

### 1-Access to Counselling & Talking Therapies?

# Welcome to North London Talking Therapies

Talking therapies services offer free, confidential help for problems such as stress, anxiety, depression and insomnia.

We provide cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), counselling, other therapies and guided self-help across North London.

You can find out more about talking therapies, and self-refer if needed, by visiting the links below.

To fast-track counselling in the North London NHS Foundation Trust area, self-refer to [Camden and Islington NHS Talking Therapies](#) online or call 020 3317 6670 (Camden) / 020 3317 7252 (Islington). For urgent crisis, call 111 (select option 2) for Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, or 0800 917 3333 for Camden/Islington. For specialized, rapid-deterioration cases, a clinician must complete the NHS CHC fast-track tool.

### 2-Fast-tracking to counselling – how to go about it?



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#### How to Fast-Track Counselling in North London

- **NHS Talking Therapies (Camden & Islington):**
  - **Self-Referral:** The fastest method is to complete the online self-referral form on the [Camden and Islington NHS Talking Therapies website](#).
  - **Phone Referral:** Call 020 3317 6670 (Camden) or 020 3317 7252 (Islington).
  - **GP Referral:** Ask your GP to refer you, as they can directly email referrals to `nlft.icopecamden.referrals@nhs.net` or `nlft.icopeislington.referrals@nhs.net`.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Urgent Mental Health Help (Crisis):**
  - **Barnet, Enfield, Haringey:** Call NHS 111 and select option 2 to reach the Crisis Telephone Service.
  - **Camden or Islington:** Call the Crisis Single Point of Access team on 0800 917 3333.
  - **Availability:** These services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and offer triage within 24 hours.
- **Specialist/Maternal Mental Health (Maple Service):**
  - For the Maple Service (perinatal), referrals can be made by professionals (GPs, midwives) via [nlft.NCL.perinatal@nhs.net](mailto:nlft.NCL.perinatal@nhs.net).
  - Self-referrals are possible by calling the team to request a form.
  - Initial assessments are aimed to be offered within four weeks.
- **Fast-Track for Continuing Healthcare (End of Life/Rapidly Deteriorating):**
  - If a person is rapidly deteriorating and needs urgent support, a clinician (doctor, nurse) must complete the **NHS Continuing Healthcare Fast-Track Pathway Tool**. This ensures a care package can be put in place, ideally within 48 hours.
- **Wait Times & Standards:**
  - NHS England standards state 75% of patients should have a first appointment within 6 weeks, and 95% within 18 weeks.



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### Key Contact Information

- **Camden Talking Therapies:** 020 3317 6670
- **Islington Talking Therapies:** 020 3317 7252
- **Camden/Islington Crisis:** 0800 917 3333
- **Barnet/Enfield/Haringey Crisis:** 111 (option 2)



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## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

### 3-Availability of talking therapies?

<https://www.northlondonmentalhealth.nhs.uk/talking-therapies/>

Talking therapies services offer free, confidential help for problems such as stress, anxiety, depression and insomnia.

We provide cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), counselling, other therapies and guided self-help across North London.

You can find out more about talking therapies, and self-refer if needed, by visiting the links above.

### 4-What talking therapy is available to support families dealing with brain injury following a motorcycle accident?

The North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT) provides several talking therapies and psychological support services for adults and families dealing with the impact of trauma, including brain injuries from accidents.

Key Services & Therapies Available:

North London NHS Talking Therapies (formerly IAPT): Offers free, confidential support for anxiety, depression, PTSD, and stress.

Long-Term Conditions (LTC) Pathway: Specifically designed for patients with chronic physical health conditions and their families.

Treatments: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), including one-to-one or group sessions, and guided self-help.

Trauma-focused therapy: Includes Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) for PTSD.

Traumatic Stress Clinic (St Pancras Hospital): Provides evidence-based psychological treatment for PTSD resulting from multiple traumatic events, including major accidents.

Islington Survivors Trauma Service (ISTS): Offers therapeutic support for individuals and families dealing with trauma.

Neuro-rehabilitation Support: While specialized neurological care (like the ENABLE team) is often provided by partner trusts (e.g., West London NHS), the North London NHS Foundation Trust provides community rehabilitation teams that may assist with the adjustment to brain injury.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

Support for Families:

Behavioural Couples Therapy: Available to help partners deal with relationship strain.

