



Workforce Wellbeing Champions

26 February 2021

Dear Colleague,

Workforce Specialist Service – for regulated health and social care staff

Thank you for all your work to support health and social care staff throughout the pandemic. Supporting staff wellbeing and the welfare of the workforce remains a critical priority, and, as the Cabinet Secretary has outlined today, the Scottish Government is committed to supporting staff and helping them to recover.

I am writing to update you on the development of the Workforce Specialist Service (WSS), further to the Programme for Government announcement in September last year, and to thank you for your work with us to date.

The WSS, delivered by NHS Practitioner Health on an interim basis, is a confidential, multidisciplinary mental health treatment service with expertise in treating regulated health and social services professionals. They specialise in caring for regulated professionals as patients, and as such are experts at the interface between regulation, employment and mental illness and addiction.

The WSS forms part of a 'network' of services and resources that aim to improve the wellbeing and mental health of health and social care staff across Scotland, and will supplement the range of staff support services available at local level.

In summary:

- It is a free at the point of delivery, confidential primary care led mental health treatment service, which is available to regulated members of the health and social care workforce in Scotland.
- It is of particular benefit to those who find it difficult to access treatment for mental health due to concerns about receiving a confidential service or the professional implications of seeking support.
- It is delivered by a multi-disciplinary team of mental health care providers that can treat professionals suffering from a range of mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, depression or addiction, in particular where these might affect work.
- The service will operate under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with each of the relevant regulators in order to provide assurance of confidentiality of those they treat wherever possible whilst ensuring patient/client safety and not undermining the statutory responsibilities of the regulator. (N.B. MOUs are in place with the General Medical Council (GMC), General Dental Council (GDC), Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the General



Pharmaceutical Council (GPhc). We are hoping to finalise shortly MOUs with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and the General Optical Council (GOC)).

- This service is complementary to the local Occupational Health Service and local support services and does not remove the statutory responsibility of the NHS Board Responsible Officers and Nurse and Midwifery Directors to ensure there is a culture of support to maintain patient safety.
- The service has extensive experience supporting regulated professionals and in supporting them through regulatory and investigation processes.

Staff can access the service by visiting the National Wellbeing Hub: [The Workforce Specialist Service \(WSS\) - PRoMIS | National Wellbeing Hub for those working in Health and Social Care](#). They can also email prac.health@nhs.net, or call 0300 0303 300.

We ask that you raise awareness of this new service across your organisations and networks, and that you signpost the service to any colleagues who may benefit from it. We will provide you and your teams with further communications assets about the service shortly.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact Victoria.bruce@gov.scot if you have any comments or questions.

Many thanks again for your work with us.

Yours sincerely



Cat McMeeken

Deputy Director, Leadership, Culture and Wellbeing