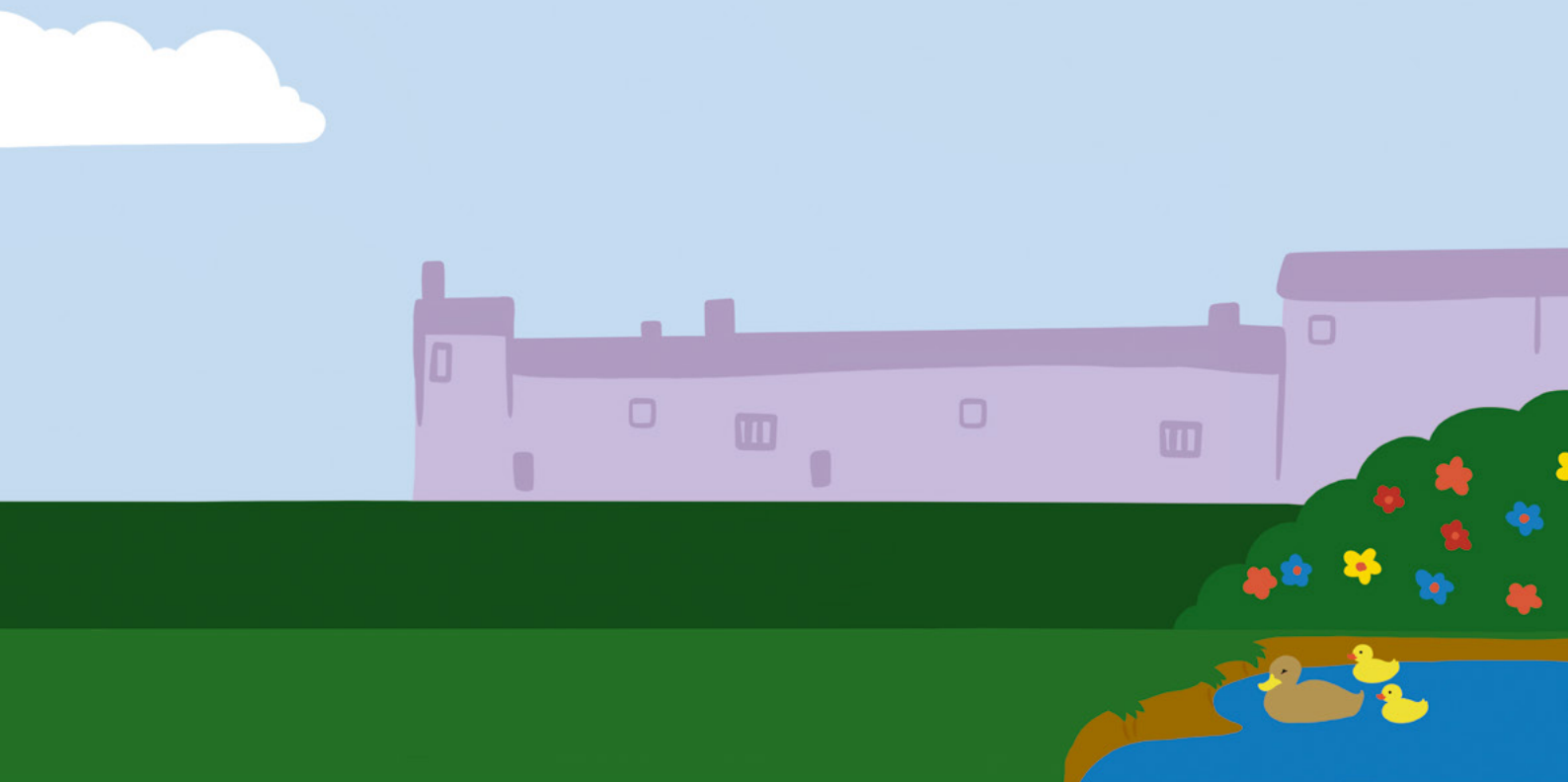
Building on Our Covid-19 Response

Covid-19 has created many challenges. But we can also recognise, and build on, the innovations and new service designs that have emerged in response to the pandemic.

Some of the key achievements during the pandemic, and which we want to build on through the actions outlined in our Plan, include:

- The **Clear Your Head** campaign, which has provided practical advice on how to stay active, keep connected with friends and family, and create healthy routines to help get through the crisis.

- The expansion of the **NHS 24 Mental Health Hub** so that it is available to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- The establishment of **Mental Health Assessment Centres**. These Centres provide the assessment of unscheduled mental health needs for anyone presenting in mental health crisis or distress, in a separate location to emergency departments. This has had a positive impact for people presenting with mental health needs, ensuring they receive the right support at the right time while also alleviating pressure on Emergency Departments.

- The expansion of **digital services**. As with all health services, mental health services had to adapt quickly to delivering support and care in different ways. Many Health Boards have moved parts of their services online, and provided less urgent care digitally using Near-Me. We will further build on this success with the roll-out of Computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, which will support a minimum of a further 10,000 people.

- The roll out of the **Distress Brief Intervention** (DBI) programme on a national basis. DBI gives people over 16 who present in emotional distress the opportunity to be referred for further dedicated support.

Our Key Commitments

Each of the commitments outlined in our Plan is important. Together, they add up to a comprehensive vision for how we as a nation respond to the mental health need that has arisen because of Covid-19 and lockdown.

There are certain key deliverables which we will move forward at pace. These are highlighted here, along with the action that we will take on each over the coming months.