Group Therapy: Various support groups for managing long-term, stressful life changes.

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Accessing Services:

Self-referral: Adults (18+) can self-refer to North London NHS Talking Therapies online or by phone.

GP Referral: A GP or other healthcare professional can make a referral.

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Additional Local Support:

Headway North West London: A charity providing specialist support, including local support groups and advice for brain injury survivors and their families.

Carers First: Provides one-to-one practical and emotional support for unpaid carers.

nhs.uk

### 5-How to access more support; many doors, but difficult to get answers?

For immediate mental health support in North London (Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, Camden, Islington), call [NHS 111 and select option 2](tel:111) for the 24/7 crisis line.

The [North London NHS Foundation Trust \(NLFT\)](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare-organisations/north-london-nhs-foundation-trust/) uses a Single Point of Access (SPA) for community services, aimed at streamlining referrals, which can be reached through GP, or directly for urgent cases.



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### How to Access Support & Get Answers:

- **24/7 Crisis Support:** Call 111, option 2 for mental health, which connects you to trained clinicians in Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, Camden, or Islington.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Mental Health Crisis Assessment Hubs:** For immediate in-person help, these hubs are available, such as at Goodmayes Hospital.
- **[Community Single Point of Access \(SPA\)](#):** This is designed to reduce the "many doors" problem by providing a central route for adult and older adult mental health services.
- **GP Referral:** Your GP is the primary route to access non-urgent mental health services.
- **Direct Self-Referral:** For non-crisis mental health issues, you can refer yourself to NHS talking therapies without a GP.
- **Specific Service Contacts:**
  - **Barnet, Enfield, Haringey (BEH) Switchboard:** 020 8702 3000.
  - **Camden and Islington (C&I) Switchboard:** 020 3317 7500.
  - **Crisis Telephone Service (C&I):** 080 0917 3333.



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### Alternative Support Resources:

- **[Samaritans](#):** 116 123 (Free, 24/7).
- **[Shout](#):** Text "SHOUT" to 85258 for text-based support.
- **[Crisis Cafes](#):** Local safe spaces for immediate distress support.



If you are struggling to get answers, the SPA and NHS 111 are designed to navigate the system for you.



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## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

### 6-How to get help with mental health problems when you feel unable to ask?

<https://www.northlondonmentalhealth.nhs.uk/urgent-help/>

## Urgent help



Anyone in crisis, including children, or concerned family members can now call 111, choose the mental health option (option 2), and talk to a trained mental health professional. The line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

If someone you know is experiencing mental health difficulties, you should speak to their GP first.

They will be able to advise you on different ways to provide treatment or refer them to one of our services. There are also lots of charity support lines you can call for help and support.

Experiencing mental health difficulties can be hard to understand. There is a lot of information available for those with a mental illness and their families and carers.

If you are known to a service in Camden and Islington and need mental health support, call our mental health crisis line on **080 0917 3333**.

Our Crisis Telephone Service are a team of trained mental health advisors and clinicians who provide help or advice in a crisis, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

When you cannot directly ask for mental health help, you can use discreet methods like self-referral to NHS talking therapies, texting "SHOUT" to 85258, calling the Samaritans at 116 123, or emailing a GP for an appointment. Emergency help is available 24/7 by calling 111 or 999.

### Discreet Ways to Access Help

- **[Self-Referral to NHS Talking Therapies](#)**: You can access support for anxiety and depression without a GP referral.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- [Text/Helplines](#): Text SHOUT to 85258 for 24/7, confidential, silent text support.
- [Samaritans](#): Call 116 123 anytime, or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org).
- [GP Email/Online Services](#): Many GP surgeries allow you to request appointments or describe symptoms via their website or email, reducing the need for direct verbal communication.
- [University/Workplace Support](#): Check if your school or employer has student support services or an occupational health team.

### If You Cannot Speak to Anyone

- [Write it Down](#): Write a list of symptoms, or a note to give to a trusted person (doctor, family member, friend) that says, "I am struggling with my mental health and need help".
- [Digital Tools](#): Use NHS-approved apps or websites like [Every Mind Matters](#) for self-help resources.



[nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

### If You Are in Crisis

- [Call 111](#): [NHS 111](#) is available 24/7 for urgent mental health support.
- [Call 999](#): If you are in immediate danger, call 999 or go to A&E.

### Self-Care Steps

- [Routine](#): Focus on small routines like getting enough sleep, eating regular meals, and taking a short walk.
- [Reduce Pressure](#): Limit demands on yourself and focus only on essential daily tasks.



## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

### 7-What support is offered for mental health?

The North London NHS Foundation Trust offers comprehensive mental health support across Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, and Islington for adults (18+). Services include 24/7 crisis support (via NHS 111, option 2), community mental health teams, psychological therapies (CBT, counselling), inpatient care, and specialized support for addictions, dementia, and complex emotional needs.



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#### Key support services provided:

- **Crisis and Urgent Care**: 24/7 Crisis Telephone Service and Crisis Resolution/Home Treatment Teams for immediate support.
- **Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT)**: Support for severe mental health issues, including assessment, medication management, and social support.
- **NHS Talking Therapies**: Free, confidential treatment for anxiety, depression, and stress, including CBT, guided self-help, and workshops.
- **Specialist Services**: Support for complex emotional needs (personality disorders), older adults (memory services), addiction, and forensic mental health.
- **Wellbeing and Recovery**: Recovery colleges, peer support, and employment support to aid recovery.
- **Local Voluntary Partnerships**: Collaboration with organizations like Mind in Camden and Haringey for counselling and community support.

#### Accessing Services:

- **Self-referral**: Available for some services like Talking Therapies.
- **GP Referral**: Recommended for accessing core community mental health teams.
- **Urgent Help**: Call 111 and select option 2 for mental health crisis

### 8-When Talking Therapy Is Not Enough?

When talking therapy isn't enough, it may be due to a poor therapist fit, lack of progress, or deeper issues requiring a holistic approach. Signs include feeling worse, no improvement, or dreading sessions. Beyond talk therapy, options include medication, somatic (body-based) therapies, group therapy, or changing techniques.

#### Signs That Talking Therapy Is Not Enough

- **No Progress:** You have been in therapy for a while but are not seeing improvements in symptoms.
- **Feeling Worse:** Instead of healing, you feel more overwhelmed, hopeless, or distressed.
- **Therapeutic Mismatch:** You do not feel a connection, trust, or "click" with your therapist.
- **Unclear Goals:** Therapy feels directionless, lacking structure or measurable goals.
- **Lack of Action:** You discuss issues but struggle to apply new skills in your daily life.

#### What to Do Next

- **Switch Modalities:** Explore body-oriented therapies like [EMDR](#) (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), [somatic experiencing](#), neurofeedback, or creative therapies (art/dance).
- **Combine Approaches:** Consult a psychiatrist or doctor to discuss if [medication management](#) is needed alongside therapy.
- **Change Therapists or Type of Therapy:** Interview new therapists or consider a different form of talk therapy (e.g., switching from psychoanalysis to CBT).
- **Try Group or Family Therapy:** Group therapy can offer a different, community-based perspective.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Focus on Lifestyle:** Incorporate brain-healthy habits, such as improved nutrition, exercise, and sleep.
- **Provide Direct Feedback:** Tell your therapist what is not working. They may be able to adjust their approach.

If you are experiencing severe, chronic, or treatment-resistant issues, it is important to seek a higher level of care.

### 9-What support is available when talking therapies are not enough and more specialist or supported interventions are needed?

When talking therapies (such as those provided by IAPT/NHS Talking Therapies) are not enough, the **North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT)**—formed by the merger of Camden & Islington and Barnet, Enfield & Haringey trusts—provides a range of secondary and specialist mental health services for complex needs. These services are designed for individuals with severe, enduring, or complex conditions that require multi-disciplinary care.



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## 1. Assessment and Initial Support

- **Assessment Services (e.g., Barnet Assessment Service):** If Talking Therapies cannot meet your needs, you may be referred for a specialist assessment to determine the right, more intensive, care pathway.
- **Community Core Teams:** These teams, operational in boroughs like Islington, provide specialized support for severe, long-term, or complex conditions, including psychiatry, social work, and nursing.



