

A guide to Mental Health and Crisis Services in Leeds

Adult services



If you are feeling anxious or lonely, experiencing mental health problems or money worries or going through a 'life crisis' like the break-down of a relationship, you may be able to access Crisis Services in Leeds. Here is a guide on what Crisis and Mental Health support is available in Leeds.

For more information on how to access mental health services and your right to support, please click [here](#). Please note that info on mental health services in Leeds is for people in Leeds only.

What's available in Leeds?

You can self-refer to these services:

- [MindWell](#) - a website with resources and links to mental health support
- [Battle Scars](#) - a local service supporting people who are experiencing self-harm
- [Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service](#) - they provide support and therapies in groups, one-to-one, classes, online support sessions and evidence-based psychological interventions. They are part of Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- [Mentally Healthy Leeds](#) - a preventative mental health service that works with people at risk of experiencing poor mental health, led by Touchstone
- [The Advonet Group: Independent Mental Health Advocacy \(IMHA\)](#) - free, independent advocacy for anyone who has been sectioned under the Mental Health Act
- [Leeds Mind](#) - they offer a range of different mental health services and support, online and offline as well as [peer support groups](#).
- [Inkwell Arts](#) - an art and mental health service led by Leeds Mind. Some services at Inkwells can only be accessed via a GP referral.

- [Leeds Autism AIM](#) and [Yorkshire Autism AIM](#) – they offer group mental health peer support sessions.
- [Live Well Leeds](#) - a community-based support service for people with mild to moderate support needs to manage and/or recover from mental health difficulties*, they run online groups on a regular basis, often via Zoom.

**Please note that Leeds Autism AIM is partly funded to deliver autism awareness training for Live Well Leeds' staff team.*

Crisis Services in Leeds?

If you need to talk to someone anonymously and you are in a crisis:

- [SHOUT](#) - a free text-based mental health helpline - text 85258 to get support
- [Samaritans](#) - call their number for free on 116 123
- [West Yorkshire 24-hour mental health helpline](#) - 0800 183 0558 (Freephone), open 24 hours for anyone aged 18 and over who needs to talk and be listened to.
- [Connect Helpline](#) - open to people in Leeds experiencing mental distress; call 0808 800 1212 from 6pm-2am or through an online chat.
- [Leeds Survivor-Led Crisis Service](#) - Mental health crisis services. Including [Dial House](#), which is an out-of-hours Leeds service for people in times of crisis. It is a place of sanctuary where visitors can relax in a homely environment and have an hour of one-to-one.
- [Dial House @ Touchstone](#) - out-of-hours crisis service in Leeds for people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. When you are finding it hard to cope – it's a place you can go for emotional support and information. All staff are from BME groups. Refugees and asylum seekers are welcome.
- [Well-Bean Café](#) - supports anyone in a crisis – it provides a safe place for people in crisis to go and to prevent avoidable attendances at A&E offering a non-clinical alternative. Offer one-to-one support and a social space, where refreshments and hot food will be available

Speaking to your GP



You'll need to talk to your GP to use some mental health services. This is known as a GP referral. Your GP can also talk to you about your mental health and help introduce you to the right mental health service for your needs.

You can contact your GP if you are concerned about your mental health, and feel at risk of harming yourself. Your GP will be able to get you in contact with additional support services if necessary. Your GP may also discuss potential medications to help with your mood or review existing medications.

Here is a list of the services that you need a GP referral for:

- [Community Mental Health Service](#) – they provides specialist community mental health services for adults usually aged between 18 and 65, although this can vary depending on need.
- [Inkwell Arts](#) - an art and mental health service led by Leeds Mind. Some services at Inkwell can only be accessed via a GP referral.
- [Crisis Assessment Service](#) - offers assessment to people 18 years and over who are experiencing acute mental health problems that may pose a risk to themselves and/or others, who require an assessment that day or within the next 72 hours. The Crisis Assessment Service is based at The Becklin Centre and all referrals for this service should go through their [Single Point of Access \(SPA\) Team](#).
- [Oasis](#) – A residential short-stay service for people In crisis. Leeds OASIS is a new option in the existing LYPFT crisis pathway, offering an alternative to hospital admission for those that do not necessarily need a bed on an acute ward. The service is set up to feel like an ordinary house and you can stay for up to seven nights or if you're a day visitor, you can visit between 10am and 9pm for up to a week. This service is open to anyone with an existing crisis referral with CRISS or IHTT, or those in secondary mental health services (CMHT).
- [Crisis Resolution Intensive Support Service \(CRISS\)](#) – **provides intensive support at home to adults aged 18-65 years who are experiencing a mental health crisis.** You will be referred to us if you experience a mental health crisis that requires urgent assessment and treatment. This may be your first experience of mental health distress or a relapse of an existing mental illness. [IHTT](#) is for people older than 65.

Applying for NHS funding for specialist therapy



Many people will have mental health difficulties at some point in their life. Often, autistic people may find generic talking therapist services hard to use. They may benefit from accessing autism-specific counselling instead.

Getting funding for specialist counselling

Funding for autism-specific counselling is available through the ICB (Integrated Care Board). They oversee NHS-run GP surgeries in your area. To do this, take the following steps:

- Make an appointment with your GP. Let them know you want to apply for funding.
- Your GP will then apply for funding on your behalf.
- Before that, they will need to say why you need 'specialist autism' counselling.
- The GP will do this by writing a letter to the ICB. It will say why they think you need this support.

