

South London Listens

Be Well Hubs Guide

Supporting wellbeing and promoting better mental health in our communities



Working together to promote recovery and prevent a mental ill-health crisis as result of the impact of Covid-19.

South London Listens is a partnership between NHS, local authorities and the community.

For more information visit: www.southlondonlistens.org

citizensuk

Be Well Hubs

Supporting wellbeing and tackling mental ill-health

This document will tell you everything you need to know about how your organisation can become a Be Well Church/Mosque/School/Community Group.

Be Well Hubs: Meaning • Connection • Action

‘I came away feeling hopeful, and I came away feeling connected. I’m learning that I’m not alone, that others share my story, that I share their story’,

J from Lewisham Citizens on her experience of practising listening

Community organisations are often the **first port of call** for people, so if we can support their mental health it makes a big difference.

Rachel Perrera Mitcham Parish Church, Merton

Organisations like ours play an essential role in showing people that they are not walking alone. Through this initiative, we will continue to make sure our members feel supported, listened to and connected to others.

Felicia Apata, Creating Ground, Greenwich

I believe the schools have a really important role to play in supporting mental health. I was part of creating a Mental Health Schools Charter, which helps schools become places where mental health is talked about and wellbeing is promoted. Through the Be Well Hubs initiative we can extend this work.

James Potter, Chaplain Wimbledon College, Merton

As we have listened to people across south London, we have heard powerful stories. Every person and family has been like a Pandora’s box. When you hear their stories, the box opens up and you see all the challenges they are dealing with.

Martha Cadena, Empoderando Familias, Southwark

In south London we have come together and made each other stronger. **If you go alone, you don’t go far. But if you go with people, you can go further.** This is why relationships are so important, they are the building blocks for community and for creating change.

Ijeoma Nnadi, Creating Ground, Greenwich

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Be Well Hubs - where did the idea come from?

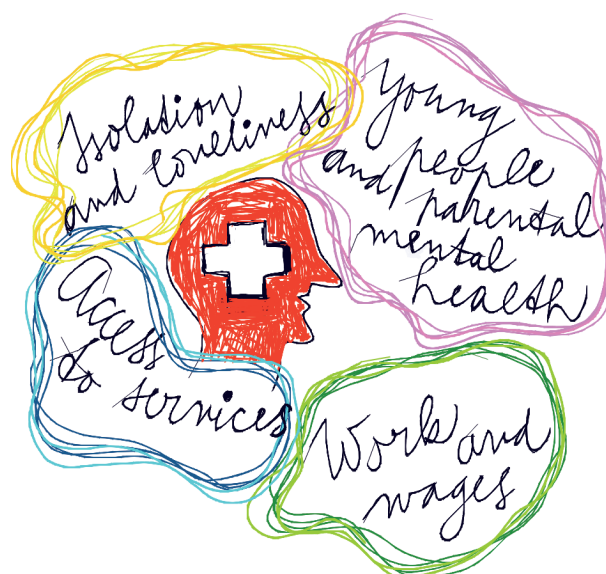
Covid-19 has upended life as we know it. The mental health of many people has been impacted directly by the pandemic, whether through the virus itself, the impact on jobs or the barriers it has created, or made worse, making it more difficult for communities to come together.

Recognising the deep psychological fallout of the pandemic, mental health trusts, local authorities and Citizens UK set up a proactive response to prevent a mental ill-health crisis. Over 6,000 people from a diverse array of communities have helped shape this work which is called South London Listens. It is an urgent mental ill-health prevention response to promote recovery for our communities based on what people told us matters most to them. By working together, we can prevent people's lives being affected by mental ill-health.

South London Listens is a collaboration between Citizens UK, the three NHS mental health trusts (South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust and South West London and St. George's Mental Health Trust), local authorities, and the NHS Integrated Care Systems across south east and south west London.

The Be well hubs initiative is about getting people connected to each other and to the right services. This means strengthening both the relationships in existing community institutions themselves – whether it is in a school, place of worship, or simply somewhere people gather – as well as the relationship between these places and their local statutory health services and local government.

The initial vision - born out of South London community leaders listening to their communities - was for nobody to be more than 10 minutes away from being connected to someone who can help them with their mental health. You can help us to realise this bold ambition by making your community institution a Be Well Hub today.



While people often say I can't talk right now, what they really mean is I can't listen right now.

