

Women's Mental Health Service

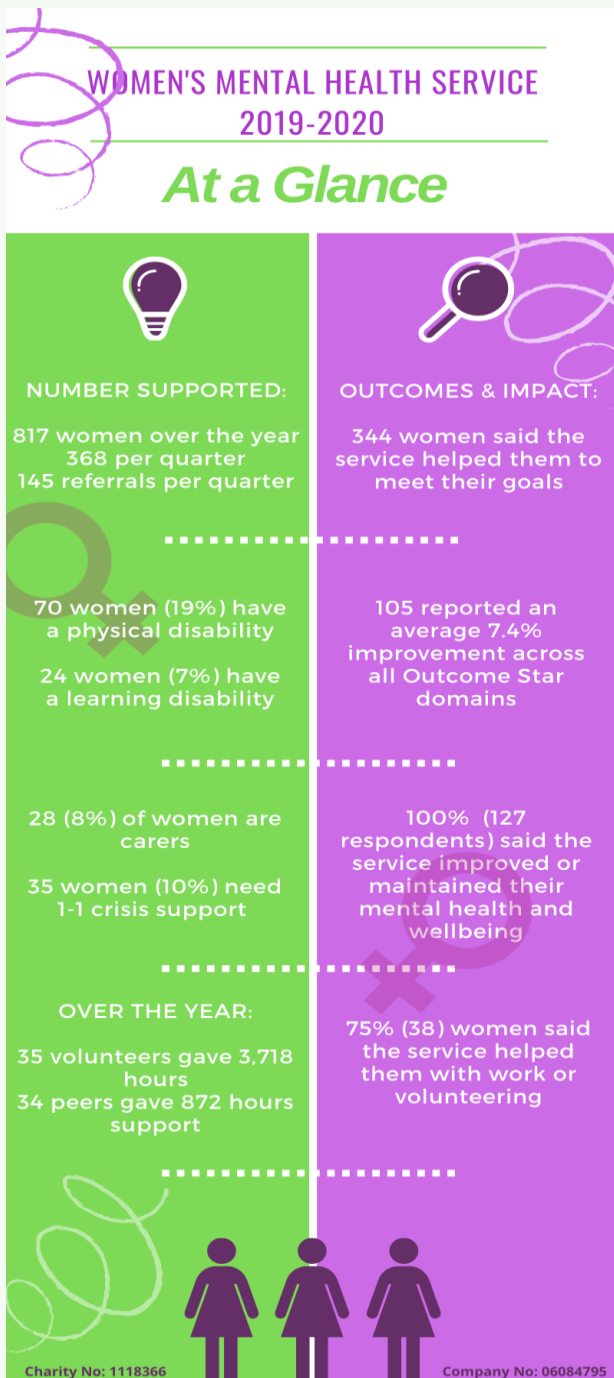
Annual Report 2019 - 20

WomenCentre is a registered charity with a mission to improve the quality of life for women. WomenCentre delivers a range of services, support and information for women and girls across Kirklees and Calderdale.



“Womencentre has helped me to stop feeling alone, ignored and worthless. I have made new friends that are slowly turning into my family.”

1. Women's Mental Health Service Overview



Women's Mental Service Aims and Objectives

To enable women in Kirklees who experience mental ill-health, access to opportunities and experiences that will promote, protect and improve mental health, physical and emotional wellbeing, recovery and enable a fulfilling life, by:

- Providing safe, non-threatening and supportive women-only spaces.
- Valuing women's expertise and working with them to shape and deliver their support and the wider service.
- Promoting social inclusion and self-determination.
- Supporting women's journey towards employment, volunteering and education.
- Focusing on peer support and self-advocacy.
- Ensuring the needs of specific groups are met – e.g. older women, those with dementia, carers, LGBT women and BAME women.
- Joint working where there are co-existing needs - e.g. substance abuse and domestic violence.

WomenCentre works with women of all ages and backgrounds, using a holistic approach to support each woman with the range of issues she may face.

Core to all our services is the concept that each woman leads the way out of her presenting troubles with resources, facilitation and support provided by our staff, volunteers and peers.

A significant number of women use our Mental Health and Wellbeing Service because it is gender specific.



“The power of women talking in a safe space together is remarkable. Keep doing what works the best. TALK. LOVE. SUPPORT. SHARE.”

2. Developments & Achievements

Embedding Our New Delivery Model

Over this year we have worked hard with staff, volunteers, women and commissioners to re-shape the service to meet the new service specification, make it more responsive and further develop our co-productive working with women and the Working Together Better VCS Mental Health Partnership.