Whole Population Mental Health

• We will build on the success of Clear Your Head, a national mental health campaign to help people cope during the Covid-19 pandemic. This campaign highlights the practical things people can do to help them feel better whilst continuing to stay at home, acknowledging these are worrying and uncertain times for many. The campaign will continue to evolve as we move through subsequent phases of our response to Covid-19.

By **December 2020**, we will have updated and refreshed Clear Your Head to reflect the changing nature of the pandemic, and how ongoing restrictions are impacting on people's mental health.

Employment

• For those facing redundancy, we will work with Public Health Scotland to improve our offer of mental health and wellbeing support through our Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) initiative.

By **November 2020**, we will have commenced work with Public Health Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, and other key partners, to develop a range of approaches. By **March 2021** we will have improved our mental health and wellbeing offer for those facing redundancy.

Ensuring Equity and Equality

- Building on the Equality Impact Assessments carried out on the Mental Health Strategy 2017-27, we will work with equalities and mental health organisations to look at the causes of mental health inequality at a structural and individual level. This will include specific consideration of the mental health impacts on LGBTI and minority ethnic groups. We will act on, and address, the issues identified.

By **February 2021**, we will have convened an expert equalities group who will have commenced work to ensure an overall focus on reducing mental health inequalities.

Children, Young People and Families

- We will continue to work with and support local authorities in establishing community mental health and wellbeing services and supports.

Local partnerships are aiming to have the first services in place from **January 2021 onwards**, with support available across all 32 local authorities in **2021**.

- In collaboration with Mental Health in Schools Working Group, we will develop and deliver a new mental health training and learning resource which will be available to all school staff by summer 2021. This resource will include learning for school staff to respond to the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people's mental wellbeing.

Whilst we continue to work with education authorities to support the implementation of national guidance, an additional invitation to tender will be issued in **October 2020**. This will seek a suitable contractor to develop and produce an online mental health training and learning resource for all school staff. The resource will be available by **summer 2021**.

People With Long-Term Physical Health Conditions and Disabilities

- Working with Local Authorities, Integrated Joint Boards, NHS boards and stakeholders, we will develop a person-centred approach to supporting the mental health of those who have been in shielding (or who are at higher risk) for extended periods.

By **December 2020**, we will have gathered together examples of best practice, including approaches which focus on self-management and peer support. This will support our approach to implementation. By **March 2021**, appropriate support will be being delivered to those whose mental wellbeing has been adversely affected by shielding, or by being at higher risk.

Older People

- We will work to ensure there is equitable access to mental health support and services for older people, recognising that not all older people will have access to digital resources.

By **March 2021**, we will have engaged with NHS Boards and other service providers to map the range of provision available to older people, identify gaps, and agree a set of actions for improvement.

Distress Interventions

- We will embed, develop and evaluate the move to a national, physically distanced approach to the Distress Brief Intervention programme. We will work with partners to develop a blended model of face-to-face, telephonic and digital contact that efficiently provides a person centred response.

Building on the considerable success of the Distress Brief Intervention (DBI) programme, by **November 2020**, we will have started work with the DBI Central team and the wider DBI community to develop an enhanced DBI model. This will take into account the findings of the final DBI Evaluation Report, which will be published in **spring 2021**.

Digital Innovations

- In partnership with NHS Boards, we will expand the current Computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (cCBT) service provision. We will do this by increasing treatment choice through the introduction of a new cCBT platform.

We will fulfil this action through a rapid implementation programme, which will be deployed at scale by **October 2020**. There will be no limitation on treatment numbers through cCBT. Together with the development of internet-enabled CBT (ieCBT), these services will support at a minimum a further 10,000 people – with the potential to support 30,000 people – to access therapy.

Mental Health Services

- The Scottish Government will provide a tailored programme of enhanced improvement support for individual NHS Boards, based on our assessment of their mobilisation plans, current CAMHS and Psychological Therapies performance, and feedback from our engagement with mental health leads since the start of the pandemic. This will be accompanied by a programme of national support to Boards based on key themes emerging from the remobilisation plans. The key themes are likely to include workforce, digital services, and service reform.

By **November 2020**, we will have commenced a tailored programme of enhanced improvement support, and will have engaged with all NHS Boards on the programme of national support. This work will build on progress in service delivery achieved during the initial recovery from lockdown. We will also focus on supporting all NHS Boards to respond effectively to the anticipated increase in demand in the months ahead.

- We will support the collaborative development, implementation and assessment of quality standards for mental health services.

These will build on the approach we took to develop a revised CAMHS specification, which, for the first time, set a national standard of service to be received by children, young people and families who are supported by CAMHS anywhere in Scotland. Within this, we will publish a Service Specification for children and young people who have support needs as a result of their neurodevelopmental profiles. Our Quality and Safety Board will play an important role in this programme of work.

By **March 2021** we will be delivering work in this area, which will be overseen by the Quality and Safety Board. We will also have commenced work to develop a set of quality standards across mental health services, and to develop a benchmarking, performance and improvement programme with NHS Boards and Integrated Joint Boards (IJBs) to support the delivery of these standards.

- We will ensure that third sector organisations are among our core strategic partners for the development and implementation of the actions in this Plan.

By **November 2020**, we will ensure third sector representation is prominent within the governance structures for, and work to implement and deliver, this Transition and Recovery Plan.

Conclusion

- Our full Plan contains the key commitments outlined here. It also contains a number of other key areas of focus that stakeholders have told us are important. These are areas, or groups of people, where Covid-19 and lockdown are likely to have had particular impacts on mental health.

- We want to be ambitious. Ultimately, we must ensure that everyone in Scotland is supported to achieve and maintain good mental health. We also want the right help and support to be available whenever it is needed. That includes specialist services for when mental illness does occur.

- You can read the full Transition and Recovery Plan for Mental Health here.