

## Let's Talk Well

Gloucestershire (BACP accredited service)

Integrated Care Board Funding - Counselling provision for children and young people in Gloucestershire

Let's Talk Well, previously TIC+ (Teens in Crisis) are a well-established third sector counselling service for children and young people (aged 9-25) with a long-standing funding relationship with Gloucestershire ICB (Integrated Care Board), receiving funding initially from three separate NHS funding streams including:

- Self-referrals from young people or parents directly
- Referrals from MHSTs (Mental Health Support Teams)
- Referrals from CAMHS.

Following a quality impact assessment led by NHS England, which involved scrutinising the children and young people counselling pathways, it was recommended that the different budget strands be consolidated into one pot of funding, resulting in all the above pathways now sitting within one counselling and young people budget stream, commissioned on a three-year (plus two) funding cycle.

Let's Talk Well have a policy of only accepting referrals from professionals if the child or young person is involved and makes the referral with them, thus operating on a self-referral basis only, ensuring all children and young people have ownership of what they choose to share from the start.

The local MHST and CAMHS do continue to have a direct pathway to Let's Talk Well for counselling when an intervention needs a more open, relational space for children and young people to explore deeper emotional experiences, making it a vital part of the comprehensive support offer. Issues referred to counselling are diverse but typically could include bereavement or loss, self-harming or thoughts of suicide as well as being victims of child sexual abuse.

MHST referrals are sent through to Let's Talk Well who then take on the initial assessment (ensuring a child or young person doesn't have to be assessed twice). The counselling service typically works with those young people who fall between the remit of CAMHS and what Educational Mental Health Practitioners working in MHSTs can provide, this is often referred to as working the 'missing middle'\*.

Let's Talk Well provides counselling to approximately 3000 local young people per year, inclusive of those stepped up to counselling from MHSTs and those who are either closed by CAMHS or who don't meet the threshold.

Let's Talk Well only refer about 3% of children and young people on to higher tiered CAMHS or statutory services demonstrating value for money as well as taking pressure away from CAMHS.

\* BACP's [flowchart](#) on funded pathways to school and college counselling which captures the 'missing middle' in more detail.

Please contact [public.affairs@bacp.co.uk](mailto:public.affairs@bacp.co.uk) for more information on how Let's Talk Well's model can be replicated.