We have redesigned our Counselling service to add capacity, provided a wider range of targeted issue specific short courses, extended our use of creative therapies e.g. dance, drama and art, expanded our provision in Dewsbury and started to provide smoking cessation support.

Our Range of Activities (Huddersfield & Dewsbury)

Support Groups (facilitated & peer-led): Women Together, Mothers Apart, SisterShout (LGBTQ), Tea & Chat and Addictive Behaviours

Activity Groups (facilitated & peer-led): Sewing, Walking, Clothes Exchange, Reading, Talk English, Sisters Sing, Knitting and Yoga

Co-produced Courses: Making Sense, Reflective Women, Confidence, Healthy Relationships, The Power of Goodbye, IAPT workshops, Breaking the Cycle & Managing Stress & Anxiety

Drop-ins: Huddersfield, Dewsbury & Women in Exile

Counselling & Smoking Cessation

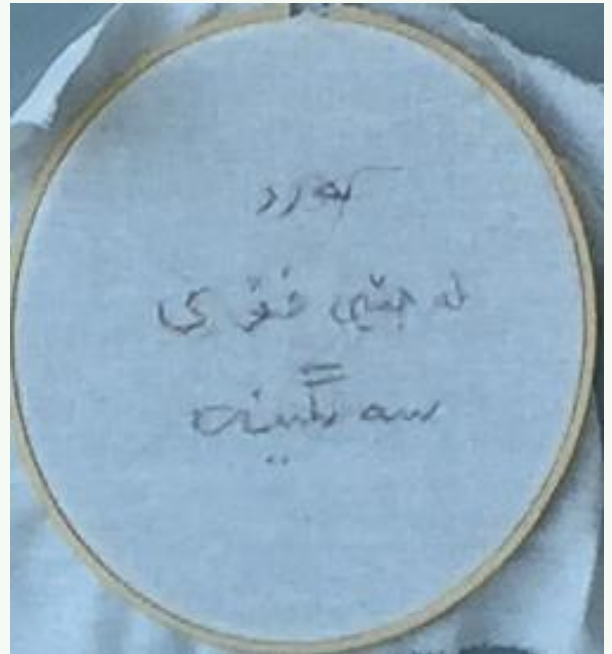
Creative 1:1 & Group Therapies: Art, Dance & Movement, Music

Some Co-creation Highlights

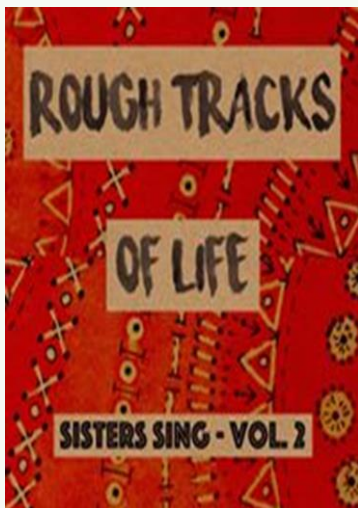
Peers supporting our **Women in Exile and Women Together** groups delivered activities and provided translation for other women; enabling us to support a diverse number of women with different language needs.

Peer led activities included massage, threading and an art project that involved embroidery using human hair to express women's feelings through a word or a proverb, written in their own language and sharing their stories of oppression.

The artwork was led by a woman participant, supported by a worker and was initially sponsored by feministspaces.net and then further developed with funding from the Kirklees Cohesion fund, "It's up to You".



Kurdish human hair embroidery: Saying "if you stay in your place you will be more valuable."



We launched our **second CD of songs** "Rough Tracks of Life – Volume 2" in March 2020. The songs were created, written and performed and the CD cover was designed by women accessing support (see the link below). This would have been launched at our annual Sound Women event in late March, but the event was cancelled due to Covid-19.

https://www.facebook.com/pg/womencentrekirkleescreativearts/posts/?ref=page_internal

We also held quarterly open mic nights attended by up to 30 women, and SisterSing and members of the music therapy group went to Asda twice before Christmas to sing Christmas carols. They raised £212, which contributed towards the production of the CD.



Our **Sister Shout Group** created **digital stories** of their lived experience of being LGBT and presented them at our AGM in October, raising the profile of LGBT women within the organization and wider membership.

They also focused on hate crimes against the LGBT community, which have doubled since 2014. The hate crime liaison officer at West Yorkshire Police and a representative from Safer Kirklees visited the group to outline what constitutes a hate crime or hate incident and how these can be reported. This gave the group confidence that their concerns would be taken seriously and would be followed up without judgement.



Strengthening Partnership Working

Over the year we have met regularly with our **Working Together Better** voluntary sector mental health and wellbeing partners including: Community Links Clear, Hoot, Richmond Fellowship, S2R, Cloverleaf and Touchstone to explore how we can improve community mental health services in Kirklees for people and with people.



