

Community Living Well

Autumn/Winter
2020

In this edition

Resilience during
an uncertain time



Facing redundancy
after lockdown



Latest service
updates



Community
LivingWell

Working together for your wellbeing

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Editor's Letter

Welcome to the autumn/winter edition of the Community Living Well magazine. I hope you have been keeping safe and well during this difficult time. This is my first edition as editor since I joined as Marketing Coordinator in September, and I hope you will find it useful.

The situation regarding Covid-19 and lockdown is changing all the time, which is bringing a lot of uncertainty to our lives. I wanted to include articles that provide practical help and advice on issues that many of us may be dealing with at the moment.

We've written an article about suicide prevention to highlight how important it is to talk openly about this - a subject that many of us find challenging. It is vital that we are aware of our own wellbeing, as well as the wellbeing of those around us.

Throughout the pandemic, people have shown courage and resilience - there have been many positive stories to tell, so we focus on some of the incredible voluntary organisations that have helped our community. We also tell you about the ways in which we are continuing to support people using Community Living Well services.

Plus, there's information on what to do if you are facing eviction from your home, or if you have been made redundant from your job since lockdown.

If you have any suggestions, features, stories or feedback about the magazine, please contact me at stewart.gillespie@kcmind.org.uk.

Take care and stay safe,

Stewart Gillespie – Marketing Coordinator

How to Refer

You can refer to the Community Living Well service quickly and securely by completing the form found here communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/. Alternatively, you can ask your GP to refer you.

After we have received your information, we will be in touch within 5 working days. If you have any questions about the referral process or other parts of Community Living Well, please contact us on **020 3317 4200**

Community Living Well

Eligibility

Community Living Well is a primary care service for anyone experiencing mental health difficulties who is 16 years old or over and signed up with a GP in Kensington and Chelsea, Queen's Park or Paddington.

Community Living Well offers a different kind of mental health support. It brings people together from your local community groups, NHS and the voluntary sector in one service which will work alongside you and your GP to help you access the support you need.

Our model of care aims to:

- work as one integrated service that wraps around the individual
- work with the GP at the centre as the accountable clinician responsible for each person's treatment and care

Our Partners

Central and North West London NHS

Foundation Trust – Primary Care Liaison

and Talking Therapies (IAPT) Services

Kensington and Chelsea Mind

– Peer Support Service

SMART (St Mary Abbots Rehabilitation and

Training) – Navigator and Employment Services

Kensington and Chelsea Social

Council – Self-Care Services

Wellbeing Support

Employment – Advice and guidance on looking for work, staying in work, and improving employability skills.

Navigators – Advice and guidance on a range of issues including benefits, debt, housing and signposting to specialist support services.

Peer Support – Groups, social events and activities bringing people together to support and learn from each other.

Self-Care – Support and activities that help you to take care of your own mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Clinical Support

Talking Therapies (IAPT) – Talking therapy or counselling that can help you if you are feeling stressed, worried or low in mood.

Primary Care Liaison – Specialist nurse-led support and access to Primary Care Psychiatry.

Find out more information and whether we can help you on our website

communitylivingwell.co.uk

Suicide Prevention: Conversations Save Lives

This year has been particularly difficult for all of us; the pandemic and months of lockdown restrictions have had a massive impact on our daily lives as well as our mental health. In our borough, we have the added on-going trauma of the Grenfell tragedy. This is a lot to cope with and it is understandable that many are struggling with their mental health and wellbeing or facing challenges in life.

Suicide Awareness

To mark both World Suicide Prevention Day (10 September 2020) and World Mental Health Day (10 October 2020), we want to create more awareness of suicide prevention, help break the stigma, and look at how our local community is trying to help those who may need support.



It's good to talk

The awareness of mental health and mental wellbeing has increased significantly in recent years, and people are now more aware of their own mental wellbeing as well as the wellbeing of those around them. However, many people are still uncomfortable talking about suicide or suicidal thoughts or feelings.

It can be scary talking to someone who is experiencing suicidal thoughts, but it really can make a difference.

How can I support someone in a crisis?

If someone tells you they are experiencing suicidal thoughts, always take them seriously.

Ask open questions – this invites them to answer more than 'yes' or 'no', for example, 'How are you feeling?' or 'What happened?'

Try not to judge – it's important not to blame the person or give your own opinion on the situation.

Give them time and listen – be patient, as it has probably been very difficult for them to open up to you.

Don't be afraid to ask the difficult questions – being direct lets the person know they can talk freely about how they're feeling. Ask 'Are you having suicidal thoughts?' or 'Have you felt like you want to end your life?'



If you need urgent assistance...

