

# THE DIFFERENCE WE'RE MAKING: CRISIS HOUSE AND CAFES



- Over 5,000 people have used the Crisis Cafes since their launch in February 2018, 89% of which would have used urgent or emergency services had the Cafes not been available.
- Since it opened in 2017, there have been 900 stays at the Warren. 530 of these avoided acute admission.
- In 2019, the Crisis Cafes and the Warren have been shortlisted at the Health Service Journal (HSJ) Value Awards, the NHS Parliamentary Awards, and won a HSJ Patient Safety Award.

LIVING OUR VALUES

RESPECT AND  
COMPASSION



Kirsty, Service User of the Crisis Cafes and House shares her experience in her own words:

When I went to the Crisis Café, the support worker sat and talked with me for about three hours, we talked through everything. She took me to see the Urgent Care and Assessment Team at Berrywood Hospital. I find it quite difficult to explain how I'm feeling, so it was great to have her with me to help me convey that to the team.

At the Crisis House, everybody was lovely and so welcoming – really professional, but caring at the same time. Over the week that I stayed, the staff helped me to find different ways to cope with my emotions and build my confidence. Everybody here fought my corner, they made sure I got the help I needed. One of the members of staff suggested that, after leaving, I could volunteer at the Warren. That meant the world to me, to know that someone saw some value in me.

I've gone from wanting to end my life to feeling more confident, more comfortable, and even looking for a career in the NHS, it is just amazing.

## ALTERNATIVES TO ADMISSION

Our Crisis Pathway includes a series of co-produced measures put in place in the Northamptonshire community to support people in mental health crisis to get the right care, and aims to reduce the burden on acute inpatient mental health and emergency services.

The Crisis House (known as 'The Warren') was launched in August 2016 to offer an alternative to acute mental health admission for those in crisis. Rooms are available in a dedicated bungalow for short stays where individuals can engage in collaborative, non-judgemental recovery.

Building on this success, the Crisis Cafes were piloted in January 2017 in collaboration with MIND with the primary aim to provide a safe out of hours space for service users to seek help for a mental health crisis without having to rely on A&E departments, or other emergency services. Due to success and positive feedback from service users, this was rolled out further in 2017 and 2018, thereby now providing Crisis Café coverage all week across the county.

The provision of these safe community spaces for those in crisis has resulted in significant financial system savings, and there is also evidence of reduced admissions and therefore reduction in bed occupancy.

MAKING A  
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FOR YOU,  
WITH YOU

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## A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Partnership is key to the Crisis Pathway. Our work with service users and carers has allowed NHFT to better understand the needs of those in crisis, meaning that we have developed solutions such as the Crisis House and Crisis Cafes that truly address the needs of the service users and their carers, and result in positive outcomes.

The Crisis House service model was designed in collaboration with service users and carers who have a lived experience of mental health services when they are in crisis. For example, preferences of service users and carers were taken into account ensuring the house had separate gender corridors, but also a space where someone who does not identify with standard gender definitions can be supported as required.

This collaboration not only formed a key part of the service development from the point of business plan design, but also mobilisation to opening and reference group review. The input of service users and carers defined a series of 'I Statements' to be measured as outcomes of the services. We continue to hold monthly user forums to gauge the impact of all areas of the crisis services and develop them accordingly.

The Crisis Cafés were developed and are run in partnership with MIND, to ensure the Cafés meet the needs of users at all levels of crisis. Both NHFT and MIND staff receive training alongside each other and work together to provide the holistic support that service users need, allowing them to access clinical interventions if appropriate, as well as community-based options.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- A second Crisis House is due to open in the North of the county in late 2019
- Opportunities to extend the Crisis Cafes are being explored
- The introduction of Mental Health Hubs in council offices across the county
- Working towards a joint third sector and NHFT self-referral 'front door to mental health' in late 2019.



Members of NHFT and Mind Staff, at the Rushden Crisis Cafe

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