

SHIP

Self-harm Intervention

Programme

Information for primary
care staff

What is the Self-harm Intervention Programme (SHIP) and who is it for?

SHIP is an early intervention service for people aged 11 and over who self-harm. It is aimed at people with low level mental health needs (Step 2). In such cases, the patient may have personal and social problems that are leading to self-harm being used as a coping mechanism. SHIP is not appropriate for patients who have more complex mental health problems that require care by Health and Social Care Trust mental health services.

People who self-harm will be offered support based on their needs. The type of therapy offered will be in line with NICE guidance (NG225).

SHIP also offers a short period of education and support to people who care for someone who self-harms (such as a parent, partner or friend).

Who provides the service?

SHIP is provided by a network of voluntary sector organisations offering counselling, that work in partnership with GPs and local Trust mental health services. The service is commissioned and monitored by the Public Health Agency. SHIP is provided at a range of community locations and is available across Northern Ireland. Please see the table overleaf for further details in each area.

Who can refer to the SHIP service?

At present referrals to SHIP can only be made by:

- a) mental health professionals in multidisciplinary teams in primary care;
- b) mental health professionals in HSC Trusts.

If a GP feels that SHIP might be appropriate for their patient, they can mention this in the referral to their local Trust mental health services, who will triage the case and make the referral to SHIP if appropriate.

Self referrals from people who are self-harming are not accepted. A referral must be made by a health professional as described above to ensure the person is receiving the right service.



What does SHIP offer for families, carers or friends of people who self-harm?

SHIP can offer advice and support to families, carers or friends. This can be provided even if the person who self-harms does not want any support. This support helps those supporting someone who self-harms to understand what to do in a crisis and also how to look after their own mental health and wellbeing.

Families, carers or friends can be referred to SHIP by the mental health professional referring the person who self-harms or they can contact SHIP directly in the area in which they live. Lines are open Monday–Friday 9am–4pm (excluding public holidays).

Please note these phone lines are for families, carers or friends only. People who self-harm must be referred by a health professional as above.

Trust area	SHIP service provider	Telephone number
Belfast Northern	ASCERT	0800 254 5123
South Eastern Southern	Inspire Wellbeing	0800 987 4117
Western	Zest	028 7126 6999

Useful resources

The PHA has developed some booklets for people who self-harm and their families. These are available online and also in hard copy from the local Trust.

Improving the lives of people who self-harm
www.pha.site/imprlives

Caring for someone who has self-harmed or had suicidal thoughts www.pha.site/caresh

Useful numbers



Lifeline

24 hour crisis response helpline

0808 808 8000



Samaritans

A listening ear, available 24/7

116 123



Childline

Counselling for children and young people

0800 1111

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Public Health
Agency

Public Health Agency

12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.

Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).

www.publichealth.hscni.net

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