- Contact your GP surgery
- Contact Central North West London NHS Trust's Single Point of Access (SPA) - a first point of contact for people experiencing a mental health crisis: **0800 0234 650**

If you or someone else that you know is at immediate risk:

- You can attend Accident & Emergency (A&E)
 - Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, 369 Fulham Road, London, SW10 9NH
 - The Royal Marsden Hospital, 203 Fulham Road, London SW3 6JJ
 - St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY
- If you have already taken an overdose or injured yourself, dial 999

Support for the Grenfell Community

If you or someone you know has been affected by the Grenfell Tower fire, support is available...

The Grenfell Health and Wellbeing Service is there for you if you need to talk. You can call their helpline on **020 8637 6279** (Mon - Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-5pm) or overnight on **0800 023 4650** (from 8pm).

Follow them on Twitter at [@GrenfellNHS](https://twitter.com/GrenfellNHS) for useful information, including details of events to support your emotional wellbeing and recovery.

Other helpful resources...

Mind offers advice on ways to help yourself cope during a crisis: www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/

For emotional support or help if you are struggling with suicidal feelings or despair, call the Samaritans on **116 123**, free of charge and available 24 hours a day/365 days a year.



Resilience During an Uncertain Time

The challenges we've faced this year have been extremely tough. The coronavirus pandemic was completely unexpected, and we've all had to adapt to a new way of living, whilst trying to remain strong, determined and patient. If you are struggling with your mental health, this uncertainty can bring even more stress and fear.

Our Community

Throughout this hard time, it has been wonderful to see people coming together – friends, family and communities pulling together to support and help one another. In Kensington and Chelsea, many voluntary and community organisations, as well as individual volunteers, have been working non-stop to provide people in the community with invaluable support.

We want to highlight the work of some of these incredible people, and say a huge 'thank you' to our voluntary heroes...

SMART

SMART began its food distribution service the day before lockdown started and during their busiest week, they distributed over 270 bags of food. SMART's neighbours were incredible, popping in to donate food, money or deliver bags. SMART say they were particularly grateful to two young people and their mum who came every week to help out after they had finished their home-schooling.

Director of SMART, Amelia, said, "It has never been just about the food. After every long day of deliveries we would get a flurry of calls, emails and texts from people - ill, frightened, alone - whose world had been brightened by the brief human contact that they had from our volunteers."



NHS Responders

NHS Responders is a national group of volunteers who provide support to anyone who is shielding, vulnerable, self-isolating or who has caring responsibilities. The volunteers provide various services, including telephone calls to check-in or give support, collection of shopping, medication or other essential supplies, and transport.

Throughout May and June, West London CCG had a total of 2,193 volunteers, who provided 7,698 tasks to 1,345 individuals.



Mutual Aid

Nathan Cooper, Mutual Aid Kensington and Chelsea Volunteer Coordinator, told us about the work they have been doing:

"In early March, Mutual Aid Kensington and Chelsea was created as a platform to enable neighbourliness in the RBKC. We realised that in this period of unprecedented and uncertain crisis, all residents - regardless of their background - would be affected. Our primary aim was to ensure we could support neighbours to: be kept well fed, have the medicine they need, not have to endanger their vulnerable loved ones by leaving the house, not have to feel alone, and to be able to feel like there's someone out there listening and looking out for them."

To ensure we were as close to the ground as possible, we formed eight decentralised areas across RBKC, each with its own online communication channels and telephone number so neighbours seeking support could be connected with those offering their time to help out. During the peak of the pandemic, Mutual Aid welcomed around 15,000 volunteers making dozens of food deliveries, running essential errands, and providing health and wellbeing support, working in every RBKC ward, every day. In one ward alone, over 300 calls have led to over 150 support requests being dealt with, all whilst striving for the highest standards of safeguarding and confidentiality."

To find out how to support Mutual Aid or receive support, please visit MutualAidKC.com or drop us a line on mutualaidkc@gmail.com

Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea (VCKC)

During the first few months of the pandemic, VCKC received over 2,000 registrations from potential volunteers wanting to help the community. Ahmed was one of those people, and here is his story...

When Ahmed first came to Wellbeing at VCKC (the Volunteering on Prescription team) he was struggling with depression and isolation after having to give up his job due to a health condition. He started to come to community volunteering taster days and to volunteer regularly at his local library and started to feel much happier.

During lockdown, starting in March 2020, he started to feel very isolated and depressed again.

Wellbeing phoned Ahmed to assess his needs and started regular Welfare Check phone calls with him. They also liaised with his GP, who was monitoring him carefully. As his mood improved, he has been able to become a wellbeing volunteer and has been helped to access interactive online workshops, such as relaxation, art, and 'Cook & Chat'. They have also been able to give him some tech support so that he can access his phone therapy sessions.

Recently Ahmed has been helped to facilitate an online wellbeing art workshop. This utilises his artistic skills, which were noted at his initial assessment, and has given him a focus, purpose and sense of pride and satisfaction.

