

Appendix A: Mental health service pathways for Suffolk residents

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DISCLAIMER

Purpose of this document

This report and supporting infographics are not intended to be advertised or distributed to the public as a service directory. Their primary purpose is to map service pathways for the Mental Health Needs Assessment as of April 2026, providing stakeholders and commissioners with an overview understanding of the mental health system landscape.

Understanding the pathway

This document provides a high-level summary of the mental health support pathway and outlines potential routes through which Suffolk residents may access mental health services. However, it is important to understand that the actual pathway is more complex than presented here.

Access to mental health services is based on clinical need and assessment. Residents cannot simply request a referral to a particular service; referrals are made when specific clinical thresholds and eligibility criteria are met. Healthcare professionals, including GPs and mental health practitioners, conduct thorough assessments to determine the most appropriate level of support for each individual's circumstances.

Mental health services operate within finite resources, and demand often exceeds capacity. This means that services must appropriately prioritise referrals based on clinical urgency and severity of need. Some individuals may experience waiting times for assessment or treatment, and not all referrals will result in acceptance to the requested service if the clinical assessment determines that a different level or type of support would be more appropriate.

The ultimate aim of Suffolk's mental health system remains to ensure that residents receive the care and support they need. Healthcare professionals work diligently to match individuals with the most suitable services and interventions for their circumstances, taking into account both clinical appropriateness and available resources. Where specialist services are not immediately available or appropriate, alternative sources of support and self-management strategies may be recommended to support wellbeing whilst awaiting further assessment or treatment.

Residents are encouraged to discuss their mental health concerns openly with their GP or healthcare provider, who can provide guidance on available options and the most appropriate pathway for their individual needs.

Mental health service pathways for Suffolk residents

This section provides a high-level overview of mental health services available to Suffolk residents should they experience any mental health concerns.

The pathways are organised by age group:

- Children and young people aged 0-25 years
- Adults aged 18 years and over

Notably, there is an intentional overlap between the two age-based pathways, with those aged 18-25 years appearing in both. Young adults in this age group often face significant life changes such as leaving education, entering employment and moving away from family support networks. These transitions may influence the way in which young people access support services. By presenting pathways that encompass this transitional period within both sections, this assessment acknowledges that young adults may utilise both children and young people and adult services depending on their need, ensuring continuity of care during this critical transition period.

Within each age group, services are categorised into two sectors:

1. Public sector

Public sector mental health services refer to formal, statutory services typically delivered by clinical professionals such as psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, mental health nurses, and therapists. They operate within regulated clinical governance frameworks and follow National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines.

Suffolk's NHS sector statutory mental health services are primarily commissioned by NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB. Services are delivered by Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT)

2. Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector

The VCFSE sector comprises of organisations independent of statutory health services that play a crucial role in supporting mental health and wellbeing in Suffolk.

Rather than replacing statutory services, VCFSE organisations work alongside and in partnership with health services creating a comprehensive and accessible system of mental health support for the community.

Residents can access VCFSE sector directly for support alongside any level of NHS sector support. Residents may choose to access VCFSE services based on their individual accessibility, preferences, and needs. VCFSE partners also advocate for and assist residents in attaining the appropriate NHS sector support for their needs if necessary.

VCFSE sector services may receive funding from NHS/local authorities to deliver services, but they can also be funded by donations, fundraising and grants.

The VCFSE sector includes organisations such as Charities, community groups, voluntary organisations, social enterprises, peer support groups and faith-based organisations.

It's important to highlight that the pathways presented below are flexible and multidirectional, based on level of need. Residents with changing needs may move from one level of care to another or utilise multiple levels of care at once.

Children and young people (ages 0-25 years)

Summary

Figure 1 shows a high level infographic mapping the [Suffolk Mental Health Services Pathway for Children and Young People \(ages 0-25 years\)](#). Key findings show that:

Public sector:

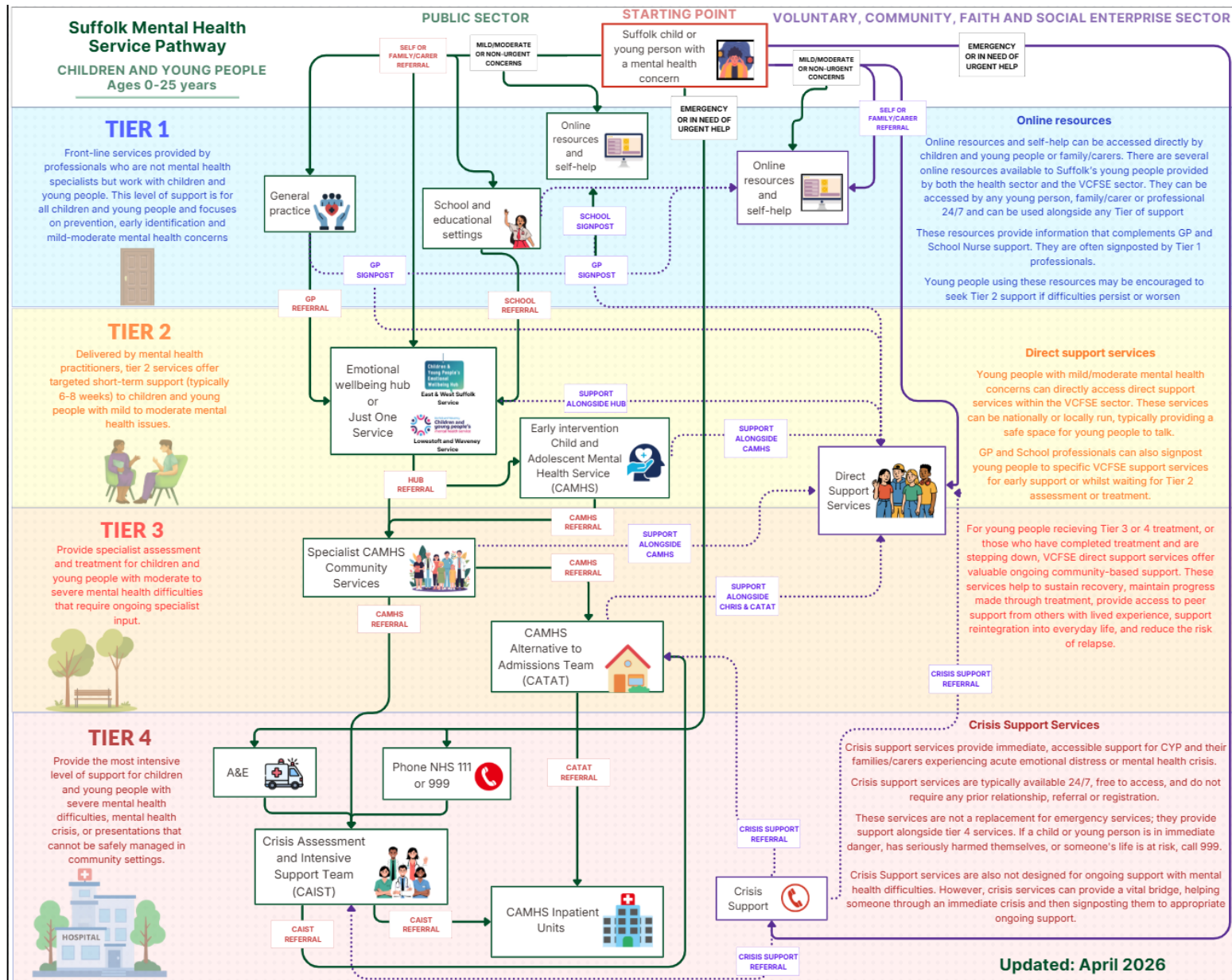
- There are five main entry points to public sector services for children and young people with mental health concerns:
 - For mild/moderate mental health concerns children and young people or a family/carer can access mental health services initially through:
 - Online resources and self-help
 - Their local GP practice
 - School and educational professionals
 - Direct online referrals to the Emotional Wellbeing Hub (East or West Suffolk residents) or Just One Service (Lowestoft or wider Waveney residents)

- For emergency, crisis or urgent support children and young people can access help directly without referral through phoning NHS 111 and selecting the mental health option, calling 999, or attending their closest A&E
- The Tier 2 services - Emotional Wellbeing Hub or Just One Suffolk - act as a single point of access for children and young people and can refer on to Tier 1, 2 or 3 services depending on need.
- Tier 3 services can only be accessed through a healthcare professional referral.
- Tier 4 services should be accessed for urgent and emergency support. Young residents can access these services through attending A&E or phoning NHS 111 or 999 or through VCFSE crisis support. Tier 3 services may also refer children and young people when necessary.