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## 2. Specialist Mental Health Services

If you have complex needs, you may be referred to one of the following specialist services:

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Complex Depression, Anxiety, and Trauma Service (CDAT):** A service providing multi-professional help, including specialized psychotherapy and, for some, medication review, for those with complex problems that cannot be managed in primary care.
- **Complex Emotional Needs Pathway (CEN):** Located at the Springwell Centre (Barnet), this team supports people with severe, complex emotional difficulties or "personality disorder" diagnoses. Interventions include **Mentalization Based Treatment (MBT)**, structured clinical management, and, for young adults, specialised support.
- **Adult ADHD Clinic:** Provides specialist assessment and pharmacological treatment for adults (18+) in Barnet, Enfield, or Haringey, including an ADHD life skills group.
- **Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service:** Supports women, birthing people, and their partners with severe mental illnesses (e.g., bipolar disorder, schizophrenia) during pregnancy or up to 24 months after birth.
- **Forensic Services (North London Forensic Service):** Provides secure inpatient care and community support for people with mental illness who are under the care of forensic services, based at Chase Farm Hospital.
- **Eating Disorders Service:** A national specialist centre at St Ann's Hospital for adults with conditions like Anorexia or Bulimia Nervosa.



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### 3. Intensive Rehabilitation and Acute Care

- **Aberdeen Park Service:** Provides 24-hour, intensive, inpatient rehabilitation support for people with complex psychosis.
- **Community Rehabilitation Teams:** Support individuals with moderate to severe mental health difficulties (primarily psychosis) living in supported accommodation to build independence.
- **Crisis Services (24/7):** For urgent, immediate risk, the Trust operates a 24/7 Single Point of Access and Crisis Resolution Teams. The **MHCAS at St Pancras Hospital** provides 24/7 specialist assessment away from A&E.



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### 4. How to Access These Services

- **GP Referral:** Your GP or existing care team is the primary route to these services. They can refer you to the appropriate specialist team if your needs exceed primary care capacity.
- **Self-Referral for Specific Services:** Some services, like the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service, accept self-referrals.
- **Crisis Hotline:** For immediate help, contact the 24/7 crisis line (0800 917 3333 for Camden/Islington, 0800 151 0023 for Barnet/Enfield/Haringey).



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*Note: The North London NHS Foundation Trust covers the five boroughs of **Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, and Islington.***



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### 10- What happens if individuals are expected to arrange this themselves but are unable to do so?

If individuals are expected to arrange their own care or services at a North London NHS Foundation trust but are unable to do so, they can be supported by the Trust to make decisions, or, if they lack mental capacity, decisions will be made in their "best interests" under the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#). The trust must first make every effort to enable the person to act for themselves.

Legislation.gov.uk

If the individual cannot arrange the necessary care due to a lack of mental capacity (due to illness, injury, or disability), the NHS trust must follow specific procedures:

- **Best Interests Decision:** Staff will make decisions in the person's best interests, ensuring the action is the least restrictive option.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Capacity Assessment:** A formal assessment will be conducted to determine if the person is truly unable to make the specific decision at that time.
- **Support & Advocacy:** The trust is required to provide support to help the person communicate their wishes.
- **Involvement of Others:** If the person lacks capacity, the trust will involve family, carers, or an independent mental capacity advocate (IMCA) to determine the best course of action.

If the inability to arrange care is due to other factors (e.g., physical disability, lack of resources), the trust should provide social work support or referrals to local authority social services to arrange necessary care.

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Legislation.gov.uk

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

If the inability to arrange care is due to other factors (e.g., physical disability, lack of resources), the trust should provide social work support or referrals to local authority social services to arrange necessary care.

If individuals are expected to arrange services (such as social care, benefits, or legal affairs) themselves but are unable to do so, legal frameworks—specifically the **Mental Capacity Act 2005** in the UK—ensure that they are not abandoned. Instead, the responsibility shifts to others to act in their "best interests".



GOV.UK

Here is what happens when someone cannot arrange services themselves:

### 1. Shift to "Best Interests" Decision-Making

If a person cannot manage their own affairs due to a lack of mental capacity (e.g., dementia, brain injury, severe learning disability), others must step in to make decisions.