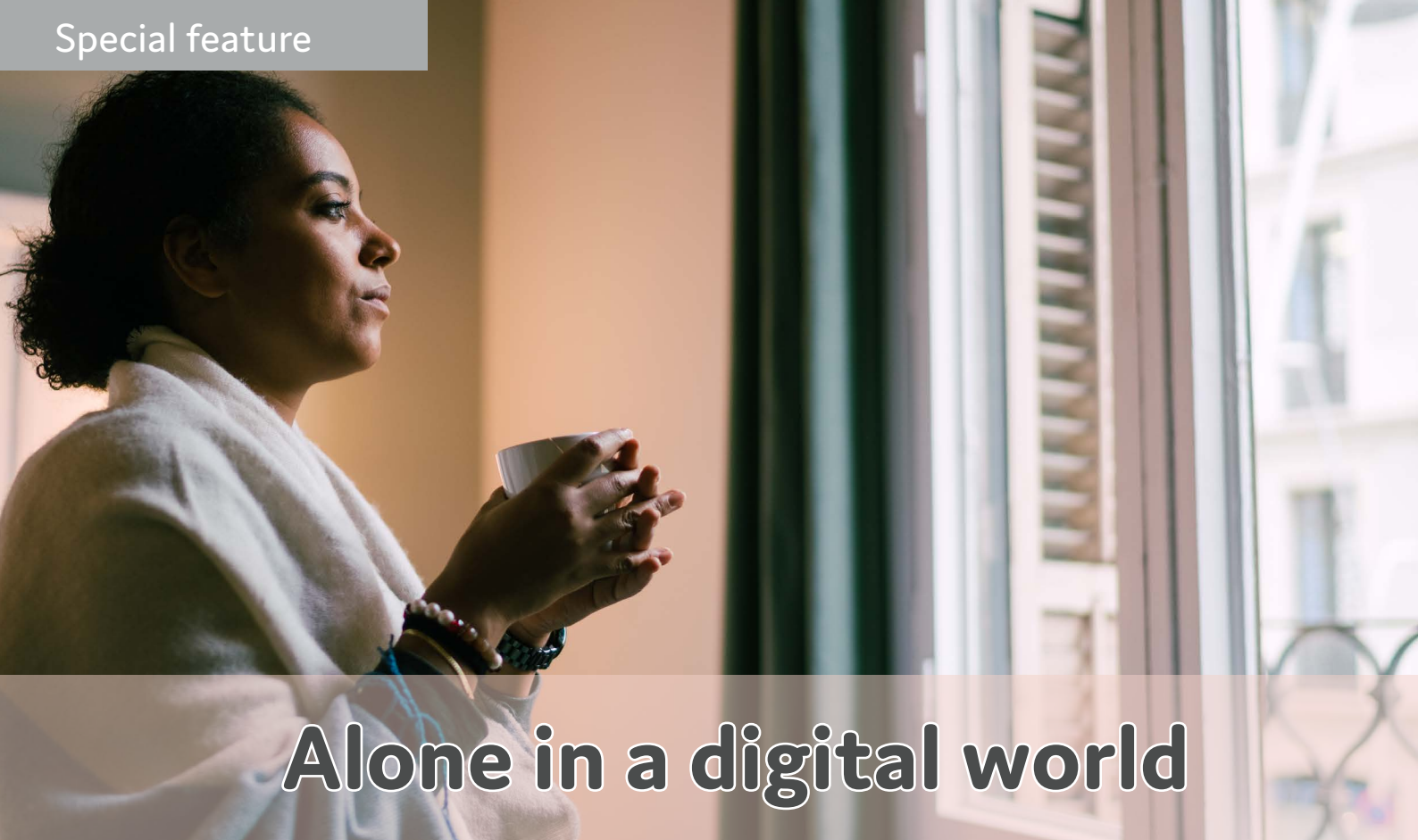
Ahmed said: *"I feel more hopeful about the future, I feel very happy. Since I met these people at the Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea, I feel much better."*



Volunteering on Prescription

Volunteering on Prescription is a self-care programme that helps you meet people, share skills and interests and improve your wellbeing through volunteering tailored to your needs. The Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea builds your programme around you and what you like. There is a range of different Self-Care services that can be accessed through Community Living Well.

You can refer to the Self-Care service by completing this [online form](#) or call **020 3317 4200**.



Alone in a digital world

We are living in a fast-paced digital world, where almost everything is now online, including banking, shopping and advice. For many, this is a good thing, as it means faster access to services and instant responses to some requests. But what if you cannot get online? We've taken a look at some of the reasons why people can't get online and provide some tips on how to stay connected if you are feeling excluded.

Digital Exclusion

The recent lockdown has highlighted a major divide in our society, with millions of people unable to access critical online services, and millions more restricted by pay-as-you-go services. This digital exclusion can have an impact on your mental state if you are worried about missing out on vital services such as healthcare, education and benefits.



Did you know...

13% of UK adults do not use the internet

10% of UK households do not have internet access

(Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Use and Attitudes' report 2020)

Restrictions to access

There are many reasons as to why people do not access the internet:

Accessibility: they might not have access via broadband, WiFi or mobile. Even if they do have an internet connection, they may not have a computer, smartphone or tablet.