VCFSE sector:

- All VCFSE services can be accessed directly by children and young people and their families/carers with no referral from statutory services.
- Suffolk children and young people have access to several VCFSE mental health services. These have been organised into three categories to clarify their role and integration within overall mental health pathways:
- Online resources and self-help:
 - Designed for universal access and independent use
 - Provide information, psychoeducational materials, peer forums, and guided self-help techniques that young people and families can access anonymously
 - Provide information that complements Tier 1 support and will usually be signposted by health professionals as good resources for general mental wellbeing
 - Can be accessed 24/7 and can be used alongside any tier of support
- Direct support services:
 - Provide interactive support for children and young people and their families/carers who need more than online resources or self-help, but who are not in immediate crisis.
 - Includes counselling, therapeutic youth work, one-to-one mentoring, group programmes, drop-in provision, and peer support networks.
 - Can be accessed alongside statutory provision or when stepping down in level of care, helping to sustain recovery, maintain progress made through treatment, provide access to peer support from others with lived experience, support reintegration into everyday life, and reduce the risk of relapse.
 - Delivered by a range of organisations, from national charities to grassroots community groups established to meet local need.
- Crisis support services
 - Provide immediate, accessible support for children and young people and their families/carers experiencing acute emotional distress or mental health crisis.
 - Typically, available 24/7, free to access, and do not require any prior relationship, referral or registration.
 - These services are not a replacement for emergency services; they provide support alongside tier 4 services. If a child or young person is in immediate danger, has seriously harmed themselves, or someone's life is at risk, call 999.
 - Not designed for ongoing support with mental health difficulties. However, can provide a vital bridge, helping someone through an immediate crisis and then advocating and assisting them to appropriate ongoing support.

Figure 1: Suffolk Mental Health Service Pathway for Children and Young People ages 0-25 years



Public sector

This section maps public sector mental health services available to children and young people and young adults ages 0-25 years in Suffolk. Services are organised using a four-tier framework.

Tier 1

Tier 1 services are those front-line services either provided online or in community settings by professionals who are not mental health specialists but work with children and young people. This level of support is for all children and young people and focuses on early identification and mild difficulties.

Access routes in Tier 1 include:

- General practice
- School or educational setting support
- Online resources and self-help

General practice

For children and young people struggling with mild/moderate mental health concerns GPs can provide:

- Initial assessment of mental health concerns
- Treatment of mild mental health difficulties
- Prescribing medication where appropriate
- Referrals to specialist services
- Physical health monitoring for young people on mental health medication
- Health checks and developmental reviews

Children and young people can access GP services through:

- A parent/carer booking an appointment online, over the phone or in person
- Young people can generally make their own appointments, with confidentiality at age 13 years or over. At 16 young people are presumed to have capacity to consent to treatment and manage appointments alone.
- Use [Doc Ready](#) to prepare for discussing mental health

GP services are typically there for children and young people who present with:

- Mild anxiety or low mood
- Sleep difficulties
- Behavioural concerns
- Eating or weight concerns
- Developmental worries

Depending on the level of need a GP may:

- Provide initial support or monitoring
- Signpost to relevant VCFSE services and resources
- Refer residents to tier 2 services.

School and Educational Settings

Schools, colleges and early years settings across Suffolk also provide mental health support, including:

- **Pastoral care and counselling:** school counsellors, learning mentors, pastoral leads
- **Designated mental health leads:** staff member responsible for mental health support
- **School nurses:** staff members responsible for health assessment, health education, support for mental health concerns
- **Mental health support team:** in some schools- early intervention for mild-moderate difficulties

- **Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs):** for children with additional needs affecting learning and wellbeing

These services can offer:

- One-to-one support and counselling
- Small group interventions (e.g. anxiety management or social skills)
- Referral to tier 2 services
- Support during the school day

There are several ways to get support in school and educational settings:

- Parents/carers can speak to class teacher, form tutor, or pastoral team
- Young people can self-refer to a member of school staff
- School staff can identify concerns and offer support

Schools and educational settings also have links to other services:

- They can directly refer to tier 2 mental health services
- They have partnerships with educational psychology services
- They have links to SEND services for children with additional needs

Online resources and self-help

Online resources and self-help provisions are designed for universal access and independent use. They provide information, psychoeducational materials, peer forums, and guided self-help techniques that young people and families can access anonymously, at any time, without requiring referral or appointment.

Young people using these resources may be encouraged or supported to seek Tier 2 support if difficulties persist or worsen.

Table 1 shows public sector provided online-resources and self-help available to children and young people and their families in Suffolk.

Table 1: Online resources and self-help provided by the public sector for Suffolk residents

Resource	Description
Kooth	<p>An anonymous, free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support service providing young people aged 11-25 years with access to support from a professional team of qualified counsellors. Kooth offers young people throughout Suffolk, a safe & anonymous place where they can seek support online. They can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access live text based counselling sessions or use our messaging service. • Seek support or advice about anything they are worried about • Browse through a wide range of self-help materials and mini activities • Share their experiences with others through live moderated forums • Track thoughts and feelings through journals and goal trackers <p>To access these services children and young people in Suffolk can register on Kooth to start receiving help 365 days a year counsellors are online from 12 noon until 10 pm weekdays, and 6pm until 10pm weekends. There are no thresholds or barriers for young people on receiving help from Kooth. Parents and professionals can also book on to a Kooth information webinar to find out more about how Kooth supports young people's emotional wellbeing.</p>
The Source	<p>Website provides information, advice and guidance to young people in Suffolk, aged 11-18 (and up to 25 for those with additional needs) on issues they face in their everyday lives. The website has a 'Your Mind' section for young people to explore a wide range of information and advice about various emotional health and wellbeing topics, such as anxiety, stress, loneliness, low mood, self-harm, suicidal feelings and more. The website also has an Emotional Wellbeing Directory of helplines and support services that young people can contact to find the right support. The Source website also has other useful information about learning, career options</p>

Resource	Description
	(including apprenticeships and a CV Builder), relationships and sex, keeping safe, inclusion, and housing and money. The site is aimed at young people but is also a valuable resource to parents and carers looking for local information to help support their child or young person. The website is provided by Suffolk County Council.
MindEd for Families	A free NHS e-learning resource providing evidence-based information and practical guidance to help families support children and young people's mental health. Resource was developed by parents working alongside mental health practitioners.
Suffolk Community Libraries	Suffolk community libraries health and wellbeing programme supports library staff and customers in providing up to date and reliable mental health and wellbeing information and signposting.
Stay Alive	Stay Alive app is a suicide prevention resource full of tools and resources to help people stay safe from suicide.

Tier 2

Tier 2 services are for children and young people with mild to moderate mental health concerns that require some specialist input but not intensive ongoing treatment. These services are delivered by mental health practitioners.

Suffolk children and young people can access tier 2 services via:

- GP referral
- Self-referral
- Family/carer referral
- School or educational setting referral

Depending on geography all referrals will go to either:

- Emotional Wellbeing Hub (East and West Suffolk)
- Just One Service (Lowestoft and wider Waveney)

These services act as a single point of access and will assess referrals to determine the young persons needs.

From these assessments children and young people can be referred down the following pathways:

- Signposted to VCFSE sector services
- Brief Tier 2 intervention and back to Tier 1
- Tier 2 early intervention services
- Onward referral to Tier 3 specialist Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Emotional Wellbeing Hub

The [Emotional Wellbeing Hub](#) is provided by NSFT and supports children and young people across East and West Suffolk.

The Emotional Wellbeing Hub offers:

- Initial assessment and triage of referrals
- Brief intervention for emerging difficulties (short-term support)
- Consultation and advice to professionals

The Emotional Wellbeing Hub acts as a single point of access to NHS CAMHS. This means in order to access CAMHS services, children and young people must be referred to the Emotional Wellbeing Hub first. Referrals are made through the [Emotional Wellbeing Hub online form](#).

Routine referrals are typically assessed within 4-6 weeks. Urgent referrals are prioritised for quicker assessment.

Just One Service

The [Just One Service](#) is provided by NHS Norfolk and Waveney Children & Young People's Health service and supports children and young people across Lowestoft and the wider Waveney area.

Just One Service offers similar services to the Emotional Wellbeing Hub just across different geographies, services include:

- Mental health assessment and advice
- Support via helpline, text, and face-to-face

Similarly to the Emotional Wellbeing hub, the Just One Service acts as a single point of access to NHS CAMHS. Referrals are made through the [Just One Service online form](#).

One difference to the Emotional Wellbeing Hub is that Just One Service is integrated with other children's health services, so families have one point of contact for multiple health needs, not just mental health.

Early intervention Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

After assessment by the Emotional Wellbeing Hub or Just One Service, children and young people with mild to moderate difficulties may be offered Tier 2 Early Intervention from the Early intervention Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), rather than ongoing Tier 3 specialist CAMHS. These are time-limited interventions delivered by mental health practitioners.

Table 2 provides an overview of different Early intervention CAMHS.

