


## Primary Care Mental Health update Hertfordshire Talking Therapies

NHS Talking Therapies, for anxiety and depression services are working to reduce health inequalities, ensuring services meet the needs of all in the population that they serve. Our work on advancing equalities focuses on improving access, outcomes and experiences for specific populations and under-represented groups.

### LGBTQIA+




LGBTQIA+ is an inclusive term that includes people of different genders and sexualities, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual, and allies. While each letter represents a specific group of people, the term encompasses a spectrum of gender fluidity and sexual identities. Mental health problems can affect any of us, but they're more common among people who identify as LGBTQIA+. This may be linked to experiences of discrimination, homophobia or transphobia, social isolation, or rejection because of gender or sexuality. Talking with a therapist who's trained to work with LGBTQIA+ people may help with issues such as; difficulty accepting your sexual orientation, coping with other people's reactions to your sexuality, low self-esteem and more. Getting help as soon as someone feels they need it is important, no matter how big or small the problem may seem.

### Students

There has been a five-fold increase in students reporting mental health problems over the past ten years. In the coming weeks and months, students will be receiving exam results, moving from sixth form or college to university which can bring feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. It's completely normal to experience stress in the time between exams and results day, especially as results day draws closer and for many students, university is the first experience they'll have of living independently which can bring new worries. Our service already works closely with local educational establishments to provide all students aged 16+ with support for study stress and we have a presence at universities during the first few weeks whilst students settle however, students can also self-refer to access additional support. Students can also access our range of free online webinars at a time and date that best suits them.



### Perinatal support



The perinatal period (from the beginning of pregnancy through to two years post-birth) can be joyful and exciting, but also a demanding and stressful time. It is common for pregnant women and new parents or caregivers to experience emotional difficulties such as stress, low mood, and worry. These thoughts and feelings often pass with time. However, some people notice that they continue. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) can help people to cope with difficult thoughts and feelings by teaching tips and techniques to manage them. The webinar '[Becoming a parent or caregiver and emotional wellbeing](#)' discusses the different challenges of the perinatal period and provides tools based on CBT that can help improve emotional wellbeing during this period. We also offer a 6-week online Perinatal Group starting on Thursday 7th September.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our services are collaborating with local community organisations to increase access to mental health services for ethnic minority groups who need mental health support, but not yet accessing services in Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. One Vision brings together ethnic minority groups in Watford with the aim to address the needs of the community to work together to tackle food poverty, mental health issues, social marginalisation, and youth needs. We have also partnered with Stevenage Equalities Commission to enrich ethnic minority services and communities in Stevenage. This new resource will have access to healing circles, creative wellbeing solutions and migration nation workshops. These are designed around heritage to ensure cultural needs are being respected along the journey of recovery and wellbeing.

