

Kent and Medway Safe Havens Summary

Wednesday, 17 March 2021

Introduction

NHSE Community Crisis Care funding was secured to develop four safe havens across Kent and Medway. The safe havens are provided by Mental Health Matters (MHM) an organisation with over 35 years' experience in delivering support to those with complex mental health support needs.

Through working with experts by experience, carers, commissioners, statutory and emergency services and local providers MHM have developed a model which is person centred, safe, and effective in reducing crisis, distress and achieving significant positive outcomes.

The safe havens provide a supportive place to go for those in need where they will experience care in a welcoming, safe, comfortable and non-clinical environment that promotes independence and provides opportunities for recovery. This is key to providing a service that people will engage with at times of crisis and vulnerability.

The safe havens are open every evening between 6pm and 11pm (365 days a year) and offer a non-referral based, open access alternative provision for those aged 16+ who are experiencing, or at risk of, a mental health crisis.

Support delivered within the safe havens includes:

- Crisis De-escalation
- Emotional support and resilience building
- Peer-led support
- 1 to 1

Locations

The Kent and Medway Safe Havens Project Group determined the locations of the four safe havens by using data that considered the levels of deprivation, numbers of S136 / % conversion rates, Liaison presentation/assessments and crisis contacts. The safe havens are located in:

- Age UK Centre Gillingham, Medway
- Age UK Centre, Canterbury
- Mid Kent Mind, Maidstone
- Holy Trinity Church, Margate

The link to the safe havens is <https://www.mhm.org.uk/kent-safe-havens>

Thanet Safe Haven

Thanet safe haven opened virtually on 20th April 2020. Finding a suitable space in Thanet for the location of the safe haven proved challenging and the physical opening was delayed until 9th November 2020. The CCG Mental Health Clinical Lead, Dr Malasi visited the Thanet haven on 10th November 2020.

Data

The numbers attending the safe havens in person have been disappointingly low due to Covid and lockdown:

Nov 20	7 people attended in person and 1 person was brought in by the Police
Dec 20	11 people attended in person and 4 people were brought in by the Police

Promotion

We are currently working with both CCG and KMPT communications departments to promote the havens:

- Medway Messenger
- Leaflet drop on mental health crisis to every household in Kent and Medway
- Radio Advertising

Feedback on the Thanet haven from service users

Client advised that if they had not spoken with us this evening, they would have “*gone to Margate beach and gone with the wave*”.

Client brought in by the police and had been picked up at Ramsgate harbour wall. He advised that he was thankful that we were there to listen to him and help him realise that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Client was a teacher who had become overwhelmed with pressures at work, this had led to suicide ideation and severe depression. The safe haven was the second point of contact for the client who has since come back to us twice to build resilience plans, a recovery plan and an action plan for when she is at her lowest points. The client advised that she was lost before she found the haven.

Client was referred by secondary services and advised that they felt generally listened too, free from being judged for having a serious mental illness and did not feel rushed, which was calming.

Client advised that no one understands them and that they felt better when they spoke to one of our staff. The client was able to calm and return home.

A 16 year old client from a local service came to the haven with their care support worker following a suicide attempt and stated, “*I felt like no one was talking at me, instead you talked with me and that made a difference*”.

Please contact Sharon Dosanjh, NHS Kent and Medway CCG at sharondosanjh@nhs.net if you would like any further information on the Safe Havens.