

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a service which provides a volunteer to work on a one-to-one basis with a person in need. A trained volunteer mentor is matched with a service user and will meet them usually once a week, perhaps in their home or outside at some other venue, to support them in achieving their agreed goals.

Not the same as Befriending?

No, befriending is usually just about providing company over a period of time, for people who are isolated. Mentoring is about actively supporting someone to achieve clear goals.

What kind of issues might a mentor help someone with?

Many people who use this service have difficulties with anxiety or self-confidence and may be going through a particularly difficult patch, or some kind of change in their life.

It has helped people learn to socialise again after becoming isolated. It has given people the support they needed to make choices for themselves in difficult family situations.



The Mentoring Service has been assessed by the national Mentoring and Befriending Foundation and awarded Approved Provider Standard for the quality of its service.

What is the Agoraphobia Service?

Some people have great anxieties about leaving their house, and functioning in the world outside. They may also have other fears which prevent them from doing things like going into supermarkets, being in large groups or using public transport. These life-limiting anxieties are often known as “agoraphobia”.

Our Agoraphobia Service provides trained volunteers to work with a person to help them overcome these fears.

What does the volunteer do?

The service manager will visit the person with agoraphobia to work out a plan of action: this will be based on little steps towards achieving things that were previously too frightening. The volunteer will meet weekly with the client to support them through these small steps.

This is known as “gradual exposure” and is a known technique for helping people deal with these kind of anxieties.

All mentors and agoraphobia volunteers are:

Selected by DGS Mind as appropriate to offer mentoring support

Trained by DGS Mind to be a mentor

Checked with the appropriate authority to ensure there are no reasons why they should not work with vulnerable adults

Fully supported and supervised by DGS Mind

Who can use the Mentoring or the Agoraphobia Service?

The service is for people who:

- Are over the age of 18
- Live within the Dartford, Gravesham or Swanley areas
- Have an appropriate mental health issue
- Are committed and motivated to doing something about this
- Have clear and concise goals
- Are ready to move forward.

How do I apply for these services?

A person can contact us directly, either by phone or in person, to make a self-referral, or they can be referred by a professional involved in supporting them (eg. a GP, or a worker with the Mental Health Team).

Contact:

Germana Lampo
The Almshouses, 20 West Hill
Dartford, Kent, DA1 2EP

Tel: 01322 291380

Email: germanalampo@dgsmind.co.uk

What is the next part of the process?

A home visit will be arranged. We always have 2 staff doing the first visit to a client we do not know. They will talk to you to assess your needs and, where there is agreement that we can be of help to you, you will then be matched with a volunteer. Sometimes this might take a little while as it is important to find the right match.

Aims of the Mentoring Service and the Agoraphobia Service:

To provide an individualised service which helps people overcome their anxieties and fears.

To promote self-confidence and self-esteem.

To work in a way which empowers the service user to become independent.

To work to help a person decrease any feelings of social isolation.

To support clients to achieve the personal goals that will improve their mental health.

For the Agoraphobia Service in particular, to provide a volunteer to be present to support clients to take small steps to overcome their anxieties.

To support clients to develop skills for self-help.

What service users have said about the Service:

“When I joined the mentoring scheme I was new to Dartford and knew no one. My mentor helped me to gain confidence and help me to help myself in getting established in Dartford.”

“I feel my mentor has been very helpful in helping me sort out new places and activities to get involved in.”

DGS Mind provides services in a variety of locations in the area:

Community Services:

A wide range of open sessions, activity sessions, Coping with Life courses, self-development and support groups, mindfulness course, recovery groups, individual assistance, assisted volunteering, vocational and employment help.

Psychological Therapies:

Provided on behalf of the NHS: Counselling, CBT, Psychoeducation, Guided Self-Help, Group Work.

Low-cost Counselling:

Individual Counselling without rigid limits as to the number of sessions available. Fees starting from £8.00 per session.

Supported Housing:

Long and short-term supported housing.

Education:

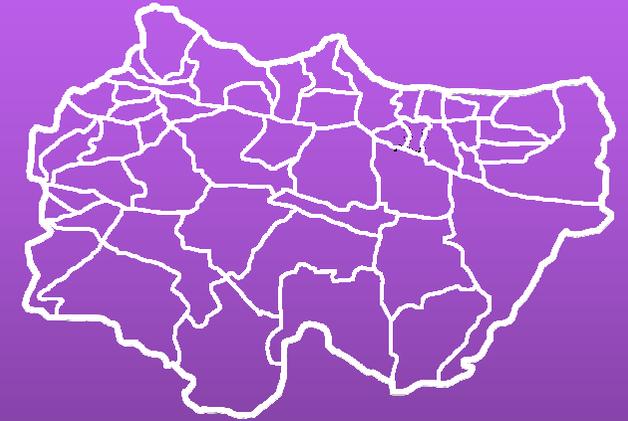
Placements for social work students, mental health nurse trainees, trainee counsellors. Mental health training sessions.

All our leaflets are available in large print, Braille, or other formats, on request.

In DGS Mind we are committed to continuously improve our services through quality review and service user feedback.

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www.dgsmind.co.uk

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Mentoring & Agoraphobia Services