



Guided Self-Help and Social Prescribing

What is Guided Self-Help?

Action in Caerau & Ely (ACE) holds a contract with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to provide a free Guided Self-Help service to patients of all GP practices across East, North, South West and West Cardiff.

GP's can complete referrals for guided self-help using a referral form, signpost you or you can self-refer. If you have contacted your GP with concerns about your mental health it is usually better if your GP makes the referral as this will contain relevant information about what your GP thinks would help you. This ensures a more joined up approach towards recovery.

How does Guided Self-Help work?

The guided self-help will help identify the issues that are impacting on your mental health as well as working with you over a period of time to help and support recovery. It is important to understand that this service puts you -the patient- at the centre and in control. ACE will be at your side to help and support you.

The guided self-help that ACE provide is delivered in one to one sessions over 6 – 8 weeks. We will usually see you face to face in a GP practice or our offices. We can also provide this service via telephone or virtual online platforms. We will match you with a trained member of staff that can best support your needs.

During our first session we will talk to you about the problems you are having and support you to prioritise the things you want to resolve. We use a number of different practical guides and worksheets to help you. These were developed based on the common mental health problems identified by the Centre of Clinical Intervention and based on the principles of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).



Issues we can help you with

Assertiveness	I am not confident enough to voice my needs or opinions. I struggle to say no, I'm putting my own needs on hold to please others.
Self Esteem	I lack confidence and have negative self-belief about myself and situations. I always think things aren't going to work and have feelings of being judged by others.
Depression	I lack motivation, I feel unhappy or hopeless and don't find pleasure in things I usually enjoy. I think very negatively and may avoid situations.
Panic	I have panic attacks and suffer from physical symptoms that overwhelm me. My heart pounds, I sweat, tremble, shake which leads to an overwhelming sense of dread.
Worry	I overthink situations, I catastrophize and focus on things which are out of my control. I worry so much that this impacts on my physical health and causes extreme anxiety.
Perfectionism	I am always putting myself under unrelenting pressure to seek high standards. Nothing is ever good enough, I must do well at everything and cannot make mistakes.
Procrastination	I put things off, I struggle to complete tasks and tend to prioritise other things as a distraction.
Social Anxiety	I am terrified of social situations, this could be meeting a friend for a coffee, attending a wedding, appointments, public transport etc.
Distress Intolerance	I have harmful escape methods, I cannot tolerate or regulate my emotions. I may get very angry, very upset and these feelings are unbearable. I may use escape methods of binge eating, alcohol or drugs, self-harm, excessive sleeping, reassurance seeking and situational avoidance.
Self-Compassion	As the saying goes "you are your own worst critic". I am overly sensitive and put other people's needs first. I then turn inwards and don't like myself and believe that I don't deserve to be happy or content. I don't take any form of compliments.

As these symptoms are interlinked, at times we work on more than one guided self-help module.

The modules help you to understand the difficulties you may be having and enable you to manage your emotional symptoms. Our trained staff will help guide you through the self-help to provide you with skills and techniques with the hope that you can cope differently and positively manage these difficult situations.

Other Support

There are many things that impact on your mental health and when these become difficult to cope with we often ask to see our GP. In order to resolve these difficulties the practical problems have to also be dealt with. Therefore alongside the guided self-help we will also provide assistance with practical problems which will include signposting or referring you to other agencies and services that can help you. These may be; debt, employment, careers, housing, relationships, addictions etc. This is often called 'social prescribing' this has been part of our service for many years and therefore have excellent links with local services and outcomes achieved.

Frequently Asked Questions

“Will this be confidential?”

Yes, we work in line with a confidentiality policy, we will only breach confidentiality if we believe you or someone linked to you may be at risk.

“Is this group work?”

No, these are one to one sessions.

“Is this instead of medication?”

No, if your GP has prescribed you medication you should continue to take this and discuss your options with your GP.

“What if I don't want to complete the guided self-help?”

We would offer you practical and emotional support and look for other more appropriate services for you.

“Will you share information with my GP?”

If you have agreed to share information we will provide the GP with an update, this will include sessions attended and any relevant information. We would encourage you to make contact with your GP if your condition gets worse or doesn't improve.

“Are there other options you can offer me?”

We also provide online group sessions called Stress Control & Action for Living which many people find helpful – often after they have completed the guided self-help. Currently these sessions are offered online. In addition we offer lots of different types of support and advice and other services that may be able to help you – have a look at our website or the Stepiau website for more information

How can I find out more information?

Speak to your GP or phone Action in Caerau & Ely (ACE) during office hours on 02920 003132

Websites:

www.aceplace.org or www.stepiau.org

You can also follow us on Facebook by searching 'ACE – Action in Caerau & Ely' and Twitter @elycaerau