Confidence: some are afraid of doing something wrong, lack trust or fear being caught out in an online scam.

Motivation: some people simply do not want to go online.

During lockdown, those with no internet connection or who could not afford to keep topping up pay-as-you-go accounts, were left shut in their homes, socially isolated with no means of contacting anyone in the outside world.

I can't get online and it's making me anxious. What can I do?

If you cannot access the internet easily, support is available.

Make a call

Many services still operate a telephone service – lines may be busier than usual during the pandemic, but you can still get through to speak to someone. Just be patient or try to call at different times during the day.

Are feeling lonely or anxious and feel you need support?

To refer yourself to the Talking Therapies service, please fill out the online form available here: communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/ or call **020 3317 4200**

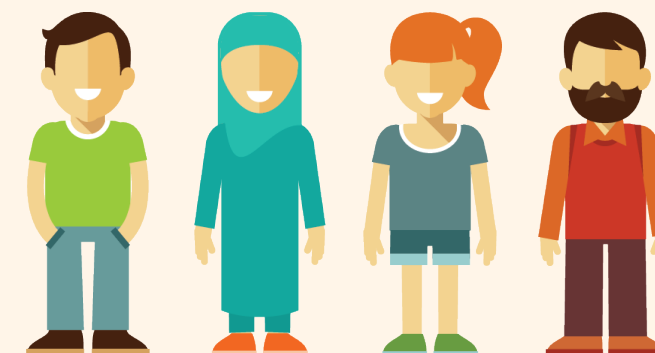


Did you know...

65% of smartphone users agree that it is more difficult to complete forms on their smartphone than on a computer

53% of internet users aged 65+ are less likely to bank online

(Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Use and Attitudes' report 2020)



Seek help or training

Many organisations such as Housing Associations, Local Authorities, Job Centre Plus, and regional health associations can often provide advice, guidance or training.

Ask someone

Find a trusted source – seek help from a friend, family member, carer or health worker. Ask them if you can use their internet access sometimes, or get them to teach you how to use the technology properly.

Keeping Yourself Well

Self-Care is an approach to health and wellbeing which helps you to keep yourself well. The Community Living Well self-care programme helps people to take more control of their mental health and physical wellbeing, and to build social contact access to community, leisure, education, arts and volunteering opportunities. There is a range of different Self-Care services that can be accessed through Community Living Well.

One-to-one emotional support

One of the self-care services run by the BME Health Forum is one-to-one emotional wellbeing and support in your own language. They provide emotional support and help with practical problems, including help to access other services.

Alex used this service in his time of need. This is his story...

Spiralling out of control

After his divorce, Alex (around 50 years of age) felt isolated, low in mood, and started ignoring letters sent to his address. His health and wellbeing were spiralling out of control and his only relative, his sister, had not made any contact for more than seven years.

Finding the courage

He found out about the Community Living Well programme through someone who attends his local Mosque and was encouraged with the level of support they received. Alex managed to get the courage to attend.

He attended sessions to get support with his on-going challenges such as arrears and housing situation. Due to his ill mental health, he had failed to realise that his rent arrears were now getting out of hand and he was at risk of being evicted – he did not know where to go or what to do.

Comfort and support

Our staff provided comfort and support to Alex when he attended his first session, as he was restless while the matter was still unresolved. Our adviser contacted Alex's local housing office on his behalf, arranged extra time and set up a repayment agreement, making it easier for Alex to manage his debt.

At Alex's meetings, he and the adviser set realistic goals for him to work towards, including sorting any mail he received so he felt more organised.

Making progress

Alex made good progress at his fortnightly meetings. He reached his goals and kept up with his repayment agreement. He was more engaged and started to set more goals that he could work towards.

Alex described how the service was instrumental in helping him make progress:

“I couldn't praise them enough. With my problem, I do not meet people regularly as sometimes they are not so understanding or interested in what I say. I had to hide my difficulties and thought my problem would disappear, but it got worse. So I turn up at this place, tell these people I need help at first meeting and felt a sense of relief as there is a young man (project leader) who is just so calm and caring, saying 'anything you need, don't worry.'”

Emotional and practical help in your language...

A service offered only for Arabic (including Moroccan and Sudanese dialects), Farsi, French, Somali and Spanish speakers to provide emotional support and help with practical problems, including help to access other services.

When: By appointment: Contact BME Health Forum
Where: Over the phone or online
Email: pete.westmore@bmehf.org.uk
Telephone: 07958 479 217





In the spotlight: Lucy's story

Lucy is one of our Peer Support workers. She first discovered Peer Support after seeking therapy herself, and eventually came to work with us at Community Living Well Peer Support Team. We have asked her about her experience and why she thinks Peer Support groups are so helpful.

Tell us a little bit about yourself, and how you got involved with Community Living Well and Peer Support?

