

Responsible Officer and Appraisal Networks Information Sheet 3

NHS GP Health service

The NHS GP Health service (GP Health) was launched on 30th January 2017. This is a free and confidential service for GPs and GP trainees working or looking to return to clinical practice in England who are suffering with mental health or addictions issues.

What is GP Health?

GP Health will help GPs with:

- Common and more complex mental health conditions
- Mental health conditions relating to a physical health issue
- Substance misuse including support for community detoxification
- Rehabilitation and support to return to work after a period of mental ill-health.

Why has GP Health been introduced?

The [General Practice Forward View](#) made a commitment to support general practice including to improve recruitment and retention and also to support GPs who wish to return to general practice. Supporting GPs with mental problems is one way to help.

GPs are less likely to access mainstream NHS services when they need mental health support, primarily due to issues of stigma and confidentiality. The focus of GP Health is therefore to support GP mental health, including stress and burnout.

The NHS GP Health Service:

- is not an Occupational Health service, it is a treatment service. GPH clinicians may link with local OH services to support a GP patient's return to clinical practice. If OH support is what you need, please contact the NHS England regional team to identify your local OH provider.
- is not a replacement for mainstream NHS services, nor is it designed to offer a second opinion. GPs who are currently supported by NHS mental health services are encouraged to remain with their local treatment team, but can seek guidance on particular aspects of care, or support for return to work.
- can support GPs who are undergoing performance proceedings, but it cannot be used to provide health reports to inform PAGs or PLDPs. Formal assessment of health issues should be commissioned from a separate organisation.

How can NHS England Appraisers help:

GP Health is a **self-referral** service, but an appraiser can signpost a GP to contact it at:

- Website: www.gphealth.nhs.uk
- Telephone: **0300 0303 300**
- Email: gp.health@nhs.net

Hours: 8am–8pm weekdays and 8am–2pm Saturdays (not bank holiday weekends).

This information sheet is relevant primarily to NHS England responsible officers

These information sheets are written on an ad hoc basis, on issues of relevance to responsible officers and their teams, medical appraisers and doctors.