



Talking Therapies

# Next steps to Therapy



Making People Better

Services provided by



**vita**  
health group  
Part of Spire Healthcare

# What happens now?

**Once your referral has been accepted, you will be offered an assessment appointment.**

During this appointment, your practitioner will explore your current symptoms and what you'd like to work on through therapy. After this, you and your practitioner will make a decision as to next steps and talk through your options.

Once you've had your assessment, and you've decided on the treatment pathway you'd like to try, you may get booked in straight away (i.e. if you choose Webinar or Silvercloud) or you will be placed on the waiting list and we will be in touch once there is availability for you to start treatment.

In the meantime, you will be given information and access to more general mental health resources that you can review and use whilst you wait. We'd encourage you to keep in touch with your GP if you need to review medication or notice your symptoms worsen.



# How to prepare for your assessment

It is completely normal to feel a little nervous before your assessment appointment, but don't worry – there is nothing to really feel nervous about! Here are some tips that might help you feel a bit more prepared:



## Make sure you are in a quiet, confidential space at the time of the appointment.

Ideally this would be at home, or somewhere private. We cannot accept calls whilst you are driving, and do strongly advise that you are not in a busy, public space or are doing other things at the time i.e. doing your food shop, washing your car, catching a train, skydiving etc. etc.

The best place to be is sat at home with a cup of tea, where you won't be disturbed or distracted.



## Complete your questionnaires before the appointment.

We do find that as these can be quite time-consuming, it's best to complete the mandatory questionnaires before your appointment time so that we're not rushing, and you have plenty of time.

These will normally be sent via text message or email (don't forget to check your junk folder) 2-3 days before your appointment. Remember to keep an eye out for these and complete them no later than an hour or so before your appointment. If you struggle with these, then just let us know as soon as you can, so that we can help.



## Have a think about what you want to say

We know it can be hard to know where to start sometimes. Therefore, we would recommend that if you are worried you might miss something important, or feel quite nervous to share on the day, writing a few key points down to have to hand for the appointment can be really helpful.

But don't worry – we will ask you plenty of questions, and help you out if you feel stuck. We know it can be daunting, and we will be there to guide you along the way.



## Plan something nice for afterwards

We usually recommend that you plan some downtime after your assessment. This could be blocking out some time to sit down and have a breather, maybe taking the dog for a walk, or perhaps even planning to call a friend afterwards for a debrief. This can be really helpful if the assessment has brought up some difficult thoughts and feelings.



## Other things to note...

During assessment, your practitioner may recommend one intervention over the others. This is because, for example, sometimes we may feel you require 1:1 or a focused-webinar group to help reach your goals, or perhaps a different type of treatment all together. We will always take into account your preferences, but we will also explain our professional opinion too, so that you can make an informed choice for your care.

We work as part of a “stepped care” model, which means that if we feel you need something different, we can discuss other options or potentially look at other therapy types depending on how things go. This is why it's really important you keep feeding back to us how you feel about your therapy, and that you let us know if you feel something needs to change.



Your practitioner at both assessment and treatment will be able to talk you through all your options and answer any questions you may have – so don't worry if you can't decide just yet!

# If you need help right now

It is important to remember that we are not an urgent support service and cannot offer 24/7 support.

If you feel that you are experiencing a mental health crisis, or need support right now, then the first thing to do is speak with your GP or call the NHS 111 helpline.

If you want to talk to someone confidentially, you can contact the following:

- Call Samaritans on 116 123
- Text “SHOUT” to 85258
- Call CALM on 0800 58 58 58 (5pm – midnight, every day), or use their WhatsApp or Live Chat service ([www.thecalmzone.net/feeling-suicidal](http://www.thecalmzone.net/feeling-suicidal))

In the event of an emergency, or if you do not feel able to keep yourself safe, then you should call 999 or attend your local A&E department.

## Alternative next steps

All of our treatment options are evidence-based and approved by National Institute for Health & Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines. At the end of your assessment, depending on your goals for treatment, the type of symptoms you are experiencing and informed by the evidence base, you will be offered treatment options that are right for you.

You may be offered one of our first steps CBT based treatment approaches (further detail in our introduction to CBT approaches booklet), alternatively you may be offered another type of therapy:

- Counselling for Depression
- Mindfulness-based CBT (MBCT)
- Interpersonal therapy (CBT)
- Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR)

Each treatment involves different next steps – these will be discussed with you at the end of your assessment. You can find out more information on our website: [www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk](http://www.vitahealthgroup.co.uk)

We may even decide that you might benefit from something different all together. Our team also has access to other resources and information that could point you in the right direction of different options outside of our service. For example, other local mental health teams, local counselling and therapy services, support groups and specialist support. It’s always worth exploring these with your GP or a Primary Care Practitioner at your GP practice before you refer to us too.

We will explore all options with you so that you can make an informed decision about your care.

## Contact us

If you would like to speak to us, or if you have any questions you can call us on:

Basildon & Brentwood: 01268 977 171

Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire: 0333 200 1893

Calderdale: 0333 0153 494

Kent & Medway: 0333 091 0414

Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland: 0330 094 5595

Newcastle: 0330 0534 230

West Essex: 0333 015 2966

Please note, our phone lines are open Monday through Thursday from 9am to 7:45pm, and Friday from 9am until 4:30pm.