Hi, my name is Lucy and I'm a Peer Support worker with Community Living Well Peer Support Team. I first came across Community Living Well when I was receiving therapy myself. I was feeling directionless, having been forced to leave education, and feeling most potently like I didn't want anyone else to feel as isolated and alone as I had in the depths of my depression. When I expressed this, my therapist handed over a brochure for the Peer Support training being offered by Mind. A few months of training and an interview later, I had the job.

What is your experience of Peer Support and how would you explain it to others?

For me, Peer Support has always been about meeting people on the same level. Whether that's just being social among people who have been through similar experiences or more formally, coming to a Peer Support group, sharing how you're feeling and receiving the support of others who recognise those struggles, it doesn't matter. It's that shared experience, that's the key.

“Peer Support is helpful to anyone, whether you only experience mild anxiety or have been confronting your mental health for years.”

How is Peer Support different to other types of support?

In my experience, talking to doctors or other health professionals can at times be a bit anxiety-inducing, because there's a power dynamic there. That dynamic exists for a reason, since these professionals come from an education and authority. As a Peer Support worker, what I hope I can provide is an open understanding and empathy. Coming from a place of lived experience of mental health and openly sharing that experience, I would hope that members feel a sense of comfort and reassurance speaking to me because I know where they're coming from. I've been through, if not the exact same things then something similar, and so when I speak about what has helped me to recover and keep my mental health in check, it comes from the position of “I tried this and it helped”, rather than “just do as I tell you”, which can feel a bit alienating.

In what types of situations have you found peer support helpful?

I think Peer Support is helpful for anyone, whether you only experience mild anxiety or have been confronting your mental health for years. We have people in our Peer Support groups from all walks of life and across ages, gender, race and religion, tied together by our shared knowledge and struggles with mental health. I know when I was struggling, I didn't know how to speak to those around me about what I was feeling because I couldn't stand to burden them with my emotions and trauma. What Peer Support offers is the space to share without fear of judgement and with acceptance and understanding of those feelings that are designed to isolate us.

Since Covid-19, the Peer Support service has moved online. What is your role and how does it differ to the face-to-face groups?

Really, my role hasn't changed much since the move to online Peer Support groups. I still share how I'm coping day to day, particularly how Covid has affected my mental health and I use my own experience to support others. Of course, it's a bit different being online rather than face-to-face. A lot of body language cues can be lost in translation so I have to be extra attentive, and the comfort of all being in a room together obviously can't quite be replicated. But even if they don't quite have the same feel as the in-person Peer Support groups, the online groups are an incredible way to feel connected to others in times of such great isolation.

What advice would you give to someone who is considering joining an online Peer Support group?

Just try it! I promise we're very welcoming and will do whatever we can to make the experience as easy and supportive as we can. If you need to have a phone call easing you in beforehand, we can do that. You don't even have to contribute if you don't feel up to it. You can just listen and get a feel for the group to see if it's for you. There's nothing to lose and a whole community to gain by joining.

Want to find out more about Peer Support?

Find out how Peer Support can help you. Go to: communitylivingwell.co.uk/how-we-can-help-mental-health



Peer Support in your own words...



Peer support is when people use their own experiences to help each other. Community Living Well Peer Support is available to people over 16 who experience mental health problems whilst under the care of their GP, and their carers.

It can support you if you want to:

- ✓ **feel less isolated**
- ✓ **increase your confidence**
- ✓ **get or give support and talk to others who understand your mental health problems through a shared experience**
- ✓ **be more knowledgeable about your mental health**

The current situation...

Although the Peer Support team cannot provide our usual face-to-face meetings and groups at the moment, our wellbeing services have continued to support people online and by phone. Feedback from people using these new services has been extremely positive.

We want to reassure you that if you are struggling, we can help. Whether it is online for now, or face-to-face when things return to normal, our sessions still provide a place to meet new people and share your feelings without judgement.

Don't take our word for it – here are some of the things that people have said about their experience with Peer Support...

“My therapist referred me to Peer Support. It has helped me a lot to make progress in areas of my life. I've been given helpful information from the Peer Support staff and, step by step, I'm doing more things. I have recently contacted a volunteering service that they gave me information about.”

“I am new to Peer Support. Very, very good experience - made me smile and it was nice to talk to others with similar issues - it made me feel more understood, like I'm not the only one. Good mix of people.”



“It's the best service I've ever been to - it's amazing. Sometimes people can spend days without talking. Amazing staff, very kind. And I have spoken to some really nice people there.”

“I can't thank you enough! I didn't realise how isolated I was before I joined Peer Support. I've been making terrific friends, having lots of laughs and coffee breaks. I am more relaxed and I've been having a ball of a time! Everything is organised to perfection, and I always leave [a group] on a high! The staff are incredibly dedicated and send such lovely texts - it's great to feel part of a community.”