Kate Murphy



Community leaders across south London listened face-to-face (or rather screen to screen) to 6,000 people. In countless listening circles and 1-2-1 meetings, they unearthed stories related to the pandemic that were putting serious additional pressure on people's wellbeing: from poor housing to insecure work, and the hostile environment to a crippling sense of loneliness and isolation. We didn't just want to admire the problem - after all it doesn't take a genius to realise that these problems existed - but we wanted to make tangible suggestions of action that our NHS mental health trusts could take to make meaningful change. We also wanted to listen to our communities to find leaders that want to play their part in making change happen. You can see a video about our South London Listens works here: <https://bit.ly/3Cfy9n>

This initiative isn't just about citizens asking the system to do more, or act differently - although we did and you can see the proposals we made at www.southlondonlistens.org - it is also about civil society stepping up and supporting where the system is struggling. We all have a responsibility to ensure our communities are strong and resilient. Be Well Hubs are civil society's chance to say we are committed to the wellbeing of those we already connect to as part of our organisation and we also want to let others know we are here to help. Be Well Hubs can never replace or play the role that our NHS mental health trusts have in delivering services or supporting the most unwell but we can absolutely play our part in helping to signpost people and making sure they keep connected.

Watch some of the community leaders at the June 2021 Summit speaking about why Be Well Hubs are so important <https://bit.ly/3tAJD06>

Be Well Hubs across south London will continue to listen and act in order to help strengthen our communities.

What is a Be Well Hub?

Be Well Hubs will help to promote recovery in our communities. The Hubs' main purposes are to de-stigmatise mental health, to use community organising principles to build strong relationships, and to organise leaders to listen and take action on the barriers and systemic problems impacting people's mental health.



The idea is to continue the form of deep listening in communities that has led to powerful change so far through South London Listens. Community institutions will be trained and supported to run

monthly listening circles where they can signpost those in need to services, and use their collective voice to call on decision makers to address the causes of mental ill-health, working with us to find new and innovative ways of making our mental health services even better.



Watch this short video to find out more about Be Well Hubs

If you are a member of a faith group, school or community organisation you can become a Be Well Hub. You have to commit to:

Building relationships and providing a place to talk:

- 1. Combating stigma surrounding mental health by holding listening circle meetings and/or creating opportunities for people to come and speak openly about their mental health:** these could be in the form of pre-existing gatherings (e.g. coffee mornings, lunch clubs, drop-ins, activity groups, services) but will be required to include focused time on wellbeing and mental health, occurring on a regular basis (monthly conversations).
- 2. Regular listening** to the pressures on members' mental health and barriers to accessing services, focusing on listening rather than advising. Helping to connect people together with services or other groups for support.

Offering practical support to your members:

- 3. Train members as Be Well Champions;** aiming to get three to five members committed to attend the training outlined below.
- 4. Provide information, resources and signposting to mental health support,** with people in your organisation that have awareness of mental health and knowledge of the support/services available locally. This could also involve an updated notice board, space on your website and a designated member of staff or volunteer with responsibility for the upkeep of this area and information.
- 5. Build a relationship with your local mental health trust:** this will involve a designated point of contact in your organisation and supervision meetings with their local trust in order to receive advice and support.

Taking action with the wider community:

- 6. Identify and take action with Citizens UK to reduce the causes of mental ill-health and promote access to mental health services,** feeding back recurrent mental health issues in your community to the mental health trusts and helping to ensure people are engaged in developing and shaping the solutions.

To be eligible to become a Be Well Hub you need to:

- Be based in south London and/or show that members/service users of your organisation have a stake in the mental health services of one of the following: South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust, Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust.
- Commit to fulfilling all of the Be Well core principles (as above)
- Have robust safeguarding policy procedures in place, which will be reviewed by the NHS safeguarding leads, and to be able to share these on request.
- Commit to undertaking the necessary responsibilities of making your organisation a Be Well Hub for a minimum of one year.

To become a Be Well Hub you will need to complete a short application form:



What is a Be Well Champion?

A Be Well Champion is an individual who attends the designated training sessions (below) and is working with their organisation to set up a Be Well Hub. If you are an individual and not connected to or affiliated with an organisation you can still join our mental health training and will be able to join our mailing list as a mental health activist.

What support you will get?

Once your application has been approved you will need to attend the following training:

1. Mental Health Awareness / Active Listening Training
2. 'How to become a Be Well Hub' Workshop

Upon successfully completing the training you will be connected with a local Citizens UK organiser and invited to group supervision sessions at least six times a year with the NHS mental health trusts. These sessions are set up as a space to reflect and learn together as we set up Be Well Hubs. We will develop a program of support through these sessions based on your needs.

About the training

Through training and support from the NHS mental health trusts and Citizens UK, we aim to continue listening, organising and acting on issues relating to people's mental health and wellbeing. We enable more communities to foster a positive environment where mental health can be more openly discussed and services signposted.

By teaching the core elements of community organising we ensure communities can take action to address the root causes of mental ill-health. And, by providing basic mental health awareness training, we ensure Be Well Champions can have confident and supportive conversations in their communities.

The training to become a Be Well Hub is delivered in two parts. The first is delivered by South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust's expert Mental Health Promotion team, and is the same training that Be Well Champions receive.

