



Cheshire Transgender Counselling
Support Service



Cheshire transgender counselling support services launched

A new service for transgender, non-binary and intersex people is now available for all Cheshire residents who need support either before, during or after their social or medical journey.

The service is provided by Cheshire Merseyside Adult Gender Identity Collaborative (CMAGIC) and commissioned by NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

It provides access to experienced gender incongruence counsellors who patients can access for weekly one-hour appointments. The service is by self-referral and patients will be placed on a short waiting list before being introduced to a gender counsellor.

The service went live on 1 July. Anyone wishing to access the service should visit www.cmagic.org.uk/counselling and answer some questions. A convenient appointment will then be made. Counselling appointments take place using Zoom technology.

Anthony Griffin, chair of CMAGIC, said: “Although Cheshire is such a beautiful, largely rural area, it means that trans and non-binary people (especially young people) can feel isolated and don’t always know who to turn to for help and support if they are considering or starting their social and/or medical journey.

“We recognised from the number of people asking for help that we needed to establish a service that we know works well - and very often saves people from a deeper crisis - by simply having someone who is a trained therapist to support them. Thankfully, NHS Cheshire CCG has understood the

situation and enabled us to work in a partnership approach to launch this quality new service.”

Lesley Cleworth, mental health programme lead at the CCG, said: “Trans people experience worse physical and mental health than the general population, which is likely to be due to the direct and indirect effects of the inequality they encounter. This results in multiple admissions across health and wellbeing services.

“Additionally, the suicide risk in transgender people is reportedly higher than in the general population and seems to occur during every stage of transitioning. There are currently two to three-year waiting lists to access national gender identity clinics and a lack of support locally in terms of meeting the clinical health and wellbeing needs of this population.

“We are therefore absolutely delighted to support the launch of this service and look forward to seeing the positive impact that a localised care pathway can have for transgender and non-binary people.”

ENDS

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