

## SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

### **Q What is the Specialist Mental Health Network?**

- A** This is a new initiative that has been introduced to help you find support with your mental health from a specialist who understands your unique issues and many of the challenges you face. Diageo have provided additional funding specifically towards mental health support which has allowed the Trust to establish the network and provide six free talking therapy sessions to every beneficiary who requires it.

We know that around half of you experience poor mental health from time to time, but we are also aware that many of you have had poor experiences of counselling or therapy in the past and have not felt the person you spoke to understood you or the issues you face.

The aim of the Specialist Mental Health network is to ensure that every beneficiary has access to support from a trusted mental health specialist who understands the kinds of issues beneficiaries live with.

### **Q How Does the Specialist Mental Health Network Work?**

- A** Every member of the Specialist Network has been selected because of their expertise in an area of mental health that is relevant to our beneficiaries. They have been briefed, and receive ongoing support and supervision, from Di Stevens - an experienced, independent counsellor who has been working with the Trust and supporting beneficiaries, for more than five years.

If you feel that you may benefit from support with your mental health, a member of the Health & Wellbeing team at the Trust will put you in touch with Di. She will call you for an initial chat and will work with you to identify the right mental health specialist to provide the support you need, in the way you need it – face to face, by telephone or via Zoom for example. Di can even arrange your first appointment, so all you have to do is turn up.

### **Q What Will the Trust Pay For?**

- A** The Trust will pay for your first six sessions with your therapist. You don't have to get involved with payments as they will invoice the Trust directly.

### **Q Can I Carry on After Six Sessions?**

- A** Yes of course, but you will have to pay for these yourself.

As you near the end of your six sessions you should discuss with your therapist whether you want to continue and pay for ongoing sessions. You can use some of your Health Grant to meet these costs.

### **Q Are Associated Travel Costs Covered?**

- A** No. Travel costs are your responsibility and will not be paid by the Trust.

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### **Q What Kind of Issues Can I get Help with?**

**A** Members of the Specialist Mental Health Network have a wide range of skills and expertise in counselling, psychotherapy, trauma therapy and other psychological support. This means that they can offer mental health support with any mental health issue, including personal challenges or emotional difficulties, stress, anxiety, depression, family or relationship problems, grief, abuse and trauma.

### **Q What Happens if I Need Support with More Than One Issue?**

**A** If you are seeking support for separate issues (for example, needle phobia and bereavement) you may need different therapeutic approaches. Di Stevens will work with you to discuss your needs and agree a plan. If your plan involves more than one specialist, we may be able to help fund sessions with both of them. However, therapies will not run at the same time and would usually involve a break between them.

### **Q What Happens if I don't 'Click' with the Mental Health Specialist?**

**A** If for any reason you feel that the specialist is not quite right for you, let us know. It's really important that you feel comfortable, and we can help you find the right person.

### **Q Where Can I Find Out More About the Specialist Mental Health Network?**

**A** If you have any other questions or would like further information, please contact a member of the Health & Wellbeing team by emailing [hello@thalidomidetrust.org](mailto:hello@thalidomidetrust.org) or calling **01480 474074**.