**Exchange House Ireland National Traveller Mental Health Service**

**Service offering during Covid 19 crisis.**

During the current Covid 19 National Emergency the aim of Exchange House Ireland National Traveller Mental Health Service is to provide the fullest service possible with complete respect and commitment to Irish Government Guidance on the prevention of this disease;

Restrictions currently in place;

* All face to face group & 1:1 services with clients have been suspended until further government guidance is issued (earliest possible resumption 29th March 2020, however this will most likely be extended).
* National programme development and partnership working similarly differed or transferred to online conference style meetings e.g. Perinatal Mental Health Project, Midlands Community Development & Mental Health Programme etc.
* Duty system is strictly now over the phone and all client entry to EHINTS building has been suspended

Table 1. Outline of current services being offered

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| **NTMHS Supports** | **Service provided** | **Action/s** | **Outcomes** |
| 1:1 over the phone client supports | * Duty system * All clients considered vulnerable/at risk to receive regular contact by phone/text * Family Support & Counselling * Cognitive Behavioural Therapy * Mental Health Social Worker | EHINTS Duty system available through the organisations main telephone line. Clients can phone in to the organisations main telephone line, access supports and sign posting to the relevant internal services in a fast and efficient manner. Free service offering includes mental health support, addiction counselling, Family support & counselling, crisis intervention and CBT.  “Check in” support and advice regarding current Covid 19 guidance given to clients and their families.  Existing clients receiving counselling, CBT, Addiction support or family support will be offered appointments over the phone.  New client referrals will be allocated as per existing EHINTS duty protocol and over the phone/online counselling or text support will be offered if appropriate.  All housing and accommodation advocacy requests will be dealt with by EHINTS Social Workers and where it is deemed necessary the Mental Health Social Worker will be allocated relevant cases | If further service is needed after initial contact all clients are allocated a key worker/councillor with 5 working days of making initial call.  20 service calls per day made to at risk/highly vulnerable clients |
| Group supports | * Online video conferencing * Group messaging communications | * Zoom video conferencing is being used to facilitate the continuation of the EHI Creative Arts & Mental Health Support Group * Whats app groups currently being used to offer group support and communicate important Irish Gov Guidance on the pandemic and disease prevention | * 8 Traveller participants currently taking part in weekly zoom meetings for Creative arts. projects. Monologue performances currently being created and practiced * The NTMHS staff are currently administering 8 Whats App groups with a total of 129 participants on all receiving regular mental health support, Covid 19 text updates and group support |
| Exceptional circumstance outreach supplies provision | Where it is felt a client is at risk of social isolation and unable to obtain basic needs e.g. medicine, food etc allocated EHI staff can make an exceptional visit to provide client with needs | * This visit will be risk assessed and all precautions will be made to ensure social distancing is adhered to | * This service will be delivered on exceptional circumstances with no more the 3-5 cases predicted per week |
| Social Media | Social media Output | * Daily content creation and posting on social media to prevent Covid 19 and promote positive mental health in the Traveller community. * Promotion of other local and national mental health and suicide prevention services where necessary e.g. Pieta House, Samaritans and Turn2me * Travellers Together Preventing Suicide (TTPS)Facebook page is also being used to upload Covid 19 updates | * Likes, shares, comments and views will be used to monitor effectiveness * Number of service users signposted to other services recorded * TTPS site has over 400 likes |

Table 2, Community and Project Work (National & Local)

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| **Working Projects throughout Covid 19 crisis** | **Activities** | **Staffing** |
| Midlands Community Development | The following will be coordinated by emails and if necessary a conference call will be facilitated with partner organisations and relevant stakeholders;  -Approval of Terms of References  -Programme content and delivery proposal (from NUIG-CAN)  -Budget proposal  -Other updates – ie information from Social Welfare | Training & Education Coordinators  Service Manager |
| Limerick Travellers | -Funding applications/ proposals for the women’s group  -Preparation next phase of women’s programme:   * Contact possible speakers – Sindy Joyce, Galway TM, Cork women’s network, etc.   -Bigger picture: Traveller Community Development in Limerick  -Application for European Social Catalyst Fund closing on 15th April, re feasibility for Traveller Mental Health Hub  -Email projects re potential men’s group visits or meeting with e.g.   * + Galway Enterprise programme   + Clondalkin bicycle workshop   + Tipperary Horse Ownership association   + Longford – woman that breeds cobs/ wheel project??   + Waterford mobile forge | Training & Education Coordinators  Service Manager |
| Creative Arts Group | A short film was to be created by March 31st. With the group no longer to meet at weekly sessions the participants have agreed to meet via video conference portal Zoom. Acting coach from “Super Paua” will be facilitating monologue & Bio sessions with the group online | Men’s Mental Health Worker |
| Perinatal Mental Health Group | Steering committee will meet for the first time on March 25th with a conference call via platform Zoom used to host. The group aims and objectives will be discussed with the Comms Dept in Rotunda Hospital committed to assisting with an online social marketing strategy | Service Manager  Mental Health Social Worker |
| National Traveller Sport & Mental Health Initiative | Online video conference will take place with Sport Ireland 24th March to discuss developing a Traveller in sport and mental health initiative | Men’s Mental Health Worker supported by service manager |
| Linking with local and national Traveller organisations to | Support and advice is being offered by way of email and phone calls to 45 Traveller organisations.  Information is being distributed regarding self-isolation, transport and isolation hubs for people who contract the disease | Service Manager |
| Best Practice Guidance for Suicide Prevention | Internal training and delegation of themes to staff with review to commence immediately | NTMHS and HR Manager  Men’s Mental Health Worker  Mental Health Social Worker  Training & Education Coordinator  Family Support Councillor |