The letter then goes to the CCG's 'exceptions panel'. They are the people who decide if you are eligible for funding or not. They meet every few weeks to do this. If your application for funding is successful:

- Your GP is given an authorisation code to refer you to a service of your choice. It is done by their 'choose and book' scheme.
- The scheme allows you to pick the counselling service you want. However, at the time of writing, long waiting lists and high demand mean some counsellors are not taking new patients.

What to do before your GP appointment

Be prepared before your appointment about trying to access counselling services. Try to think about answers to these questions to give yourself the best chance of getting funding:

- When and where were you diagnosed? What is your diagnosis?
- Do you have examples of when you have struggled to engage with a non-autistic professional?
- Examples could include counselling/therapies you have used before and why they were not helpful.
- What difficulties are you experiencing now?
- Do you struggle to form relationships? If so, you should be funded for 10 sessions instead of the standard six usually prescribed. Let your GP know if this is the case.

Summary

Prepare what you want to say to your GP before your appointment. This will help them know why you need the funding for counselling.

If successful, be prepared to be on a waiting list. To know how long it will be, ask about waiting times so you know when you will have your first session.

Private Autism Counselling Services



You can access private counselling services without having to go through the NHS. When contacting them, you should be able to ask for their credentials. Things to consider when looking for a private therapist/counsellor:

- There are a few places to search. Using keyword 'autism'; Counselling Directory - <https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/> and BACP - <https://www.bacp.co.uk/search/Therapists>, or, searching 'counsellors' in the National Autistic Society directory - <https://www.autism.org.uk/directory>
- Questions to ask; How many autistic clients have you worked with? How did you adapt your approach to suit those clients? What experience of autism do you have?
- Finding the right counselling 'fit' is important, so do not be afraid to ask questions or to ask to meet/speak to the therapist before committing to any paid sessions.

- Remember that although you may feel vulnerable and in need of help, it is still a service that you are paying for, so it needs to work for you!
- AIM cannot recommend any specific autism counsellors and have not verified any qualifications or otherwise that may or may not be advertised by individual therapists. The above is for guidance and information only.

Here is a selection of autism-specific counselling services that are available in Leeds:

- [Specialist Autism Services](#) - their autism-specific counselling is normally delivered at their bases in Bradford and Leeds
- [The Horsforth Centre](#) - they have an autism-specific counsellor
- [Nick Hoare](#) - they are based in south Leeds. The waiting list for appointments with Nick is about two months, but you can often get an initial appointment set up sooner (unable to take general enquires until 20th February 2023)
- [Trudi Longbottom](#) - Trudi is an autistic counsellor who works with autistic adults. She is Leeds Autism AIM's Peer Development Worker, but works as a counsellor independently of our service. Please note that Trudi's counselling cannot be funded by NHS/ICB funding requests
- **Steph Callaghan at [Atypical Counselling](#)** - a Leeds-based service that works with autistic adults, as well as people with ADHD. They work with adults, children and families. They can usually get people in within a month, but is dependent on what time they can come
- [Angie Fell](#) is a counsellor based in North East Leeds with an interest and experience in supporting the mental health of autistic adults and adults with ADHD. Angie currently has availability for new clients for online/telephone appointments only. Their best days for appointments are Wednesday and Thursday between 9:00am and 6:00pm

Other counselling services can be found by going on the directories linked to earlier in this document.

Counselling Waiting Times: Updated April 2023

Counsellor	Current wait times	Remote or in-person	Current web address
Nick Hoare	Around one month	Remote and in person	https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/counsellors/nick-
Donna Wood		Remote	www.donnawoodcounselling.co.uk
Ruth Williams	Individual therapy no longer offered	N/A	www.aspireautismconsultancy.co.uk
Changing Seasons Counselling	"Short waiting list but looking at early March for new clients"	Both	https://www.changingseasonscounselling/
Steph Callaghan	N/A	N/A	N/A
Horsforth Centre	N/A	N/A	N/A

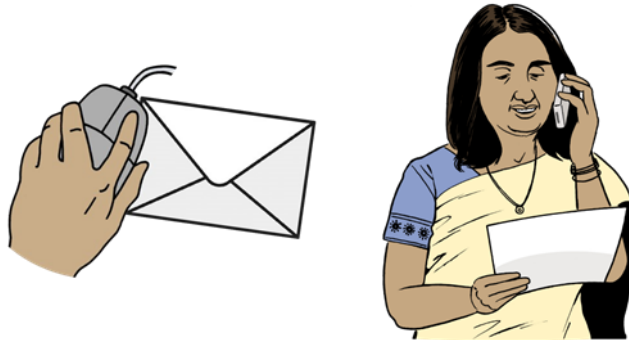
Contact us

This guide was produced by **Leeds Autism AIM** and **Yorkshire Autism AIM**, part of The Advonet Group. We are both free services co-led by and run for autistic adults (aged 18+) in the Leeds area.



If you need help to process information you have been given about the crisis services, we can support you by:

- Speaking to you by phone, via email, text chat or in person at our Autism Hub
- Sending you information that is easy to process about what Crisis Services are available
- Passing on information about where to get crisis support In your area



If you have any questions about this guide or about crisis services in Leeds, please contact us:

- Email us at leedsautismaim@advonet.org.uk
- Call The Advonet Group's office on **0113 244 0606** and ask for someone from the Leeds Autism AIM team
- Follow us on Facebook at [@leedsautismaim](https://www.facebook.com/leedsautismaim) and [@YorkshireAutismAIM](https://www.facebook.com/YorkshireAutismAIM)
- Follow us on Twitter at [@leedsautismaim](https://twitter.com/leedsautismaim) and [@yaamhep](https://twitter.com/yaamhep)

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