“I wanted to let you know how much I enjoy the Zoom meetings. They really are a lifesaver as they give me a reason to get up. The Mental Health Support Group helps me learn new ways of trying to cope with these very scary times, and I also very much enjoy the Quiz and Art Groups - they help cheer me up and take my mind off my problems. Thanks for all your great work and please keep the Zoom meetings up and running to help so many of us through these very difficult times.”

Want to sign up to one of the Peer Support groups?

To refer yourself to the Peer Support service, please fill out the form available here: communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/ or call 020 3317 4200.



Facing Redundancy After Lockdown

Since lockdown restrictions have eased and the furlough scheme has ended, sadly, many people have lost their jobs. Redundancy is a major life event and can cause many difficulties. There are practical things to consider, as well as the effect it may have on your mental wellbeing.

What is redundancy?

Redundancy happens when your company decides that the job you're doing is no longer needed. This can happen if the company is planning on restructuring, changing location or closing part or all of the business.

If you have been made redundant, it's really important that you know your rights. To ensure the process is fair, you can't be chosen for redundancy based on age, gender, disability or mental health status. If you're legally classed as an employee and you have worked continuously with the employer for over 2 years, you have rights related to redundancy and unfair dismissal.

Redundancy Pay

There are two types of redundancy pay which you might be entitled to:

- **Statutory redundancy pay** – What you're entitled to by law. The limit is currently £538 a week (£560 in Northern Ireland) if you were made redundant on or after 6 April 2020.
- **Contractual redundancy pay** – What you receive in addition to the statutory amount as stated in your contract. By law, this can't be less than the statutory amount.

You can see how much statutory pay you'll receive using the redundancy pay calculator on GOV.UK (www.gov.uk/calculate-your-redundancy-pay). This is based on age, weekly pay and number of years in the job. Your weekly pay is the average you earned per week over the 12 weeks before the day you got your redundancy notice.



If your company has ceased trading and there is no money left to offer redundancy pay, you'll need to claim your statutory redundancy pay from the Redundancy Payments Service (www.gov.uk/claim-redundancy). This normally takes 3-6 weeks for you to receive payment.

What if I was on 'furlough'?

If you've been on 'furlough' during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, you must use your full normal pay when working out redundancy pay. There is more information on your rights during redundancy on the [ACAS website](https://www.acas.org.uk) or if you have union membership, it might be helpful to speak to a union representative about redundancy negotiations. If you don't have a representative, the Community Living Well Employment team may be able to help.

Review your budget

When faced with redundancy you may be primarily concerned with your finances and next source of income. Money and mental health are often linked, so it's natural if you feel stressed or worried about this. Creating a budget planner is a good starting point to review bills and outgoings. The Money Advice Service has a template and some great tips on how to get started: www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/tools/budget-planner

It would also be helpful to check if there are any benefits or grants that you might be entitled to whilst looking for a new job.

Take care of your mental health

Redundancy can cause stress and anxiety over the future, and can make existing mental health problems worse, so it's really important to look after your mental health during this time:

- **Take time to process it** – If you've lost your job or are experiencing financial difficulties due to the crisis, take some time to process what is happening. A big part of the redundancy process can be understanding what's happening and why. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted businesses and it might be helpful to remember that the decision to make your job redundant wasn't a personal one.
- **Talk to your support network** – Having a space to express your concerns is really beneficial, so where possible, talk to family, friends or your wider support network about what's going on for you. You can also speak to your GP if you are concerned about your mental health. If you need to take time out, activities like walking, yoga and mindfulness exercises can help relieve stress during this time.
- **Let the search begin** – Spend some time reviewing and updating your CV, enrolling on free online courses or reconnect with old work colleagues who might be able to help you find a new role. Get in touch with our Employment team for some CV and interview tips. You could also use this time to write down all the skills and qualities you have; personal and professional. Not only will this help you map out your next steps in your career, but, will also give you an opportunity to celebrate what you have achieved so far and boost self-esteem.

Useful information and advice

ACAS:

www.acas.org.uk/redundancy
(0300 123 1100)

Citizens Advice Bureau:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

How to refer to Community Living Well

If you are concerned about being made redundant and would like some support managing the process or advice, you can make a self-referral to the employment service at Community Living Well. The employment team are working remotely and are not taking face-to-face appointments during the COVID-19 outbreak, but we may be able to support you remotely via telephone and online services. You can self-refer at the Community Living Well Website:

communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/



Housing regulations: What's changed and how does it affect me?

During lockdown the Government put in place measures to protect tenants from eviction. These were lifted on 20 September 2020, meaning the courts can now hear applications for repossession orders. Dealing with this situation can be extremely stressful. Our Navigators have provided some information and advice to support you during this difficult time.

Normal Eviction Process

Landlords evict tenants via two main avenues; a Section 21 notice is used when landlords want to repossess their property for their own use. A Section 8 notice, is used when the tenant has broken the tenancy agreement, perhaps by not paying the rent, or engaging in anti-social behaviour (ASB). After being served notice, a tenant usually has two months to vacate the property; if they remain, a landlord then seeks a repossession order from a court. If the court judge agrees with the landlord, an order to leave the property, usually within two weeks, is issued.

