



# **Afghan Nationals – Mental Health**

**Resource Pack for Primary Care**

Hampshire County Council's Public Health team, working with partners, has put together the following resource pack to assist primary care staff supporting Afghan Nationals who may be struggling with mental or emotional wellbeing challenges and need additional support.

Many of the services and resources below are culturally sensitive and are offered in the Pashto and Dari languages.

Telephone numbers have been provided for quick access where possible.

## **Links to services that can support Afghan Nationals who may be waiting for NHS talking therapies or other mental health services**

[MuslimsInBritain.org](https://muslimsinbritain.org) has a definitive directory of mosques and Muslim places of worship in the UK.

[Muslim Youth Helpline](https://muslimyouthhelpline.org) offers faith and culturally sensitive support by phone, live chat, WhatsApp or email. **Call their helpline seven days a week (4pm-10pm) on 0808 808 2008 or chat online via their website.**

[MWN Helpline UK](https://mwnhelpline.org) is a national specialist faith and culturally sensitive service that is confidential and non-judgmental, which offers information, support, guidance and referrals.

**Call 0800 999 5786**

[Refugee Action](https://refugeeaction.org) offers expert advice and guidance to those struggling to navigate the failing and unfair asylum system. They help those with refugee status to settle into new homes and communities – everything from helping children into schools, to booking a doctor's appointment, and ensuring they receive a hot meal when they arrive.

[NHS Support for Afghan British armed forces](https://nhs.uk/afghan-armed-forces) is a service that is available for Afghan veterans now living in the UK who worked in Afghanistan:

- directly for the British government as Locally Employed Civilians, such as interpreters or embassy staff
- in assistance of British operations in the country (for example, through serving in the Afghan National Army)

The service provides mental health assessments, advocacy and support. It can help you access:

- specialist mental health treatment and support if problems are military or conflict attributable
- treatment and support for other mental and physical health problems
- help for practical problems related to settling in the UK, such as finances, housing and employment.

**Call 0203 317 7979**

[Therapy and support services](#) are available for those experiencing PTSD related to an experience of torture.

**Call 020 7697 7777**

[Bridge to Unity](#) offers support to individuals and families arriving in the UK as refugees. They offer befriending services to support individuals, including those who may be waiting for NHS mental health therapies. Patients can be referred to the service via the referral form on the website.

[Rural Refugee Network](#) offers a befriending service, English language support and employment support. Email the service to discuss befriending and other support opportunities for patients at: **hello@ruralrefugeenetwork.org**

[Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group](#) offers a befriending service in the Winchester and Southampton areas and has a help desk located in Southampton. Email the service to discuss befriending and other support opportunities for patients at: **info@swvg-refugees.org.uk**

## **Resources in English, Pashto and Dari that can be provided to Afghans to support their own mental wellbeing:**

[Wellbeing tips for Afghan Families arriving in the UK – Dari](#)

[Sleep hygiene](#)

[Grounding techniques](#)

[Coping with depression](#)

[PTSD and re-living symptoms](#)

[Mental health and emotional wellbeing – Dari \(video\)](#)

[Staying mentally well – Pashto \(video\)](#)

[Staying mentally well – Dari \(video\)](#)

[Mindful communication for better mental health – Pashto \(video\)](#)

[Mindful communication for better mental health – Dari \(video\)](#)

[Looking after your mental health \(video\)](#)

[Islam Good Thinking](#) offers mental wellbeing resources that align with the beliefs and teachings of Islam:

- Five ways to good mental wellbeing and Islam
- Bereavement support for the Muslim community
- Fact check: Islam and mental health
- Other Good Thinking resources
- Useful websites for the Muslim community

## **Resources to assist primary care staff to have conversations with Afghan Nationals around mental health:**

The Sohail J website has a [Mental Health Guide](#) which includes information on initiating mental health conversations and barriers to discussing mental health with Afghan Nationals.

[Thrive LDN](#) offers guidance for supporting the mental health and wellbeing of refugees, as well as trauma informed principles when engaging with the Afghan Community.

[GOV UK's Mental health: migrant health guide](#) provides advice and guidance on the health needs of migrant patients for healthcare practitioners.

[BMA's refugee and asylum seeker patient health toolkit](#) provides further information on the unique health challenges for refugees and asylum seekers.

BMA also offers [mental health and specialist support](#). This guidance is for doctors who may be uncertain about the specific health needs and entitlement to different types of care of patients who are refugees and asylum seekers. It may also be helpful to other healthcare professionals and staff.

We would welcome your feedback [here](#) to help us improve this resource pack.