Table 2: Early Intervention CAMHS in Suffolk

Service	Description
Under-18 Wellbeing Service	The Under 18 Wellbeing Service is an early intervention service provided by NSFT. The service supports young people and their families with mild to moderate mental health difficulties. The service offers assessments by either a Primary Mental Health Worker (PMHW) or a Children's Wellbeing Practitioner (CWP). Following assessment therapy may be offered. This therapy could be with a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist (CBT). Alternatively, the service also provides CBT informed guided self-help with a Children's Wellbeing practitioner or bespoke interventions which could involve group work and webinars.
Psychology in School Team	The Psychology in Schools Team aims to support the development of whole-community approaches in schools across Suffolk. They endeavour to do this in co-production with the children, parents, teachers and communities of a school. This service offers workshops that aim to provide parents with information and guidance around mental health and emotional wellbeing using an accessible and interactive format- via virtual webinars and workshops that encourages the sharing of experiences of parents. The Psychology in Schools Team is made up of senior mental health clinicians who have worked in specialist mental health services. They have both generic and specialist skills and are trained across the lifespan to work with both children and adults.
Mental Health Support Teams	Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) are an early intervention service that support children and young people, their families and schools and college communities with mild to moderate mental health difficulties. Each MHST is allocated to specific secondary schools/colleges and their feeder primary schools within Suffolk. MHSTs work in education settings and in the wider education community, both in and out of term time, including school holidays.

Tier 3

Tier 3 services provide specialist assessment and treatment for children and young people with moderate to severe mental health difficulties that require ongoing specialist input (months to years) and provide assessment, evidence-based therapies and medication management where appropriate.

To access tier 3 services children and young people must be referred through the Tier 2 Emotional Wellbeing Hub or Just One Service.

NHS CAMHS Community Services

NHS CAMHS Community Services are specialist community mental health teams for children and young people with moderate to severe mental health difficulties, provided by NSFT.

Typical conditions treated by CAMHS community services include:

- Moderate to severe anxiety disorders
- Depression
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Eating disorders
- Emerging personality difficulties
- Self-harm requiring specialist intervention
- Trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Psychosis (though may transfer to Early Intervention in Psychosis service)
- Severe behavioural difficulties

CAMHS Community services comprise of multi-disciplinary teams including psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health nurses, therapists and social workers. There are some specialist teams for specific conditions such as eating disorder teams and neurodevelopmental teams.

CAMHS Community services offer the following support for children and young people:

- Assessment of mental health, family, social circumstances, developmental history
- Psychological therapies
- Medication
- Regular reviews and liaison with appropriate services such as schools, social care and GP where appropriate
- Family support and psychoeducation
- Safety plans and crisis contacts

CAMHS Alternative to Admissions Team

CAMHS Alternative to Admissions Team (CATAT) provides intensive support in the community as an alternative to Tier 4 support (CAMHS inpatient admission), or to support early discharge from Tier 4 back to the community. The CATAT service is provided by NSFT and is designed to:

- Prevent admissions to tier 4 inpatient units where possible
- Provide intensive home treatment for young people who would otherwise need hospital care
- Support young people in first 5-7 days after discharge from inpatient (high-risk period for re-admission)

Children and young people use CATAT when:

- Young person is at risk of Tier 4 (hospital) admission but could be managed at home with intensive Tier 3 support
- Young person being discharged from CAMHS inpatient (Tier 4) and needs intensive community support to prevent re-admission
- Alternative to Tier 4 admission for presentations that would traditionally require hospital care

CATAT offers:

- Very frequent home visits (daily or even multiple times per day)

- Intensive support package delivered in the home/community
- Crisis stabilisation in community setting
- Risk management at home
- Family support and psychoeducation
- Practical support with daily functioning

Tier 4

Tier 4 services provide the most intensive level of support for children and young people with severe mental health difficulties or mental health crisis that cannot be safely managed in the community, even with intensive community support such as CATAT.

Tier 4 delivers crisis intervention requiring hospital-based assessment and inpatient care provided by highly specialised teams and facilities.

Tier 4 services should be accessed for urgent and emergency support. Young residents can access these services through attending A&E or phoning NHS 111 or 999 or through VCFSE crisis support. Tier 3 services may also refer children and young people when necessary.

Tier 4 services include:

- Crisis Assessment and Intensive Support Team (CAIST)
- CAMHS Inpatient Units

Crisis Assessment and Intensive Support Team

CAIST is a 24/7 emergency mental health assessment service for children and young people in crisis provided by NSFT.

Young people should access this service when:

- They experience an immediate mental health crisis
- They are at risk of harm to self or others
- They experience severe mental health deterioration
- Family/Carers are unable to keep young person safe
- Professionals have concerns about young person's immediate risk

CAIST services can be accessed via:

- NHS 111- select mental health option (24/7)
- 999 if life-threatening emergency
- A&E mental health assessment available
- Health professionals can also refer directly
- VCFSE crisis support or referral

CAIST delivers:

- Urgent assessment
- Brief crisis intervention
- Risk assessment and safety planning
- Liaison with inpatient services if admission needed
- Support for families during crisis

It's important to note that CAIST provides crisis response, not ongoing treatment. Once a crisis is stabilised, residents will be directed to suitable care from CAMHS team, VCFSE sector support or referred to inpatient services depending on their level of need.

CAMHS Inpatient Service

CAMHS inpatient services are specialist psychiatric inpatient units for young people whose mental health needs cannot be safely managed in the community.

Admission is needed when children and young people:

- Become a risk to self or others and can't be managed at home
- Need intensive assessment and treatment
- Are sectioned under the Mental Health Act
- Require physical health monitoring (e.g. severe eating disorder)

[The Dragonfly Unit](#) in Lowestoft is a general adolescent psychiatric unit that has general psychiatric beds and eating disorder beds. The service is for young people who are experiencing an acute mental health disorder that cannot be safely managed in a community setting. This unit is the only NHS inpatient psychiatric unit specifically for children and young people (aged 12-18) in Suffolk and Norfolk. While it provides 7-12 acute beds for the region, young people often require placement in units elsewhere (such as Colchester or Cambridge) if specialised care is needed or if the unit is full.

Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector

This section maps Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector services available to children and young people in Suffolk. These services complement and integrate with public sector mental health services. Given the extensive range of available VCFSE services, these have been organised into three categories: online resources and self-help, direct support services, and crisis support.

Online resources and self-help

Online resources and self-help provisions are designed for universal access and independent use. They provide information, psychoeducational materials, peer forums, and guided self-help techniques that young people and families can access anonymously, at any time, without requiring referral or appointment.

VCFSE online resources and self-help tools primarily integrate at Tier 1 level, providing self-help and information that complements GP, school, educational, and healthcare professions. They are often signposted by Tier 1 professionals but can be accessed alongside any tier of care.

Young people using these resources may be encouraged or supported to seek Tier 2 support if difficulties persist or worsen.

Table 3 provides a list of online resources specifically designed for children and young people themselves and for parents/carers or professionals supporting children and young people when they have a mental health concern in Suffolk.

Table 3: Online resources for children and young people, and families/carers in Suffolk

Resource	Description
Young Minds	Young Minds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. It provides online resources, support, and advice for young people ages 0-25 years and parents and carers.
Suffolk Mind	Service provides online resources, self-help and guides for CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE and their families/carers as well as signposts for more specific services available.
Norfolk and Waveney Mind	Service provides online resources, self-help and guides for CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE and their families/carers as well as signposts for more specific services available.
CALMzone	CALMzone app provides free mental health support making it easier to look ahead to manage anxiety, stress panic using expert-created mental health tools and exercises. The CALM webpage also provides guides and tools to support mental health and signposts direct and crisis support services.

Direct support services

Direct support VCFSE services provide interactive support for children and young people and their families/carers who need more than online resources or self-help, but who are not in immediate crisis. Young people can access VCFSE direct support services without needing a referral from statutory services. These services typically offer a safe, non-judgemental space for young people to talk and receive support.

Direct support services can also be accessed alongside statutory public sector provision, offering valuable community-based support for young people during or while waiting for assessment or treatment. For young people who have completed treatment or are stepping down from services, direct support services can help to sustain recovery, maintain progress made through treatment, provide access to peer support from others with lived experience, support reintegration into everyday life, and reduce the risk of relapse.

Direct support services in Suffolk include counselling, therapeutic youth work, one-to-one mentoring, group programmes, drop-in provision, and peer support networks. They are delivered by a range of VCFSE organisations, from national charities to grassroots community groups established to meet local need.

Table 4 provides a list of direct support services designed to support children and young people and their families/carers in Suffolk.