Lockdown Changes

Under the COVID-19 restrictions, from 27 March 2020, some rules were changed:

- Between 27 March and 29 August, the notice period was extended to three months.
- On 27 March the Government suspended all court hearings (a moratorium) until 20 September, meaning that, even if you had been issued with an eviction notice before 27 March, your eviction was temporarily on hold.
- From 29 August most tenants are entitled to a six-month notice period, with certain exceptions.

The situation now

Court hearings have resumed; how this affects tenants will depend on the individual scenario:

1. Notice given before March 27; your notice period will have elapsed during the COVID-19 moratorium, and the court hearing can proceed.
2. Notice served between 27 March and 29 August; your notice period will lapse after three months, at which point your landlord can apply to the court for repossession.
3. Notice served after 29 August; you have a six-month notice period before the landlord can apply to court (except in cases of ASB, domestic abuse, false statement and six months of rent arrears).

Court Hearings

If your case goes to court, you will receive court papers including:

- 'claim for possession' forms
- Date of hearing
- A Defence form – your opportunity to tell the court why you have rent arrears, or why you disagree with what the landlord put in the 'claim for possession form'. It is important to complete this and send it back within 14 days.

The whole process can take some time and may take even longer with the backlog of cases to be heard, so you will not have to leave your accommodation immediately.



If you have not received advice before, you can get free legal advice and representation in court on the day of the hearing under the Housing Possession Court Duty scheme. Contact details are provided in the paperwork. Support is also available from local organisations.

Receiving Notice

Receiving a notice to quit can be very scary but there are things you can do and help is available. It is important not to ignore the notice but to seek help as soon as you receive it. Your local council has a duty to prevent homelessness so you can approach them for support. They will check the validity of the notice document and can offer to negotiate with your landlord, perhaps to agree a payment plan if there are rent arrears, so you can stay in the property, or help you find somewhere else to live.

If your social housing landlord is serving notice due to rent arrears or ASB you can negotiate a repayment plan with them to reduce the arrears or enter into an ASB agreement. This will allow you to stay in the property as long as you abide by the agreement.

If you are experiencing some of the issues mentioned...

The team are currently working remotely and are not taking face-to-face appointments but they may be able to support you remotely via telephone and online services.

To refer to our Navigator service, please [fill out the self-referral form](#) or call 020 3317 4200.

Talking Therapies During Covid-19

Covid-19 has brought changes for all our lives, including how we deliver Talking Therapies. Most people's idea about talking therapy is that it involves sitting in a room (usually a smallish room) with your therapist for 30 minutes to an hour every week and talking; or perhaps being in a therapy group and meeting weekly with a group of people to talk and learn new ways of managing difficulties. During Covid-19 this is exactly what we are advised to avoid – being in an enclosed space for an extended period of time with a person or people not from our household.

Staying Safe

In order to help keep everyone safe we needed to rethink how we provide talking therapy!

We have been offering talking therapy and groups over the telephone and via Zoom. All our therapists have quickly learnt how to adapt the way they work, so that our interventions are as effective over the phone and by video as they would be in person. They've also learnt how to help people learn how to use Zoom so that they see their therapist during the sessions rather than just hearing them. This has been really successful, with many people finding it has some advantages to having face-to-face sessions.

New Ways of Working

We've also been thinking of ways we can help people who don't have space at home or a good internet connection, or a working tablet or smart phone. We have made 'Covid secure' rooms available, so if you don't have a private space at home you can come in and use a room – we also have tablets for you to use if needed to join your session. We can also offer face-to-face sessions where these are necessary, but we do try to only do this when there's no other way, and making sure we follow all the Covid-19 safety advice, including masks and social distancing. We want to keep

everyone as safe as possible, and unfortunately at the moment that means avoiding being in enclosed spaces with people from another household as much as is possible.

Like most people we are really looking forward to the day when we can return to offering face-to-face appointments and groups, safe in the knowledge that we are not putting people at risk by doing so – but until then we will continue to adapt what we do, so it is as safe as possible for all of us.

What people have been saying about Talking Therapies...

I am able to dedicate an hour without worrying about getting there, being late or missing my next meetings - doing it from the comfort of my own home and having everything I need easily accessible to complete the session

It worked really well for me, it felt less intimidating than attending therapy and I preferred being in my own space

I felt more comfortable speaking over the phone, it was more relaxed being at home

We don't have to find and pay a sitter for our baby, we don't risk getting or spreading the virus and we don't have to spend money on transport. The appointments are more flexible and accommodating.

Being able to see the therapist made me feel more comfortable. It was helpful to be able to see the documents and work on them together. Overall I felt really empowered by the therapy

I worried that it would be difficult to express my emotions and be vulnerable over video, but I had a really good experience



If you think you would benefit from Talking Therapies...