- **Carers and Professionals:** For day-to-day decisions, family, friends, or care professionals (social workers, doctors) can make decisions in the person's best interests without a court order.
- **Best Interests Checklist:** Anyone acting for a person without capacity must follow a strict code of practice, considering the person's past wishes, beliefs, and values.

### 2. Legal Protections and Support

- **Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA):** If someone lacks capacity and has no family or friends to support them, the local authority must appoint an IMCA to represent them regarding serious decisions, such as a change of accommodation or serious medical treatment.
- **Independent Advocacy:** Under the Care Act, individuals with "substantial difficulty" in arranging their own care (even if they have some capacity) are entitled to an advocate to help them.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Appointees for Benefits:** If someone cannot manage their benefits, the [Department for Work and Pensions \(DWP\)](#) can appoint a person or organization to manage these payments on their behalf.



Citizens Advice

### 3. Legal Mechanisms for Long-Term Support

If the inability to manage affairs is long-term, more formal legal structures are used:

- **Deputyship:** If no Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) was set up before a person lost capacity, someone can apply to the Court of Protection to become a "deputy" to manage property, finances, or personal welfare.
- **Court of Protection:** In cases of disagreement or serious disputes regarding a person's care, the Court of Protection can make binding decisions.



The House of Commons Library

### 4. Responsibilities of Local Authorities

- **Duty of Care:** The local authority remains responsible for ensuring a person's eligible needs are met, even if the person is using a direct payment system to manage their own care.
- **Brokerage Support:** Some local authorities provide "brokerage" services, which help people identify and secure care providers.
- **Safeguarding:** If the failure to arrange care is leading to "self-neglect" or risk of harm, local authorities must take action, including conducting assessments to ensure the person is safe.

### Summary of Consequences

If an individual is unable to manage, the system must shift from **self-arrangement** to **supported or substituted decision-making** to prevent neglect, abuse, or dangerous situations.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

### 11-Mental Health Crisis Support?

Immediate mental health crisis support is available 24/7 through several free, confidential services. Key UK resources include calling 111 (NHS) and selecting the mental health option, calling Samaritans at 116 123, or texting "Shout" to 85258. For life-threatening emergencies, call 999 or go to the nearest A&E.

### UK Emergency and Crisis Support

- **NHS Mental Health Service:** Call 111 (option 2) for urgent, 24/7 mental health professional support.
- **[Samaritans](#):** Call 116 123 anytime for free, confidential, 24/7 support.
- **[Shout](#):** Text "Shout" to 85258 for 24/7 text-based support.
- **[CALM](#):** 0800 58 58 58 (for men), 5 pm–midnight.
- **[Stay Alive App](#):** A suicide prevention resource tool.

### Immediate Safety

- If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**.
- Go to the nearest Accident and Emergency (A&E) department.

Islington Council

### Support for Specific Groups

- **Young People (under 35):** Call Papyrus HOPELINE247 at 0800 068 4141 or text 07860 039967.
- **Young People (London/Camden):** Use [Kooth](#) for online, confidential counselling.

East Hampshire District Council

### How to Support Someone Else

- Listen without judgment.
- Avoid confrontation.
- Ask what would help them and encourage them to contact professional services.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

Mental Health Foundation

For US-based crises, call or text 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

### 12-What should I do about my mental health if I get into trouble?

If you are in a mental health crisis in North London, call [111](tel:111) and select option 2 (available 24/7) to reach [North London NHS Foundation Trust](https://www.nlft.nhs.uk/) (NLFT) crisis services. For immediate danger, call 999 or visit A&E. In Camden and Islington, call 0800 917 3333. For non-urgent support, contact your GP or self-refer to local talking therapies.



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If you get into legal or serious trouble, it is crucial to manage your mental health proactively, as the stress can exacerbate existing conditions or cause new ones. You have specific rights and access to support services designed to help you navigate this situation.