Table 4: Direct support services for children and young people and families/carers in Suffolk

Service	Description
4YP	4YP is a multi-skilled team of professionals, all have a successful track record working with young people and their families in a variety of roles including Careers Guidance, Youth Work, Counselling, Mental Health, Training and supporting vulnerable families.
Suffolk Mind	Suffolk mind run workshops, webinars, talks, interactive sessions and classroom activities to support children and young people mental health and wellbeing.
Childline	As well as providing online resources and self-help. Children and young people, families/carers can contact ChildLine counsellors via email, call, or online. They also have message boards which allow children and young people to talk to each other, offer support, or just share. Childline also offers a service known as 'Ask Sam' which allows children and young people to write letters with any worry.
The Mix	A youth work charity based in Stowmarket. Work with young people from across Mid Suffolk and beyond. The mix offers weekly drop in services and employment, education or training.
The OLLIE Foundation	Accessible in-person and online awareness sessions, events, initiatives and resources to reduce the number of people who feel like suicide is their only option.
Inspire	Wellbeing service offers virtual and face-to-face support and counselling to young people, aged 10-25 in Suffolk and North Essex, who need someone to talk to. Over the course of around 12 weeks, Inspire work with children and young people to improve outlook, wellness, and mental health. These sessions provide the knowledge, tools and coping strategies needed to deal with mental health in a positive way. Inspire make sure each session is personalised to the children and young people so they can receive the support they need.
Footsteps	Footsteps - walking with you, are a local group of professional counsellors working within the ethical framework of the ACC and BACP aiming to support and work children and young people aged between 8 and 25 years and their families. The service offers counselling at an affordable price where money is not a barrier to getting help and support. We cover the whole of Suffolk.
The Junction	The Junction provides free advice, mental health guidance and wellbeing support from mental health youth workers in a safe welcoming space in the heart of Lowestoft town centre. The hub is open to any young person aged 11-25, and support is given in the form of assistive one to ones and group workshops.
Discovery college	The Discovery College offers free educational online courses and webinars on mental health topics for 16 - 25 year olds. The courses and webinars are designed so that 16-25 year olds can become an expert in discovering themselves and their self-care alongside others their

	age. Children and young people have the option to attend webinars and/or courses, optional camera/mic use, supporting focus groups and volunteering to deliver sessions.
Outreach Youth	Outreach Youth provide drop-ins, groups and 1-to-1 counselling for LGBT*Q+ young people in a range of locations across Suffolk

Crisis support services

Crisis support VCFSE services provide immediate, accessible support for children and young people and their families/carers experiencing acute emotional distress or mental health crisis. These services are designed to be available when someone is overwhelmed, at breaking point, experiencing suicidal thoughts, or needs urgent support outside of normal service hours.

Crisis Support services are typically available 24/7, free to access, and do not require any prior relationship, referral or registration. They offer a lifeline at the moment of crisis- someone to talk to, text or chat with who can provide immediate emotional support, help the person feel less alone, and support them to stay safe.

These services are not a replacement for emergency services; they provide support alongside tier 4 services. If a child or young person is in immediate danger, has seriously harmed themselves, or someone's life is at risk, call 999.

Crisis Support services are also not designed for ongoing support with mental health difficulties- for that, young people should access direct support services or statutory provision. However, crisis services can provide a vital bridge, helping someone through an immediate crisis and then signposting them to appropriate ongoing support.

Table 5 provides a list of examples of crisis support services for children and young people.

Table 5: Crisis support services for children and young people in Suffolk

Service	Description
SHOUT	SHOUT is a free, confidential 24/7 text support service in the UK for anyone struggling with mental health. By texting "SHOUT" to 85258, users connect with a trained volunteer for immediate anonymous, and silent support.
Childline	Any child or young person under 19 can confidentially call, chat online or email about any problem big or small. You can talk about anything on 08001111.
Samaritans	Samaritans provides free, 24/7 confidential emotional support for children and young people struggling to cope, available by calling 116 123 . This service is available to anyone, regardless of age, and does not appear on phone bills.
Papyrus	Young people in need of urgent support can contact Papyrus HOPELINE a 24/7 confidential suicide prevention line on 08000684141 or text 88247
Campaign Against living miserably	If CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE is struggling with suicidal thoughts CALM can support. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE can live chat, Whatsapp or phone 0800585858 from 5pm-midnight everyday for support.

Adult (aged 18+ years)

Summary

Figure 2 presents a high level infographic mapping the [Suffolk Mental Health Pathway for Adults Ages 18+ years](#). Key findings show that:

Public sector

- There are four main entry points for Suffolk residents with a mental health concern

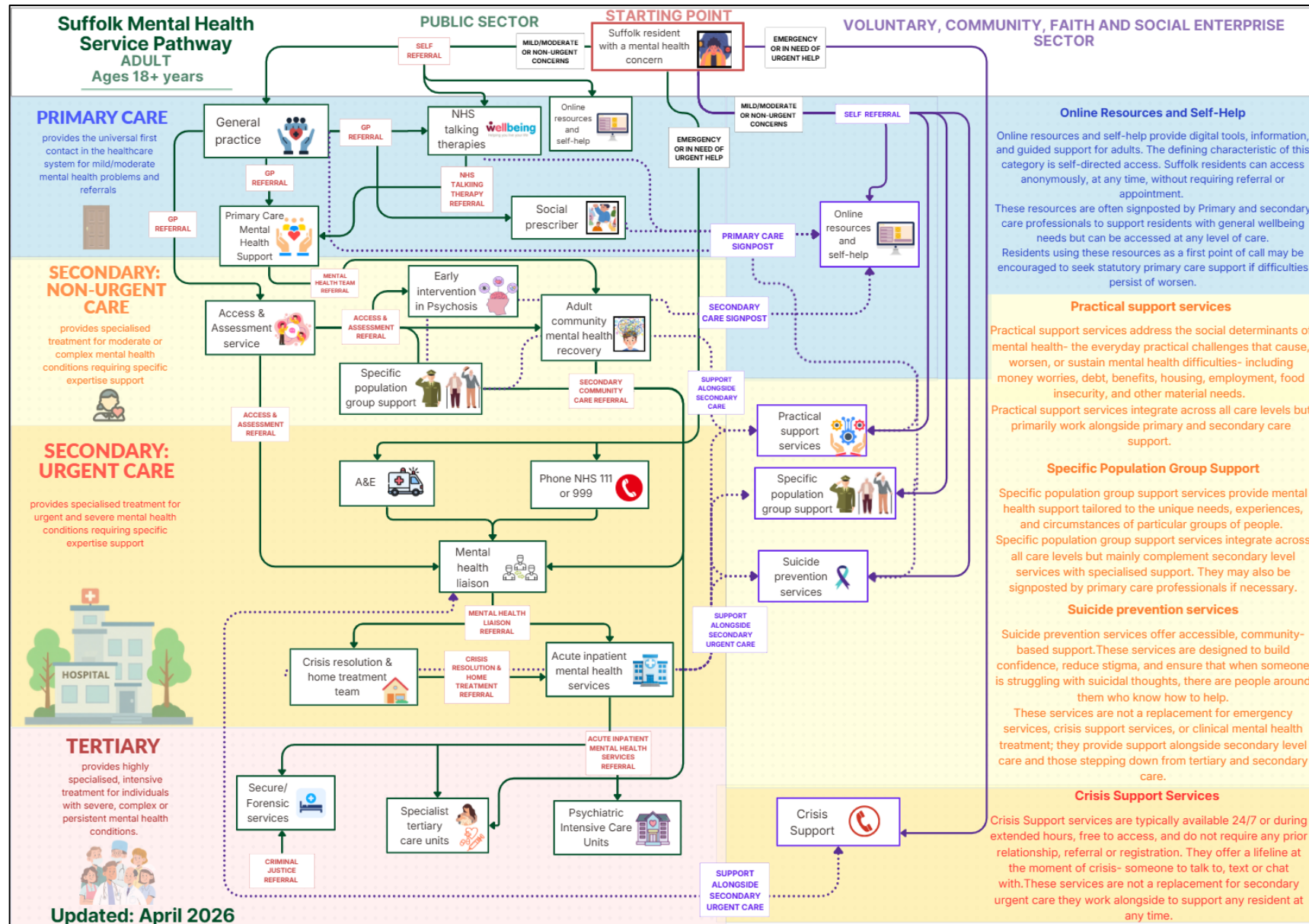
- For common and general wellbeing information residents can access an array of public sector provided online resources and self-help
- For mild/moderate mental health concerns residents can access mental health services initially through GP practices
- Suffolk wellbeing provides NHS talking therapies which can be accessed through self-referrals for common mental health problems such as anxiety or depression
- For emergency, crisis or urgent support residents can access help directly without GP referral through phoning NHS 111 and selecting the mental health option, calling 999, or attending their closest A&E
- Non-urgent secondary care can only be accessed via a GP referral
- Tertiary care can only be accessed via a referral from acute inpatient mental health services or criminal justice services
- Specialist care for specific demographic groups such as mother's or birthing people, veterans or those in the armed forces, and older adults with dementia concerns is available at secondary and tertiary levels of care and can be accessed via a GP referral.
- The pathway is flexible and multidirectional, based on need level. Residents with changing needs may be referred and move from one level of care to another.