This covers the following:

1. The role of a Be Well Champion and setting boundaries
2. Basic Mental Health awareness
3. Active listening skills and signposting
4. Safeguarding

The second part of the training is delivered by Citizens UK and covers the practicalities of becoming a Be Well Hub, as well as introducing core elements of community organising. This includes:

1. What is a Be Well Hub?
2. Building a relational culture
3. How to listen effectively in your community
4. Building your Be Well Hub team

It does not matter which order you take the two parts of the training. Once you have done your training you can begin the process to be recognised as a Be Well Hub.

About the supervision:

The supervision will be provided by expert practitioners at South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and will be an opportunity for support and ongoing training. It will also be a space in which we can share our learning and challenges. The first meeting will be used to get feedback on what additional training and support might be needed. We will then build supervision around the needs of the group getting input and support from relevant experts and speakers.

To be recognised as a Be Well Hub, organisations must:

- Attend the two training sessions outlined above.
- Have a named person responsible for helping to develop your Be Well Hub.
- Have a named team of people working with the main point of contact. For Be Well Hubs to be successful you will need teams of people feeling connected and supported to do this work. We suggest you have at least three to five people on your team.
- Demonstrate on the 'Be Well Hub plan' form how you will fulfil the six core elements of becoming a Hub.
- At least one member of your Be Well Hub team must be in attendance of each supervision session (If you are a school/mental health service and are already undertaking some form of clinical supervision we can have a further conversation about what attendance would look like).
- Ensure your safeguarding is in place and approved by the NHS safeguarding lead.
- Have fun and celebrate your success.

To continue to be a part of the initiative at the end of your first year you will have to fill out a short form to demonstrate that you are living out the core commitments.

Your Be Well Hub plan will be reviewed by a panel made up of Citizens UK and South London Listens partners. You will hear back within 30 days of submitting your form and may be asked to have a further conversation about your Be Well Hub plan. Once we confirm that you have met the requirements we will provide you with access to the supervisions and a sticker to put on a door or a window in your building. We will also register you on the southlondonlistens.org website to celebrate and recognise your organisation.

If after year one you do not fill out your form to demonstrate your ongoing commitment to the initiative we will ask you to take your sticker down and will remove you from the website.

What are the benefits of becoming a Be Well Hub

Many organisations in civil society are already beginning to do the important work of de-stigmatising mental health. Becoming a part of the Be Well hubs initiative will give you access to the support, tools and network of people to help you do it better. Specifically being a part of this initiative will give you:

1. Access to training from the mental health trust in understanding mental ill-health, equipping you and others in your community to support and sign post people more effectively.
2. Access to community organising training which will help you to tackle the systemic problems causing mental ill-health in the first place. Our organising training will also help you to build the capacity in your own organisation to tackle mental ill-health.
3. Access to supervision from the mental health trusts to help you develop good practices in your organisation.
4. Access to a network of other organisations also wanting to make change in this area that you can learn from.
5. Recognition for your organisation that you are taking mental health and wellbeing seriously. Once you are given your Be Well Hub sticker you will be listed on our website.

Remind me what steps I need to take

- Check the eligibility criteria and fill out the 'Becoming a Be Well Hub' form: <https://bit.ly/3HME5W7>.
- Attend the training.
- Fill out your Be Well Hub plan (ask for help at any point) and send it to rory.morgan@citizensuk.org or post it FAO Rory Morgan 136 Cavell Street, E1 2JA.
- Once you have been recognised as a hub put your Be Well Hub sticker in your window or somewhere prominent.
- Get going and start promoting your Be Well Hub to your local community.



Watch this short video to find out more about Be Well Hubs



To become a Be Well Hub you will need to complete a short application form

The steps to take to make your Be Well Hub happen:

Step 1:

Who do you think should be in your core team to start your Be Well Hub?

Step 2:

Write down the current/potential barriers for your organisation to fulfil the core elements and becoming a Be Well Hub

Step 3:

Consider what new or existing opportunities are there to incorporate 1-2-1's and house meetings in your organisation's current work/activities

Step 4:

Look at the core elements and agree how they will work in the context of your organisation

Be Well Hub action plan

(Insert your organisation's name) Be Well Hub

for example: Be Well St Mary's Primary

Name:

School/Faith Institution/Community Group/Other

delete as appropriate

You can use this sheet to record your action plan for developing a Be Well Hub in your institution. We suggest returning to this document with others in your institution to collaborate on this work and update your plan.

Questions to think about once you have brainstormed the steps:

Do you need further support to make these plans happen?

Is there a priority audience in your hub?

How do you want to promote and launch your hub?

Core elements of a Be Well Hub:

Commit to building relationships and providing a place to talk:

1. Commit to combating stigma surrounding mental health.
2. Hosting regular listening opportunities.

Offer practical support to members:

3. Train members as Mental Health champions.
4. Provide information, resources and signpost to mental health support.
5. Build a relationship with their local mental health trust.

Take action with the wider community:

6. Identify and take action to reduce the causes of mental ill-health.