We took a lead role in organising the successful Working Together Better **Staff Training Day** held on 26th June 2019, attended by around 90 workers from across the partnership and commissioners. Feedback from the day is contributing to shaping the development of the Partnership's work programme and priorities.

We continue to work in partnership with **a wide range of organisations** and individuals wherever possible – e.g. IAPT have delivered workshops, WEA and Richmond Fellowship provided confidence building in Dewsbury, the Brunswick Centre

"Coming here makes me happy, positive, very safe, talk to my friends."

provided HIV testing, solicitors provided advice sessions, Fusion Housing provided drop-in sessions, peers visited the Northern College and we explored opportunities around employability training with the Moonlight Foundation.

Influencing Mental Health Provision

We undertook commissioned work with freelance workers connected to Mind the Gap Learning Disability Theatre Company. Three women involved in our service had a **voice in national research** and project development around **parenting with a learning disability (LD)**. We built on this work with Touchstone Advocacy increasing our capacity to deliver better outcomes and more inclusion for LD parents as we are aware this is a big gap in provision.



January 2020. This was attended by 7 parents with a learning disability and 16 workers from organisations across Kirklees. The audience fully engaged with the performers which really highlighted the difficulties faced.

Following this WomenCentre and Touchstone proudly presented **“Exploring Learning Disability and Parenthood”** by Mind the Gap Theatre Company in

“I really enjoyed the theatre style workshop and audience participation - lots of new points.”



Eight women from Mothers Apart linked in with the Open Family Court Project and Louise Tickle who works for the Guardian to explore the way in which courts are not open to journalists. It was an enlightening discussion in which women explored both the importance of scrutiny for family courts and professionals as well as the need for protection of children’s privacy and their families.

Mothers Apart from their children can feel like they are constantly being examined – like goldfish in a bowl.



Mothers Apart led **adoption preparation** sessions for One Adoption and Barnados and **taught Social Work Students** at the University of Huddersfield and University of Lancaster.

SisterShout (LGBT) group contributed to the Insight Report on “What good involvement looks like from the perspective of Children & Young People, LGBTQ communities and people with Learning Disabilities.”

Our Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic

- Our offices were closed on 23 March 2020 and all staff transferred to working remotely from home.
- All (203) women receiving support were contacted by phone. Ongoing support calls were provided with frequency based on need.
- An online group work programme was developed.
- A Creative Arts page set up on Facebook.
- We secured funding from Creative Minds to capture the impact of lockdown on women, using words, music, dance and art.
- Counselling and therapy are being offered over the phone or by video link. All counsellors having completed training in online counselling.
- Referrals and assessments are being taken over the phone or online.
- We are participating in regular meetings with the Working Together Better Partnership to share best practice during and post Covid-19.

Vision & Targets for 2020-21 – We will:

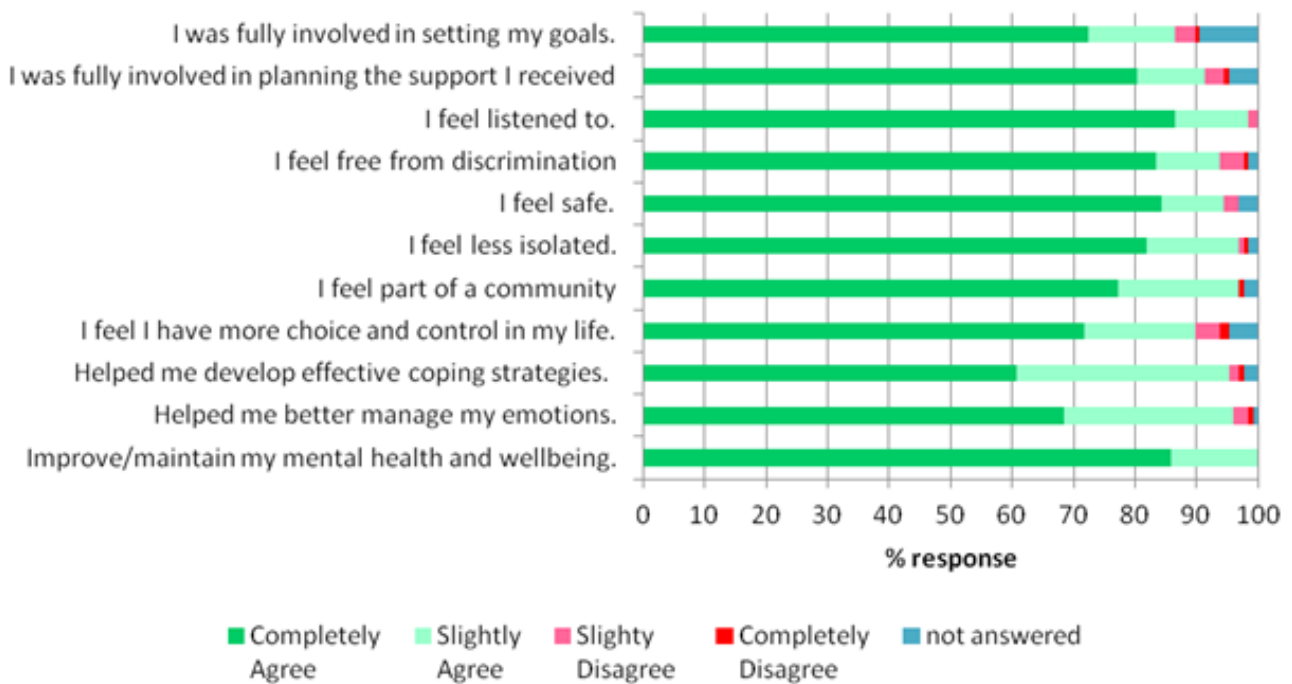
- Continue to develop & embed innovative ways of working in response to Covid-19 and recovery from it, learning from and with women, staff, volunteers, commissioners and Working Together Better partners.
- Develop and expand the counselling service into a sustainable, self-funding service that better meets demand.
- Strengthen our partnership with the Working Together Better Partnership and wider agencies to achieve our joint aims.
- Continue to inform and influence mental health provision for women both locally and nationally.