Here is what you should do:

### Immediate Actions and Support

- **Tell the Police/Legal Professionals:** If you are arrested, inform the police custody officer and your solicitor immediately about any mental health problems, vulnerabilities, or medication needs.
- **Request a Solicitor:** You have the right to free legal advice when arrested, and you can ask for a duty solicitor, who can help ensure your mental health is taken into account.
- **Liaison and Diversion Services:** Ask for a referral to NHS "Liaison and Diversion" services, which operate in police stations and courts to identify and support vulnerable people.
- **Request an "Appropriate Adult":** If you are considered "mentally vulnerable," the police should arrange for an Appropriate Adult to support you during questioning and procedures.
- **Use Emergency Resources:** If you are in immediate crisis, call 999 or go to A&E.

## **Managing Mental Health During Legal Proceedings**

- **Inform the Court:** Your solicitor can inform the court about your mental health, which may affect your bail conditions, the court process, or sentencing.
- **Medical Reports:** You, your solicitor, or the court can request a medical report from a mental health professional to consider how your condition affects your case.
- **Seek Specialist Legal Advice:** Look for solicitors specializing in mental health law if you are facing detention under the Mental Health Act (e.g., in a hospital).
- **Support Services:** Organizations like **Mind** offer legal information on mental health issues. **LawCare** provides support specifically for legal professionals or those in the legal sector.

## **Long-Term Support**

- **Contact Your GP:** Make an appointment with your GP as a matter of priority to discuss your mental health and get a referral to community mental health services.
- **Free Listening Services:** Call **Samaritans** (116 123) or text **Shout** (85258) for confidential support.
- **Mental Health Charity Support:** Contact organizations like **Rethink Mental Illness** or **Mind** for advice, advocacy, and support.

**Key Takeaway:** Do not suffer in silence; you are entitled to health support while dealing with the justice system.

*Disclaimer: This information is based on UK-specific, predominantly English and Welsh, legal and NHS guidance.*

### **13-Lack of suitable crisis beds for disabled people across boroughs?**

There is a severe, chronic shortage of suitable, accessible, and affordable crisis accommodation for disabled people across London boroughs and the UK, a situation described as a "hidden crisis". The lack of appropriate temporary accommodation

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(TA) is forcing disabled people into unsuitable, inaccessible, and unsafe conditions, with many facing long-term homelessness or being unable to live independently.

### Key Findings on the Crisis Accommodation Shortage

- **Accessible Housing Shortage:** Only 7% to 9% of homes in England have basic accessibility features. A wheelchair user joining a waiting list may wait up to 47 years for a suitable home.
- **Inadequate Temporary Accommodation:** Disabled people are significantly overrepresented in temporary accommodation (approx. 37% of users). Many are placed in accommodation lacking basic facilities like accessible bathrooms or step-free access.
- **Failed Discharge and "Bed Blocking":** Inadequate community housing and crisis support mean people are stuck in hospital beds despite being medically fit for discharge, which in turn reduces the availability of beds for new patients.
- **Systemic Failures:** A 2024 report highlighted that disabled people are often treated as a homogenous group, with specific needs ignored by housing officers. Furthermore, there is a lack of data on the number of accessible homes available, making effective planning nearly impossible.

### Impact on Disabled Individuals

- **Loss of Independence:** Inaccessible temporary accommodation often forces people to rely on others for basic needs, such as washing or navigating stairs.
- **Health Deterioration:** The stress of unsuitable housing, combined with a lack of proper facilities, causes severe physical, mental, and emotional distress.
- **Homelessness Risk:** A 2025 report found 4,841 people were forced to sleep rough in London, a record high, with many disabled people unable to find safe, accessible, affordable housing.
- **Financial Strain:** Rising costs in the private rented sector and a lack of accessible social housing mean that many disabled people are being priced out of their local areas.

### Specific Challenges and Trends

- **London Boroughs' Struggles:** London councils are spending £90 million a month on temporary accommodation, with rising costs forcing cuts to other statutory and non-statutory services.

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- **Failure of New Builds:** Despite the London Plan requiring 10% of new homes to be wheelchair-accessible (M4(3) standard), the actual compliance rate is significantly lower.
- **Delayed Regulations:** A 2022 promise to raise the minimum accessibility standards for new homes has not been implemented as of mid-2025, leaving 885,000 more people without accessible housing opportunities.
- **Disability Rights UK (DR UK) Position:** The organisation has stated that the government has "lost its way" on accessible housing, as new town plans often ignore the need for accessible homes.



