
FAQs for Health Professionals

South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust have commissioned two Recovery Cafés for South West London residents from Merton, Sutton, Wandsworth, Kingston or Richmond who are experiencing a mental health crisis.

One of the cafés is run by Hestia from 966 Garratt Lane, Tooting, and one is The Sunshine Café at 296a Kingston Road, Wimbledon Chase run by CDARS.

What is the purpose of the recovery cafés in South West London?

The Recovery Cafés provide a safe and supportive space for adults aged 18 years and over from the boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Wandsworth, Kingston or Richmond who are in mental health crisis. The cafés will offer:

- Support and interventions to empower and equip people with the skills and resilience that they need to manage their immediate crisis
- Information around the local services and resources they can use to prevent future crises
- A safe alternative to services traditionally accessed by those in crisis, such as A&E, which may not be equipped to support them effectively and may exacerbate feelings of distress and helplessness.
- An initial assessment process, one to one sessions, access to counselling, social activities, a chill out space as well as a healthy meal and a hot drink at minimum cost.

The Cafés will be co-produced with staff, volunteers and customers working together to deliver the service, ensuring social connectedness and peer support is at the heart of what we do. This includes all aspects of the service such as leading activities, preparing food for the meals and clearing up together after people have eaten.

The aim of the cafés is not to provide regular support, but to support people to harness other appropriate sources of support in a more planned way and develop their own coping mechanisms into the future so that they don't need crisis services again.

How will the service work in partnership with the Trust?

Local Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Teams will drop in to the cafés as appropriate during opening hours to provide onsite support and guidance to the staff, customers and volunteers.

The Cafés will look to form effective relationships with key agencies within the Trust, offering taster sessions at the cafés and enabling effective referrals and signposting from the Cafés.

Who is the service for?

The service is for South West London residents aged 18+ who are in mental health crisis, including those who feel unable to cope with their feelings any longer, may lack the social networks / resources to help support them during crisis and those who may feel suicidal or inclined to self-harm.

Both Hestia's Recovery Café and the Sunshine Café will be able to support up to 25 customers at one time.

Is there anyone who the Cafés can't accept?

The Cafés do not provide accommodation and are not designed to support those under 18 years old, those under the influence of drugs or alcohol, those looking to use the service on a repeat basis or people who are not resident in the boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Wandsworth, Richmond and Kingston.

As they are for people in a mental health crisis, they are also not designed to support people who already receive floating support or live in accommodation-based support schemes.

How are the Cafés funded?

The services are commissioned by South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust and funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group. The service will be funded for a minimum of 2 years from 1st April 2017, with a possible further 3 years thereafter.

When are they open?

Both Cafés are open weekdays between the hours of 6:00pm and 11:00pm every week day, as well as from 12 noon to 11:00pm at weekends and Bank Holidays.

They will be open 365 days a year.

The Cafés will need to close at 11:00pm promptly each night and customers will be supported to plan their journey home during their visit to the Cafés.

We will discourage people from visiting the cafés near to closing time to ensure that each person attending is able to benefit from the time and support they need.

Do people need to pay to use the Cafés?

No. The Cafés have not been designed as commercial enterprises. There will be a minimal fee for meals provided in the Cafés.

How do people access the service?

Simply by turning up, there is no booking or formal referrals required.

People can also ring ahead if they need any support around travelling to the café or would like to speak with a member of staff beforehand.

If you have the opportunity to signpost someone to the café and would like to make sure that they arrive safely, you can also contact Hestia's Recovery Café on 07794394920 or the Sunshine Café on 07908436617.

If you would like any more information you can also email the cafés respectively; RecoveryCafe@Hestia.org or info@sunshinerecoverycafe.org for more information.

Although they are open access, the cafés are not designed to provide ongoing drop-in support – customers will be expected to engage in activities and interventions to reduce their immediate crisis, to safety plan and to prevent future reoccurrences.

How can I / my service / organisation help to promote the recovery café?

The recovery cafés are brand new services so any support around promotion and awareness would be greatly appreciated and much needed.

You can support us by letting those within your professional networks know about the service – this might involve passing on marketing materials, mentioning the service in any organisational newsletters / meetings or simply by providing our contact details so people can get in touch directly to find out more.

You can also support us on-line by following us on Twitter, 'retweeting' any related posts or you can TAG us in your tweets @Hestia1970 or @SunshineCafe4