To refer yourself to the Talking Therapies service, please fill out this online form or call 020 3317 4200



GP Services and Support

Although some restrictions have been relaxed, we should all be aiming to distance ourselves from other people as much as we can. However, many of us still need to get prescriptions or seek medical help for something unrelated to coronavirus. We've pulled together the latest NHS information and advice about how to contact your GP and other health services at this time.

GP appointments and bookings

There have been changes to GP appointments to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Some people have been reluctant to contact their GP because they think they are too busy dealing with the pandemic, but it is still important to get help if you need it.

You can contact your GP surgery by:

- Visiting their website
- [Using the NHS app](#)
- Calling them

Only visit a GP surgery if you have been told to. [Click here to find out how to get medical help from home.](#)

Some GP surgeries are offering a consultation online or over the phone. Speak to your GP surgery for more information.

If you need an urgent appointment, don't hesitate to call your GP surgery. If your GP surgery is closed, a recorded message will tell you who to contact.

Prescriptions

You can order repeat prescriptions online. [Go to the NHS website](#) to find out how.

Other services

There are other services that may be able to help you without the need to see your GP...



You can go to a pharmacy for advice and treatment for minor conditions that do not need a prescription. You can find out about services you can get from a pharmacist here: [nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/pharmacies/what-to-expect-from-your-pharmacy-team/](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/pharmacies/what-to-expect-from-your-pharmacy-team/)



Call NHS 111 if you have an urgent medical problem, but you're not sure what to do, or go to: [nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/)



Visit 111.nhs.uk for urgent medical advice for people aged 5 and over only.



Visit a sexual health service for testing for sexually transmitted infections and contraception advice. [Go to the NHS website](#) for more information.

You do not have to make an appointment or register for these services.

(Source: [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk))





Primary Care Liaison Nurse: Service Update

The Primary Care Liaison Team is not offering face-to-face appointments at the moment. Instead, they are offering telephone consultations and face-to-face appointments using online platforms such as Zoom.

They can work with you, your GP and other professionals in a number of ways including:

- Providing assessment and support to you and your GP for such things as specialist advice on treatment options, including medication advice and support
- Help to manage your mental health and wellbeing
- Help you to find solutions to life's challenges
- Link you to Psychological Therapies, Navigators, Employment and Peer Support where this is helpful.

How to access Primary Care Liaison

You will need your GP to refer you to this part of Community Living Well if they think you might benefit from extra help or advice. It will be your decision whether you want to accept that support.

You can find out more about all of the Community Living Well services in this magazine or on our website. You can self-refer by completing this online form: communitylivingwell.co.uk/self-referral-form-mental-health/

Helpful Resources

We have compiled a list of resources and organisations in the Kensington and Chelsea and Queen's Park and Paddington area that you may find useful during this time.

• Grenfell Health and Wellbeing

The Grenfell Health & Wellbeing Service is a free and confidential NHS service for children and adults affected by Grenfell. They provide a range of psychological therapies and support to help you feel better if you're feeling traumatised, down, stressed or have been bereaved. Call **020 8637 6279** or visit www.grenfellwellbeing.com

• Kensington and Chelsea Mind

A local charity affiliated to national Mind that provides advice, information and signposting to local services and recovery focused support services for people who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

Call **020 8964 1333** or www.kcmind.org.uk

• Mutual Aid

Mutual Aid is a team of local residents that can provide help to neighbours during this time of crisis. There are a number of ways they can support you and equally ways that you can support others.

Call **020 7097 3731** or visit MutualAidKC.com

• The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council

The Council's website includes a COVID-19 information hub, where you can find advice on financial support, food and other essentials, domestic abuse support, and information for businesses.

Visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19

• The Samaritans

They can be contacted for free, confidential support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call **116 123** or visit www.samaritans.org

• SMART (St Mary Abbots Rehabilitation and Training)

SMART is a day service offering a range of support services located in the south of the Borough, with outreach locations in north Kensington.

Call **020 7376 4668** or visit www.smartlondon.org.uk

• The Volunteer Centre

The Volunteer Centre recruits, supports, manages and develops volunteers. Grenfell Home-Start provides support and practical assistance for people affected by the Grenfell tragedy.

Call **020 8960 3722** or visit www.voluntarywork.org.uk



Community
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Working together for your wellbeing

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wellbeing

Contact Details

communitylivingwell.co.uk

020 3317 4200 | cnw-tr.clw@nhs.net

Find us on...



Facebook: [CommunityLivingWell](https://www.facebook.com/CommunityLivingWell)

Twitter: [@CLWMentalHealth](https://twitter.com/CLWMentalHealth)

Community Living Well is not a crisis service. If you are worried about your mental health or the mental health of a friend or family member then please contact the Single Point of Access on **0800 0234 650** for help, advice or support over the phone, 24 hours a day.