3. Outcomes

This year **344 women** fed back that they had fully or partially **met their goals** with support from the service and **127 women fed back on the impact of the service** (see the chart below).

All the women said the service had helped them maintain or improve their mental health and wellbeing and the vast majority reported positively on all the questions asked.

Feedback from women on the impact of using WomenCentre services (n=127)



We also gathered information about women's journeys and progress using the Outcome Recovery Star (Triangle Consulting Ltd). Over the year **105 women completed at least two outcome stars reporting a 7.4% average improvement** across all 10 Domains of the Recovery Star:

Identity and Self Esteem, Trust and Hope, Managing Mental Health, Self-Care, Living Skills, Social Networks, Relationships, Addictive Behaviour, Responsibilities and Work. Below are some examples of how activities enable women to achieve these positive outcomes.

Identity and Self Esteem

Low self-esteem is at the core of most initial meetings and wellbeing plans. All our activities provide a good learning environment and safe space, offering the opportunity to try out inner work methods, to increase confidence.

"Helped improve my confidence and self-esteem and develop a sense of identity. The sessions were fun and interesting"
(Dance Therapy Participant)

"I've never lived better than when I was doing dance therapy 1 to 1 – lower anxiety and depression. I've managed to shift something blocked inside and found a deeper connection."

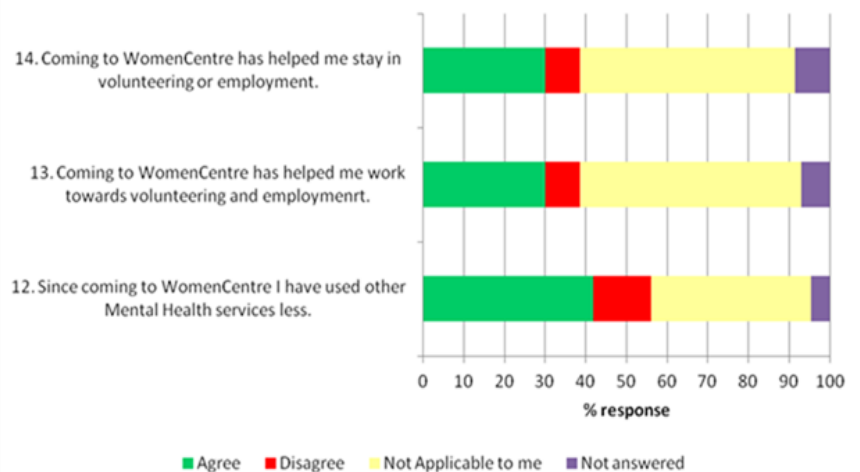
Physical Health and Self Care

Yoga, dance therapy and massage offer the opportunity and space for women to connect to their bodies, showing ways they can take care of their bodies and develop new patterns of self-care and self-connection. Where there is trauma in the background, this offers time and space more mindful rather than repeat past experience.