Disability Rights UK

### Recommendations from Experts

- **Increase Social Housing:** A push for 90,000 new social rent homes per year, with a high proportion being accessible.
- **Raise Standards:** Mandate that all new homes are built to at least an "accessible and adaptable" standard (M4(2)).
- **Improve Data Collection:** Local authorities must collect better data to track the availability of accessible housing.
- **Remove Barriers to Adaptations:** Simplify the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process.

### 14-Substance Misuse & Mental Health?

## Better Lives

## Contact us

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Address**

99-101 Seven Sisters Road  
London  
Greater London  
N7 7QP

[Get directions \(opens in Google Maps\)](#)

- **Phone**

020 3317 6099

**Online**

[Website](#)

[Email](#)

### Find another service

#### Service details

Better Lives is an integrated drug and alcohol service delivered by North London NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with Way-through. Better Lives offer a free and confidential support and treatment service from three sites, for individuals and their families affected by drug and alcohol problems. Please phone or e-mail for opening times.

#### Opening times

Mondays 9.30am-8pm, Tuesdays 12-5pm, Wed 9.30am-5pm, Thurs 12-5pm, Fri 9.30am-5pm.

#### Catchment area

Islington

#### Referral method

Self-referral or via other agency.

Drop in referrals between 1-4pm each day

This information was supplied by [FRANK](#) on 29 January 2026.

## 15-Sleep, Stress & Emotional Wellbeing?

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/sleep/>

# Sleep problems

Sleep problems are common, and the reasons we struggle to sleep are likely to change throughout our lives, for instance, illness, work or having a baby are possible causes.

A few sleepless nights are usually nothing to worry about, but it can become an issue if a lack of sleep starts to affect your daily life.

Learn more about signs you might be sleep deprived, common symptoms of insomnia and if poor sleep hygiene or sleep habits could be the reason.

To fix sleep problems, establish a consistent daily schedule by waking up and going to bed at the same time, even on weekends. Create a dark, quiet, and cool, (approx. 18°C) bedroom environment. Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and heavy meals 4–6 hours before bed, and limit screen time to prevent blue light exposure.



nhs.uk

## Key Lifestyle & Environment Changes

- **Routine:** Maintain a strict, regular sleep-wake schedule.
- **Bedroom Environment:** Ensure your room is dark, quiet, and comfortable; use blackout curtains, eye masks, or earplugs if necessary.
- **Wind Down:** Relax for at least 30–60 minutes before bed with a bath, reading, or calm music.
- **Avoid Stimulants:** Skip caffeine, tea, nicotine, and alcohol, especially 4–6 hours before sleeping.
- **Exercise:** Be physically active during the day but avoid intense exercise 3–4 hours before bed.

## Questions and Answers: **Age UK Islington Event**

- **Limit Naps:** Avoid napping during the day to ensure you are tired at night.
- **Bedroom Use:** Only use the bedroom for sleep and intimacy; avoid working or watching TV there.

### **What to Do If You Can't Sleep**

- **Don't Force It:** If you haven't fallen asleep within 20 minutes, get up and do a quiet, relaxing activity in another room until you feel sleepy.
- **Manage Worries:** If anxiety keeps you awake, try writing down your worries or to-do list before bed to clear your mind.

Cleveland Clinic

### **When to Seek Help**

If you have persistent, long-term sleep issues that impact your daily life, contact a GP or health professional. They may discuss Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), specifically CBT-I for insomnia, or temporary, short-term medication.

### **16-Family & Emotional Support?**

The North London NHS Foundation Trust provides comprehensive family and emotional support, including 24/7 mental health crisis lines (0800 917 3333 or 111 option 2), specialized child/adolescent services (AOT), and community support in Barnet, Camden, Enfield, and Haringey. They offer talking therapies for anxiety/depression, support for carers, and involvement opportunities for families.



North London NHS Foundation Trust

### **Key Family & Emotional Support Services**

- **24/7 Mental Health Crisis Support:** Immediate help for adults and children in crisis is available by calling 111 and selecting option 2 or calling the 24-hour crisis line at 0800 917 3333.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Adolescent Outreach Team (AOT):** Community-based support for young people aged 12-18 with serious mental health needs, including self-harm and potential psychosis.
- **[Talking Therapies](#):** Confidential, evidence-based psychological therapies for depression, anxiety, PTSD, and OCD.
- **Community Support:** Specialized services for adults and older adults, focusing on independence and recovery.
- **Carer and Family Support:** The Trust offers involvement opportunities through "Involvement Registers" for family members and carers to participate in improving services.