VCFSE sector

- All VCFSE services can be accessed directly by Suffolk adults with no referral from statutory public sector services.
- Suffolk adults have access to several VCFSE mental health services. These have been organised into five categories to clarify their role and integration within overall mental health pathways:
- Online resources and self-help:
 - Designed for universal access and independent use
 - Provide information, psychoeducational materials, peer forums, and guided self-help techniques that residents can access anonymously
 - Provide information that primary care support and will usually be signposted by health professionals as good resources for general mental wellbeing
 - Can be accessed 24/7 and can be used alongside any level of public sector support
 - May be locally commissioned but open to use to all triaged via VCFSE
- Practical support services:
 - Address the social determinants of mental health- the everyday practical challenges that cause, worsen, or sustain mental health difficulties.
 - Help with money worries, debt, benefits, housing, employment, food insecurity, and other material needs.
 - Integrate across all care levels but primarily work alongside primary and secondary care support.
- Specific population group services
 - Provide mental health support tailored to the unique needs, experiences, and circumstances of particular groups of people.
 - Staff and volunteers understand the specific experiences, language, and challenges of the population they serve.
 - Specific population group support services integrate across all levels of the mental health system. They mainly complement secondary level services with specialised support but may also be signposted by primary care professionals if necessary.

- Suicide prevention services
 - Complement statutory public sector provision and Suffolk Public Health initiatives by offering accessible, community-based support that reaches people who may not engage public sector services.
 - Provide education, training, safety planning tools, and specialist support to help prevent suicide and support those affected by it.
 - Provide support, information and guidance for people who have been bereaved by suicide
 - Include free training programmes that teach people how to recognise warning signs and have supportive conversations, digital tools like safety planning apps, and specialist bereavement support for those who have lost someone to suicide.
 - Designed to build confidence, reduce stigma, and ensure that when someone is struggling with suicidal thoughts, there are people around them who know how to help.
 - These services are not a replacement for emergency services, crisis support services, or clinical mental health treatment; they provide support alongside secondary level care and those stepping down from tertiary and secondary care. If an adult is in immediate danger, has seriously harmed themselves, or someone's life is at risk, call 999.
- Crisis support services
 - Provide immediate, accessible support for adults experiencing acute emotional distress or mental health crisis.
 - Typically, available 24/7, free to access, and do not require any prior relationship, referral or registration.
 - These services are not a replacement for emergency services; they provide support alongside secondary urgent care services. If an adult is in immediate danger, has seriously harmed themselves, or someone's life is at risk, call 999.
 - Not designed for ongoing support with mental health difficulties. However, can provide a vital bridge, helping someone through an immediate crisis and then advocating and assisting them to appropriate ongoing support.

Figure 2: Suffolk Mental Health Service Pathway Adults Ages 18+ years



Public sector

This section maps public sector mental health services available to adults (18+) in Suffolk. Services are organised by level of care.

Primary care

Primary care mental health services provide universal, accessible, early mental health support. Primary care services are the first point of contact for adults with mental health concerns. Services focus on early intervention, prevention, assessment and referrals, and low-intensity treatments for common mild and moderate mental health conditions.

Access routes at primary care level:

- General practice (GP) referral
- NHS Talking therapies self-referral

General Practice

General practitioners (GPs) remain the first point of contact for residents experiencing mild or moderate mental health concerns typically including low mood or depression, anxiety, sleep problems, stress, bereavement or effects of life events on mental health.

GP practices across Suffolk provide:

- Initial assessment of mental health concerns
- Treatment of mild to moderate mental health conditions
- Prescribing antidepressants or anti-anxiety medication
- Brief psychological interventions
- Monitoring and review

The GP can also refer residents to specialist services including:

- NHS Talking therapies
- Social prescriber workers
- Primary Care Mental Health Team
- Access and assessment service for residents in need of more specialised support (secondary care)

Annual health checks are also available for residents on GP mental health registers typically presenting with severe mental illness (SMI) such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or psychosis.

Residents can access GP services by:

- Booking an appointment with a GP, practice nurse or mental health practitioner over the phone or at their local GP

NHS Talking Therapies

NHS Talking Therapies services (formerly known as Improving Access to Psychological Therapies [IAPT]) provide free, evidence-based psychological interventions for adults (aged 16+ years, some services 18+ years) with common mental health problems including:

- Depression (mild to moderate)
- Generalised anxiety disorder
- Panic disorder
- Agoraphobia
- Social anxiety disorder

- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Specific phobias
- Health anxiety
- Mixed anxiety and depression

Providers of these services include:

- [Wellbeing Suffolk](#) (for Suffolk residents)
- [Wellbeing Norfolk and Waveney](#) (for Waveney residents)

Therapies are flexible in delivery offered in array of ways dependent on need, including:

- Self-directed online cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Guided self-help via workbooks and telephone support
- Group based interventions such as psychoeducation groups and anxiety management
- Face-to-face, one-to-one therapy sessions
- Person-centred counselling
- Couples therapy
- Other evidence-based therapies including Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) for trauma

Residents can access NHS talking therapies through:

- Self-referral by contacting provider
- Online self-referral forms provider website

Once referral process is completed residents receive a telephone assessment within 2-4 weeks. In this assessment specialists will discuss symptoms, history, and treatment preferences and health professionals will then offer the appropriate level of intervention. Typically, sessions run weekly for 6-20 weeks depending on presentation and progress. Regular outcome monitoring is provided throughout treatment.

Social prescribing

Social prescribing connects people to support in their local community to improve health and wellbeing. Rather than only offering medical treatments, GP and healthcare professionals can refer people to a social prescriber to help residents to access non-clinical community support.

To access social prescribing services residents can request the service via their GP. The process includes:

1. Resident discusses difficulties with GP or healthcare professional
2. GP refers to social prescribing link worker (with resident consent)
3. Link worker meets with resident (flexible, face-to-face, phone, or video) usually 3-6 sessions over several weeks
4. Together, identify what would help and what residents want to achieve
5. Link worker connects resident to local community activities, groups, or services
6. Link worker provides practical support to access these such as making introductions or going to the first sessions
7. Link worker follows up to see how the resident is getting on

Social prescribing particularly valuable for people whose wellbeing is affected by non-medical factors:

- Loneliness and social isolation
- Financial worries or debt problems
- Housing issues
- Unemployment or problems at work
- Caring responsibilities
- Bereavement
- Long-term health conditions
- Low mood, mild anxiety related to life circumstances

It's important to note that social prescribing is not a replacement for medical treatment when it's needed. It works best alongside other treatments for mental health conditions. The social prescriber does not provide counselling or therapy- they connect people to existing community resources. Services are typically free or low-cost, and people remain under the care of their GP.

Most social prescriber worker services are coordinated through [Wellbeing Suffolk](#).

The [Suffolk InfoLink](#) directory also provides information about community activities and support services that people can access independently.

Primary Care Mental Health Support

Primary Care Mental Health Support in Suffolk provides prompt, time limited, accessible care and treatment for residents with common to moderate mental health difficulties. They can support, signpost and advocate for patients' care needs, working in partnership with other mental health services.

Residents can not directly access these services but can be referred by other primary care services.

These services differ depending on the residents location:

- [Suffolk \(East and West\) Primary Mental Health Team](#): Provides compassionate, time limited support for adults with common to moderate mental health difficulties. The service is divided into East and West teams to ensure county-wide coverage. They offer assessments and short-term psychologically informed support, practical interventions to help stabilise individuals, support to safely access therapies, assistance to remain supported within a primary care setting. Team members work flexibly across Suffolk depending on their location, delivering appointments from various settings including GP surgeries, community settings, NSFT offices and through remote clinics.
- [Norfolk and Waveney Primary Care Mental Health Nurses](#): Provides compassionate, time limited support for adults with common to moderate mental health difficulties. The services are commissioned by Norfolk and Waveney ICB and are provided to residents living in Lowestoft and wider Waveney. They offer assessments and short-term psychologically informed support, practical interventions to help stabilise individuals, support to safely access therapies, assistance to remain supported within a primary care setting. Team members work flexibly depending on their location, delivering appointments from various settings including GP surgeries, community settings, NSFT offices and through remote clinics.

Online resources and self-help

Online resources and self-help services provide digital tools, information, and guided support to help adults understand, manage, and improve their general wellbeing. These services range from interactive platforms offering online support and peer communities, to educational courses, self-help programmes, apps, and information websites.

Suffolk residents can access anonymously, at any time, without requiring referral or appointment. They provide information, psychoeducational materials, peer forums, and guided self-help techniques that cover general wellbeing. However, many services in this category go beyond passive information provision to offer active, guided support including structured self-help programmes, educational courses, and peer communities.