Work

Feedback from women who completed our survey highlights that of the 51 (40%) women who answered questions around how the service has helped them stay in or work towards volunteering and employment, 38 (75%) agreed that it had helped them. 35 volunteers and 34 peers supported service delivery over the year.

Feedback from women on the impact of using WomenCentre services (n=127)



4. Annual Statistics

Women Supported and Referral Sources

Over the year we supported:

- 817 individual women: around 368 per quarter and received
- 583 referrals: around 145 per quarter.

We receive referrals from GPs, Mental Health Services in North and South Kirklees, the Police, Housing Providers and Probation Services; but most referrals come from women who have used our services, word of mouth and other Voluntary Sector Providers.

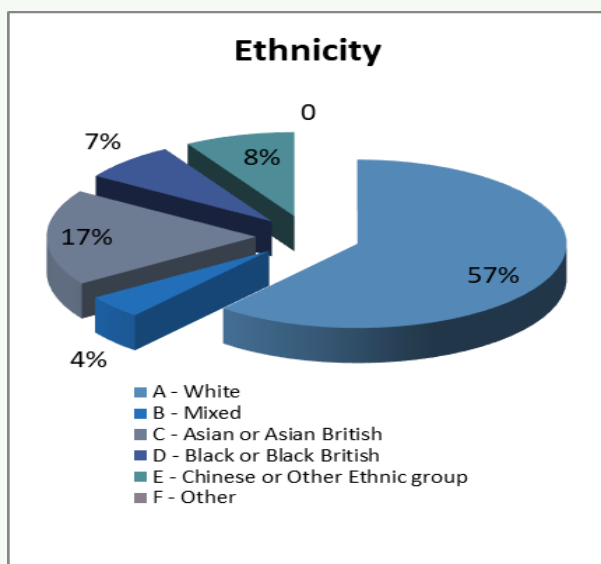
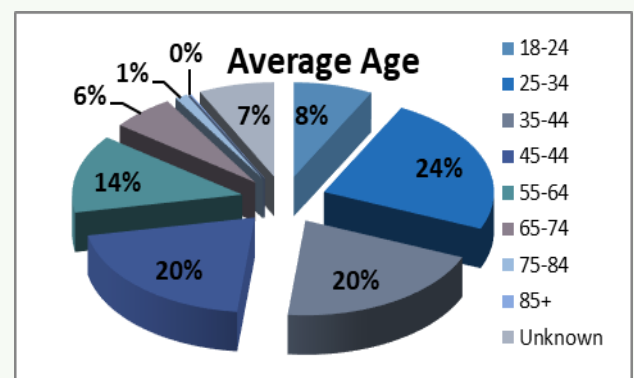
Additional Needs

In addition to mental health support many women have other needs, e.g. at any one time around:

- 70 women (19%) have a physical disability
- 28 women (8%) are carers
- 24 (7%) women have a learning disability
- 35 women (10%) need 1:1 crisis support e.g. around mental health risks, food banks, debt or immigration support

Age

We support women from 18 to in their 80's, but the majority (64%) of women we support are aged between 25-54 years.



Ethnicity

We support women from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds – 57% are White (British, Irish or other), 17% are Asian or Asian British and 7% are Black or Black British.

5. Finance

Core funding for our Mental Health and Wellbeing Service is provided by Kirklees Council and both Kirklees NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups. The table below provides a summary of income and expenditure for our WMH Service for 2019-20.

Summary of Income and Expenditure for WMH Service 2019-20	£
Income	
Income from Grants	218,906
Other Income – Conference fees, Donations & legacies	2,349
Total Income	221,255
Expenditure	
Direct pay costs	160,903
Contribution to central services, senior management pay costs	21,362
Staff travel and training	1,071
Clinical supervision and other contracted services	1,158
General direct project costs	5,934
Room and venue hire for Dewsbury and Paddock	4,316
Volunteer expenses	2,241
Contribution to premises and organisation costs	17,684
Total Expenditure	214,669
Net surplus /(deficit) in year to 31/3/20	6,586
Brought Forward Surplus at 01/04/19	4,289
Surplus Carried Forward at 31/03/20	10,875

Social and Added Value

In 2019-20 we secured additional funding for our activities in Kirklees, including:

- Syrian Resettlement funded by Kirklees Council (until September 30th 2019)
- Safer Women peer development (12 month Mind & Agenda Tampon Tax Fund)
- Two Community Cohesion grants
- Liaison and Diversion Worker to divert women from the criminal justice system
- Sexual Exploitation Worker as part of the Regional STAGE Project
- Project 1325 working with 13-25 year olds girls and young women

Previous social value work has evidenced that for every £1 spent on our Service between £2-£8 is saved depending on women's strengths, needs and circumstances.