North London NHS Foundation Trust

### Accessing Services

- **Referrals:** Contact a GP for an urgent appointment or referral.
- **Locations:** Services cover Barnet, Camden, Enfield, and Islington.
- **Specific Crisis Line:** 0800 917 3333 (available 24/7).
- **Emergencies:** If there is an immediate danger to life, call 999.



North London NHS Foundation Trust

Family and emotional support acts as a crucial protective buffer for mental health, reducing risks from adversity by up to 18% in adolescents. It involves active listening, empathy, and consistent connection—such as shared meals or dedicated, phone-free time. Resources like [FamilyLine](#), [YoungMinds](#), and [MindEd](#) provide guidance for navigating complex family emotional needs.

Family Action

### Key Aspects of Family Emotional Support:

- **Child & Adolescent Resilience:** Strong emotional bonds help young people cope with poverty and, parental mental health issues.
- **Building Connections:** Simple actions, such as eating together, playing games, or having open conversations, strengthen family bonds.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **Navigating Transitions:** Providing validation and patience during difficult times, such as divorce, is essential for children's emotional health.
- **Support for Parents:** Caregivers need support to manage their own mental health while caring for others.

### Support Resources and Services:

- **[FamilyLine](#):** A free service for emotional support, information, and guidance (0808 802 6666).
- **[YoungMinds](#):** Offers phone and online advice for parents worried about a child's mental health.
- **[MindEd for Families](#):** An online e-portal with simple, expert advice on child mental health.
- **[NHS Mental Health Services](#):** Provides resources for self-help and finding support for families and caregivers.
- **[Macmillan Cancer Support](#):** Offers specific emotional support for families dealing with cancer.



nhs.uk

### 17-Family issues – need advice?

#### Tips for Improving Emotional Support:

- **Active Listening:** Focus on understanding, not just advising.
- **Emotional Expression:** Encourage children to identify and label their feelings (e.g., "I'm scared").
- **Quality Time:** Regularly disconnect from technology to connect with family members.

## Questions and Answers: Age UK Islington Event

- **5 steps to mental wellbeing - NHS**  
If possible, take time each day to be with your family, for example, try arranging a fixed time to eat dinner together.
- **Supporting a child or young person with mental health needs - NHS**  
Get support for yourself Looking after a child with mental health issues. It is important you look after yourself as well.
- **Contact helpline - Family Action**  
Telephone: 02072546251  
Email: [Info@family-action.org.uk](mailto:Info@family-action.org.uk)

[FamilyLine](#) is a free service that offers emotional support, information, and guidance on family relationships.



Family Action

Family issues often stem from poor communication, differing values, or stressful life changes. To address these, initiate calm, respectful conversations focusing on your own feelings rather than blaming others, set firm boundaries, and practice active listening. For severe conflicts or abuse, seek professional help through counselling or dedicated support services.

### Key Advice for Family Conflict:

- **Communicate Effectively:** Use "I" statements to express feelings without blaming, such as "I feel overwhelmed when...".
- **Set Boundaries:** If a conversation becomes too heated or toxic, calmly state that you are stepping away and exit the situation to avoid escalating arguments.
- **Active Listening:** Try to understand the underlying concern of the other person, even if you disagree with their viewpoint.
- **Seek Mediation:** Consider a family counsellor or a neutral third party to help navigate deeply rooted issues.

## Questions and Answers: **Age UK Islington Event**

### **Support Services & Helplines:**

- [FamilyLine](#): Emotional support and guidance (0808 802 6666 or text 07537 404 282).
- [Family Lives](#): Confidential support for parenting and family life (0808 800 2222).
- [Family Rights Group](#): Advice on legal or social care issues (0808 801 0366).
- [Childline](#): Support for children and young people (0800 1111).
- [Citizens Advice](#): Legal advice on relationship breakdown, housing, or financial issues.

If the situation involves domestic abuse or you fear for safety, reach out to specialized services like the [NSPCC](#) or the police.