Table 6 outlines the available online resources and self-help services provided by the public sector for Suffolk residents.

Table 6: Online resources and self-hep services provided by the public sector for Suffolk residents

Service	Description
Wellbeing Suffolk	The Wellbeing service provide advice and support to people to improve your emotional health. Provides some information about different mental health and lifestyle issues, how they can affect your wellbeing and where you can find support.
Recovery College	Free educational courses on mental health recovery, delivered by people with lived and learned experience of mental health challenges. For anyone aged 16 or over.
NHS Every Mind Matters	Online resources presenting simple and practical ways to ease anxiety, manage stress, lift your mood and sleep better.

Secondary non-urgent care

Secondary non-urgent mental health services provides specialised treatment for moderate or complex mental health conditions requiring specific expertise support.

Residents requiring secondary non-urgent care support must be referred by a GP or a health professional.

Access and Assessment Service

Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT) provides the [Access and Assessment service](#) (also known as Single Point of Access or [SPA]) which delivers screening, assessment, and triage for adults. Residents must be referred by a GP or health/social care professionals.

Generally, residents will receive a referral to Access and Assessment if they are experiencing:

- Moderate to severe depression not responding to primary care treatment
- Anxiety significantly impacting functioning despite primary care treatment
- Psychotic symptoms
- Bipolar disorder
- Severe mental illness requiring specialist management
- Complex presentations requiring specialist assessment
- Risk concerns requiring specialist input

This service acts as a gateway, conducting telephone, video, or face-to-face assessments to discuss residents mental health needs. The service does not provide long-term treatment

Based on the assessment the service determines an appropriate care pathway for the residents needs which could be either:

- Primary care support with advice
- Secondary care support for more complex and severe mental health needs that require specialist support.

Adult Community Mental Health Recovery Service

[Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust](#) (NSFT) provides the [Adult Community Mental Health Recovery Service](#) which delivers assessment and treatment for residents with moderate to severe or complex mental health needs.

Conditions treated include:

- Severe depression or anxiety disorders not responding to primary care
- Bipolar disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Schizoaffective disorder
- Other psychoses
- Personality disorders
- Complex mental health presentations

The Adult Community Mental Health Recovery Service has a multi-disciplinary team including:

- Psychiatrists
- Community psychiatric nurses
- Social workers
- Psychologists
- Occupational therapists
- Support workers
- Peer support workers

Services operating across Suffolk and provide:

- **Assessment and diagnosis:** comprehensive mental health assessments, psychiatric diagnosis, risk assessments, social circumstances assessments and physical health screenings.
- **Treatment and interventions:** medication management, psychological interventions, care coordination, recovery and rehabilitation support and crisis planning.
- **Employment support:** [Individual Placement and Support](#) (IPS)

Duration of service use is dependent on resident need- long-term support is available and regular reviews of progress and ongoing need are frequently completed. The aim of the services is to support recovery and allow residents to 'be discharged or step-down' when appropriate.

Once a resident's recovery has been suitably supported, they will move back to primary care, with a care plan and relapse prevention in place. Enhanced primary care support and re-referral pathways are available based on resident need if difficulties return.

Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP)

NSFT provides the [Early Intervention in Psychosis \(EIP\) service](#). The Early Intervention in Psychosis Service is a specialist multidisciplinary service for people experiencing first episode psychosis or at high risk of psychosis.

Residents can access the EIP service through referrals from:

- Access and Assessment service
- Direct GP referrals
- Crisis services

The EIP provides intensive support for up to three years including:

- Rapid assessment within 2 weeks of referral
- NICE-recommended treatment package
- Individual and family psychological intervention
- Medication management
- Supported employment and education pathways
- Recovery-focused care planning

Support for specific population groups

Table 7 outlines specialist secondary mental health statutory services in Suffolk. These are separated from the adult community mental health recovery services and focus on provision for specific population groups that require specific expert support in Suffolk.

Residents can access these services via:

- Access and Assessment referrals
- Direct GP referrals
- Midwife referral
- Health visitor referral

Table 7: Specialist secondary mental health statutory services in Suffolk

Population group	Service description	Provider
Perinatal	Specialist community support for women experiencing mental health difficulties during pregnancy and the first year postpartum, includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and treatment of moderate to severe perinatal mental health problems • Mother and baby therapy • Liaison with maternity services, health visitors, and GPs • Support for partners where appropriate • Crisis planning 	The Community Perinatal Service (NSFT)
Dementia and memory concerns	For people of any age with memory concerns, providing a diagnostic assessment for dementia and support.	Community Memory Assessment Service (NSFT)
Armed forces/Veterans	Veterans integrated service: specialist support integrated within NSFT community mental health services providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and treatment by clinicians with military trauma expertise • Access to specialist interventions • Peer support opportunities All NHS mental health providers have dedicated armed forces champions and clinicians with expertise in military trauma.	Veterans integrated service (NSFT)

Secondary urgent care

Secondary mental health urgent care provides specialised, immediate support for severe mental health crises when primary care isn't enough, bridging the gap between standard GP visits and hospitalisation.

Residents may be referred to secondary urgent care through the [Access and Assessment service](#) or through emergency A&E, or by phoning NHS 111 or 999.

Mental health liaison

The [Suffolk Mental Health liaison team\(s\)](#) is provided by NSFT. These teams are based in acute general hospitals including Ipswich Hospital, West Suffolk Hospital and James Paget Hospital.

The team offers support to patients in A&E and on medical/surgical wards. They offer assessments in for residents undergoing a mental health crisis which may include:

- Self-harm
- Suicidal thoughts or attempts
- Acute distress or agitation
- Psychosis
- Severe depression or anxiety
- Effects of alcohol/drug use on mental health

They also offer assessment, medication advice, guidance for managing mental health presentations and discharge planning on medical and surgical wards for:

- Residents with known mental illness admitted for physical health problems
- New mental health problems arising during medical admission (e.g. delirium, depression)
- Patients who self-harm while inpatient

It's important to note that liaison services assess and provide short-term intervention- they do not provide ongoing treatment. They can link people to appropriate ongoing services depending on need including onward referral to:

- Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team (CRHTT)
- Admission to acute inpatient psychiatric ward
- Community mental health secondary care services
- VCFSE services

Crisis resolution & home treatment team

[Crisis resolution and home treatment teams](#) (CRHTT) are provided by NSFT. CRHTT are intensive home-based support for adults in mental health crisis and are an alternative to hospital admission.

CRHTT are used if residents:

- Experience an acute mental health crisis
 - Severe depression with suicidal thoughts
 - Psychotic relapse
 - Acute mania (bipolar disorder)
 - Severe anxiety or panic
 - Crisis in context of personality disorder
- Are a risk of harm to self or others
- Show severe deterioration in mental state
- Without intensive support would need hospital admission
- Require support due to early discharge from hospital

Residents can not directly access CRHTT, they must receive an assessment first usually from Mental health liaisons in A&E or over the phone via NHS 111.

CRHTT offers:

- Assessment within 24 hours of referral (often same day)
- Daily home or community location visits (frequency dependent on need)
- Referral to acute inpatient mental health services
- Face-to-face contact. Not just phone calls

Duration is dependent on need but typically lasts up to 4 weeks. Once a resident's recovery has been suitably supported, they will move back to secondary care community services, with a care plan and relapse prevention in place. Re-referral pathways are available based on resident need if difficulties return.

Acute inpatient mental health services

Acute inpatient mental health services are provided by NSFT. They are hospital-based psychiatric care for adults whose mental health needs cannot be safely managed in the community. Admission is needed when residents are:

- A risk to self or others and cannot be managed in the community even with CRHTT
- In need of intensive assessment and stabilisation
- In need of medical monitoring (e.g. physical health complications, medication monitoring)
- Unable to engage with community treatment
- Admitted under Mental Health Act (person detained for treatment)

There are two main types of admission:

- **Informal (voluntary):** resident consents to admission, they are free to leave (though this may be converted to section if attempts to leave are made when unsafe).
- **Mental health act detention (sectioned):** Compulsory admission for assessment or treatment. Residents cannot leave and requires assessment by two doctors and an approved mental health professional from the Approved Mental Health Practitioner Team (AMHP). Regular reviews are made and residents have the right to appeal. The most frequently used sections include section 2 which is an assessment lasting up to 28 days and section 3 which is treatment lasting up to 6 months.

The most common route to admissions are via CRHTT assessment; however, other routes to admission include:

- A&E and mental health liaison assessment
- Mental health act assessment in the community
- Transfer from medical ward
- Via police (section 136- removed from public place to place of safety)

The acute ward provides:

- 24/7 nursing care and medical oversight
- Nursing observation (level depends on risk)
- Daily medical reviews

Discharge planning starts from point of admission to ensure support is in place before discharge. If residents were detained under the Mental Health Act specific section 117 aftercare planning will be in place. The aim of the acute ward is for shortest stays consistent with a safe discharge to appropriate CRHTT or secondary aftercare. Clear points of contact will be provided if difficulties recur.

Tertiary care

Tertiary care for adults provides highly specialised treatment for complex, and persistent mental illnesses. Tertiary care services deliver therapies and intensive management in inpatient or forensic settings for complex cases. It focuses on rehabilitation, managing complex needs, and preventing relapse.

Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit

Psychiatric Intensive Care Units (PICUs) are intensive care provisions provided by NSFT. PICUs provide intensive treatment for patients detained under the Mental Health Act who require a higher level of care that can't be safely provided on acute wards. PICUs available to Suffolk residents include:

- [Lark Ward](#) at the Woodlands Centre in Ipswich. Is a male only PICU offering a 24-hour service for male Suffolk residents who are referred.
- [Rollesby Ward](#) in Norfolk (Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich). Is a female only PICU offering a 24-hour service for female Suffolk residents who are referred.

Discharge planning starts from point of admission to ensure support is in place before discharge. If residents were detained under the Mental Health Act specific section 117 aftercare planning will be in place. The aim of the PICU is for shortest stays consistent with a safe discharge to appropriate acute wards or specialist tertiary services and, less commonly, to secondary aftercare. Clear points of contact will be provided if difficulties recur.

Secure/Forensic services

Secure or forensic services are psychiatric facilities that provide secure care. Residents in need of secure care are those who have:

- Mental illness who have committed offenses (including serious offenses)
- Mental illness who pose significant risk to others
- Been subject to court orders or transferred from prison
- Been referred due to unsafe management in open psychiatric wards

These services provide:

- Psychiatric treatment in secure environment
- Risk assessment and management
- Psychological therapies
- Occupational therapy and skill development
- Education and vocational training
- Substance misuse treatment
- Physical health care

In Suffolk the following secure/forensic services are available:

- [Foxhall House](#) (St Clements Hospital, Ipswich): for males over 18 years of age who have offended or are at risk of offending and have mental illness.
- [Northside House](#) (Norwich): for males over 18 years of age. Provides admission, assessment and rehabilitation for males with mental illness requiring medium secure care, admits from prison and other medium secure units. Also supports males over 18 years of age who have offended or are at risk of offending and have mental illness.
- [Whitlingham Ward](#) (Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich): for females over 18 who have offended or are at risk of offending and have mental illness. Also provides admission, assessment and rehabilitation for females with mental illness requiring medium secure care, admits from prison and other medium secure units.

Discharge planning starts from point of admission to ensure support is in place before discharge. If residents were detained under the Mental Health Act specific section 117 aftercare planning will be in place. Forensic teams will work with housing providers and hostels, developing support plans which mitigate risk and support people with effective ongoing therapy as they move to and live in community settings. Clear points of contact will be provided if difficulties recur.

Specialist tertiary care units

Specialist tertiary care units support specific population groups with complex and severe mental health needs. Referrals can come from urgent GP or mental health liaison teams, secondary adult community services, secondary care specialist services or acute inpatient services. Residents cannot self-refer to these units.

Discharge planning starts from point of admission to ensure support is in place before discharge. The aim of these units is for shortest stays consistent with a safe discharge to appropriate acute wards or specialist secondary aftercare. Clear points of contact will be provided for if difficulties recur.

Table 8 outlines the specialist tertiary care units available for Suffolk residents.

Table 8: Specialist tertiary care units for Suffolk residents

Population group	Service description	Specific placements for Suffolk residents
Mother and Baby Units (MBU)	<p>MBUs are highly specialist inpatient units for women with severe perinatal mental illness requiring hospital admission, allowing mothers or birthing people to be admitted with their baby. These units are for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women with severe postpartum mental illness (most commonly postpartum psychosis) • Severe postnatal depression requiring hospitalisation • Severe mental illness relapse postpartum • Risk to mother or baby requiring intensive monitoring <p>MBUs allow mother or birthing person and baby to stay together supporting the maintenance of attachment and bonding. Mother or birthing person can continue to care for baby with 24/7 support. They will have access to specialist expertise in mother-baby relationships.</p>	<p>Kingfisher MBU (NSFT)</p>
Older people assessment and treatment wards	<p>Specialist older people assessment and treatment wards are inpatient units for older people with dementia and/or complex behavioural or psychiatric symptoms. These units are for residents with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD) • Aggression, agitation that cannot be managed in community/care home • Risk to self or others • Need for intensive assessment and treatment • Medication trials requiring close monitoring <p>Abbeygate assessment and treatment ward is for older people with co-existing physical mental health needs, including dementia care beds. Laurel Ward is for ongoing assessment and stabilisation for people aged 65 and over with dementia.</p> <p>Older people assessment and treatment wards provide specialist dementia nursing care in dementia-friendly environments, assessment and treatment for BPSD, medication for behavioural symptoms, therapeutic activities, physical health monitoring and care planning for discharge (usually to a care home with intensive support)</p>	<p>Abbeygate Ward (NSFT) Laurel ward (NSFT)</p>
Eating disorder specialist inpatient treatment	<p>Eating disorder specialist inpatient treatment units are for adults with severe eating disorders requiring hospital-level medical and psychiatric care. These units support conditions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anorexia nervosa (severe weight loss, medical instability) • Bulimia nervosa (severe symptoms, medical complications) • Other specified feeding or eating disorders (OSFED) <p>Inpatient treatment is usually needed when residents show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe malnutrition and medical risk (very low BMI) • Medical instability (heart rate, blood pressure, electrolytes) 	<p>Nearest available service is S3 Inpatient Eating Disorder Service at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk to life • Unable to manage in community despite intensive support • Need for re-feeding under medical supervision. 	
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Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector

This section maps Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector services available to adults in Suffolk. These services complement and integrate with public sector mental health services. Given the extensive range of available VCFSE services, these have been organised into five categories: online resources and self-help, specific population group support, suicide prevention services, practical support services and crisis support.

Online resources and self-help

Online resources and self-help services provide digital tools, information, and guided support to help adults understand, manage, and improve their general wellbeing. These services range from interactive platforms offering online support and peer communities, to educational courses, self-help programmes, apps, and information websites.

Suffolk residents can access anonymously, at any time, without requiring referral or appointment. They provide information, psychoeducational materials, peer forums, and guided self-help techniques that cover general wellbeing. However, many services in this category go beyond passive information provision to offer active, guided support including structured self-help programmes, educational courses, and peer communities.

Online resources and self-help tools primarily integrate at primary care level, providing complementary self-help, information and guidance. They are often signposted by primary and secondary care professionals but can be accessed alongside any level of care.

Residents using these resources as a first point of call may be encouraged seek statutory primary care support such as contacting their local GP or self-referring to NHS Talking Therapy if difficulties persist or worsen.

Table 9 provides a list of online resources for Suffolk residents when they have a mental health concerns.

Table 9: Online resources and self-help for Suffolk residents

Service	Description
Qwell	Qwell provides free, digital, mental health support including peer to peer networks and personal development tools for adults.
Suffolk Mind	Offers specialised training and online resources such as the Mental Health Toolkit and Kitbag. Promotes resources for managing stress and anxiety. Also offers counselling and peer group support for adults.

Practical support services

Practical support services address the social determinants of mental health- the everyday practical challenges that cause, worsen, or sustain mental health difficulties. These services help with money worries, debt, benefits, housing, employment, food insecurity, and other material needs.

Practical support services integrate across all care levels but primarily work alongside primary and secondary care support. GPs increasingly recognise that financial stress, debt, housing issues, and unemployment cause or worsen mental health difficulties. Primary care has Social Prescribing Link Workers who specifically connect patients to practical support services. Secondary care teams also commonly signpost Citizens Advice services as part of holistic care planning.

Table 10 outlines the practical support services available to Suffolk residents.

Table 10: Practical support services for Suffolk residents

Service	Description
Rethink	National mental health charity providing specialist practical advice for people with mental illness. Practical help on Mental Health Act, community care, welfare benefits, debt, criminal justice, carers' rights. Also provides emotional support and general guidance on living with mental illness, medication, and treatment.
Citizens Advice	A group of independent charities who help people in Suffolk to find a way forward. Offer confidential advice for free. Independent organisation and totally impartial. Specialist advice team can help with benefits, debt, employment, housing, family and relationships, energy advice, consumer issues and more. Can discuss face-to-face, over the phone, or utilise their online resources.
Money and Mental health	Charity dedicated to breaking the link between financial difficulty and mental health problems. Information on managing money with mental health difficulties; advice on communicating with creditors about mental health; tools, templates and guides; information on Breathing Space scheme (debt respite).
Martin Lewis's free mental health and debt guide	This is a free 44-page PDF booklet supported by Mind, Rethink, CAP UK and others, for people with mental ill-health and those caring for them. It covers how to handle debts when unwell, work with banks, free debt counselling, specific tips for bipolar disorder or depression sufferers, whether to declare a condition and more.
Ipswich Housing Action Group	Homelessness charity providing integrated emotional and practical support- explicitly recognises the link between homelessness and mental health. Offers 6-day-a-week drop-in offering emotional and practical support, advice and guidance; early morning support for rough sleepers; showers, laundry, postal address; connection to health and mental health services; emergency essentials
Suffolk Mind: Suffolk Work Well	Free employment support service specifically for people with mental health challenges. Support to gain, regain or retain employment, education or volunteering. One-to-one support from a dedicated Caseworker; Personal Wellbeing Plan identifying coping strategies for positive mental health at work; liaison with employers on reasonable adjustments; access to workshops.

Specific population group support

Specific population group support services provide mental health support tailored to the unique needs, experiences, and circumstances of particular groups of people. These services recognise that certain populations face distinct mental health challenges- whether due to their life experiences (veterans, survivors of trauma), their identity (LGBTQ+, ethnic minorities), their caring responsibilities (unpaid carers), their circumstances (refugees, rural communities), or the nature of their bereavement (suicide loss).

The defining characteristic of this category is specialisation- staff and volunteers understand the specific experiences, language, and challenges of the population they serve. Many are staffed or led by people with lived experience of that identity or circumstance.

Specific population group support services integrate across all levels of the mental health system. They mainly complement secondary level services with specialised support but may also be signposted to by primary care professionals if necessary.

Table 11 outlines the specific population group support available to Suffolk residents.

Table 11: Specific population group support for Suffolk residents

Services	Description
Suffolk Family Carers	Suffolk Family Carers supports family carers of all ages. Offering information, advice and guidance and support to maintain their own wellbeing. They also have a team dedicated to supporting people who are helping or caring for someone with mental ill-health.

Domestic Abuse Support	The Suffolk Domestic Abuse Helpline & Webchat Service is for anyone of any gender identity. It is FREE, 24/7 and will connect you straight to a domestic abuse professional. You are not alone. Call if you are a survivor of domestic abuse and need action. Call if you're concerned about a friend/family member or colleague and need advice. Call if you're a professional and need guidance.
Switchboard	Switchboard is a helpline for LGBTQ+ people. It is a safe space to discuss anything, including sexuality, gender identity, sexual health and emotional well-being.
Mindful Life Group	Mindful Life group is the UK's only non-profit organisation dedicated to older adult mental health. They offer free, clinician designed programs and are based in Suffolk.
Silver Line	Run by Age UK is a free, confidential telephone service for older people. They provide friendship, conversation and support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Suffolk Refugee Support	Suffolk Refugee Support provide an advice service covering an extensive range of issues.
YANA	YANA provides confidential support to those in agriculture and rural businesses
Lighthouse	Lighthouse is a Suffolk based charity that supports women, young people and children who are affected by domestic abuse.
Survivors in Transition	Survivors in Transition is for anyone in Suffolk over the age of 18 who has experienced sexual abuse in their childhood.
Combat Stress	Combat Stress provide support and advice to ex-service men and women.
NHS Op Courage	The Veterans Mental health and Wellbeing Service. Specialist care and support for service leavers, reservists, veterans and their families.
Bereaved by Suicide Support services	Losing someone to suicide can feel overwhelming. For anyone in Suffolk impacted by someone dying by suicide there is a free and confidential listing service.
Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership	If you believe someone may be at risk of abuse, harm or neglect, then the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership has a good guide on what to do.

Suicide prevention services

VCFSE organisations play a vital role in suicide prevention across Suffolk. VCFSE suicide prevention services complement statutory public sector provision and Suffolk Public Health initiatives by offering accessible, community-based support that reaches people who may not engage with statutory services.

Suicide prevention services provide education, training, safety planning tools, and specialist support to help prevent suicide and support those affected by it.

Suicide prevention services include free training programmes that teach people how to recognise warning signs and have supportive conversations, digital tools like safety planning apps, and specialist bereavement support for those who have lost someone to suicide. They are designed to build confidence, reduce stigma, and ensure that when someone is struggling with suicidal thoughts, there are people around them who know how to help.

These services are not a replacement for emergency services, crisis support services, or clinical mental health treatment; they provide support alongside secondary level care and those stepping down from tertiary and secondary care. If an adult is in immediate danger, has seriously harmed themselves, or someone's life is at risk, call 999.

Table 12 provides a list of examples of suicide support services for adults

Table 12: Suicide support services for adults

Services	Description
Stay alive	Stay Alive is an app full of useful information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis. You can use it if you are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide. The app includes a safety plan, customisable reasons for living and a life box where you can store photos that are important to you.
National Suicide Prevention Helpline UK	Offers a supportive listening service to anyone with thoughts of suicide. Call the National Suicide Prevention Helpline UK 6pm to midnight every day.

Suffolk has adopted a “making suicide prevention everybody’s business” approach, recognising that suicide prevention requires a whole-community response.

[LISTEN](#) is Suffolk’s own framework for starting conversations with someone who is distressed or experiencing suicidal thoughts. It was developed in 2013 by service users and staff, working with Suffolk User Forum in partnership with clinicians from NSFT and funded by Suffolk Public Health.

LISTEN challenges stigma, encourages open conversations, and provides a step-by-step guide to connect with others experiencing suicidal thoughts or distress. It has become the model for mental health crisis care in Suffolk and is endorsed by Skills for Care.

The LISTEN animation and booklet are available from [Suffolk User Forum](#). These resources are free and can be used by individuals, families, and professionals.

Suffolk Public Health have also produced a “[Making Suicide Everybody’s Business](#)” webinar series covering risk factors including relationship breakdown, poverty, substance misuse, autism, and domestic abuse.

Crisis support services

Crisis support services provide immediate, accessible support for adults experiencing acute emotional distress or mental health crisis. These services are designed to be available when someone is overwhelmed, at breaking point, experiencing suicidal thoughts, or needs urgent support outside of normal service hours.

Crisis Support services are typically available 24/7 or during extended hours, free to access, and do not require any prior relationship, referral or registration. They offer a lifeline at the moment of crisis- someone to talk to, text or chat with who can provide immediate emotional support, help the person feel less alone, and support them to stay safe.

These services are not a replacement for secondary urgent care they are complementary too and work alongside this to support any resident at any time. If someone is in immediate danger, has seriously harmed themselves, or their life is at risk, call 999.

Crisis Support services are also not designed for ongoing support with mental health difficulties- for that, adults should self-refer to primary care statutory services or appropriate VCFSE services. However, crisis services can provide a vital bridge, helping someone through an immediate crisis and then signposting them to appropriate ongoing support.

Table 13 provides a list of examples of crisis support services for adults.

Table 13: Crisis support services for Adults in Suffolk

Service	Description
Samaritans	Offer free 24/7 confidential support by calling 116123
SHOUT	24/7 free texting service from SHOUT offers trained crisis volunteers for those who feel at danger to themselves and others. Text 'SHOUT' to 85258
CALM	If resident is struggling with suicidal thoughts CALM can support. Suffolk residents can live chat, Whatsapp or phone 0800585858 from 5pm-midnight every day for support.
SANEline	SANEline is a national out-of-hours mental health helpline offering specialist emotional support, guidance and information to anyone affected by mental illness, including family, friends and carers. We are normally open every day of the year from 4pm to 10pm on 0300 304 7000, serving Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
National Suicide Prevention Helpline UK	Offers a supportive listening service to anyone with thoughts of suicide. Call 0800 689 5652 (free). Available 6pm to midnight every day.

Information and support services

The following services provide information, signposting, and advocacy support that enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of Suffolk's mental health system. These resources help service users, carers, and professionals navigate available support and ensure that service users' voices contribute to service development.

Suffolk InfoLink

[Suffolk InfoLink](#) is an online directory offering extensive web links to services, information, and support resources throughout Suffolk. This searchable database is designed for anyone concerned about their health or wellbeing, whether for themselves or someone they care about. The directory covers a wide range of mental health and wellbeing services, making it easier to find appropriate support based on individual needs and circumstances.

Suffolk User Forum

[Suffolk User Forum](#) is a user-led mental health charity that provides peer support and advocacy for people experiencing mental health difficulties. SUF ensures that service users' experiences and perspectives inform the planning and delivery of mental health services across Suffolk. The organisation maintains a comprehensive A-Z directory of support services, offering an additional resource for identifying appropriate help and support.

Suffolk Voluntary and Statutory Partnership

[Suffolk Voluntary and Statutory Partnership](#) (VASP) brings together voluntary and statutory organisations working in mental health and wellbeing across the county. The partnership provides a comprehensive weekly roundup of information on available services and support groups, helping individuals stay informed about current opportunities for support and community activities.