

8th January 2024

Knowle House
4 Norfolk Park Road
Sheffield S2 3QE
t: (0114) 275 0101
f: (0114) 278 1308
e: admin@vidasheffield.org.uk

Sheffield women's charity renews urgent appeal after funding blow

A local women's charity has renewed its urgent appeal for funds after a major source of potential income was lost. Vida Sheffield, which offers therapy to domestic abuse survivors, launched a petition for emergency council funding and a crowdfunder in late November last year after cuts put it at risk. The charity now believes closure may be imminent without urgent intervention, after it was turned down for a multi-year government suicide prevention grant just before Christmas.

CEO, Karen Hague MBE, said it was "heartbreaking news at a time when our staff and clients were looking forward to having some special time with their families." After raising nearly £10,000 via its local crowdfunding campaign, the charity says it still needs £30,000 to avoid closure by the end of the month and is appealing to the public as well as to Sheffield city council.

Women who experience abuse can suffer symptoms of severe anxiety, depression, PTSD and suicidal feelings. Vida helps on average 250 women and girls per year with free trauma-informed therapy. Gemma, a service user representative, said, "please don't let this service be lost to Sheffield, it is already oversubscribed and the loss will result in putting more pressure on the NHS where there is a substantial waiting list. I owe the life I have now to Vida!"

Vida has been in talks with local representatives to advocate for emergency funding and is entering talks with another potential funder this week. The charity also has received public words of support from local Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, Sheffield Women's Aid CEO, Farah Nazeer, local Councillor Angela Argenzio and Louise Haig MP. Vida Chair, Marilyn Gregory, says, "We are so grateful to all those that have shown support for our cause and raised our profile through local media."

Clinical Manager Jane McLaren explained: "We were delighted to receive the BACP accreditation in 2023 which was such an achievement for us all and now the realisation that Vida will not benefit from the DHSC funding is devastating. This issue will not go away, there is a massive need and I also feel for the incredible team of trauma-informed therapists who have helped develop the pathway of therapy over the past 15 years."

[1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse on average](#), and Vida receives 62% referrals via the NHS e.g, MAPPS, GP's and Talking Therapies.

Jane explained further, "Vida's services will be needed for many years to come. It is heart-breaking that according to the Sheffield Report it is expected that there will be an increase in abuse. We've had messages of support from our colleagues in the NHS who are lobbying on

our behalf; they are equally appalled that the Vida service is under threat; please do help us with our efforts to continue.”

95% of women who go through Vida’s service report a reduction in their trauma symptoms with 83% improving their wellbeing.

Members of the public who want to support Vida can sign the petition

at <https://chng.it/Lt7vWVbcTz> donate at www.localgiving.org/charity/vidasheffield/ or pledge funds by writing to the CEO k.hague@vidasheffield.org.uk



QR code for local giving

FURTHER INFORMATION

Vida's service costs around £15-20k per month (some volunteer therapist hours are used)
Vida provides around 216 therapy sessions a month – [Vida Pathway](#)
Vida saves the NHS around £50k per month (based on published NHS data for specialist mental health services).

National domestic abuse statistics: www.ncdv.org.uk/domestic-abuse-statistics-uk/
Sheffield report on domestic abuse: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-67489129

Costs for specialist NHS services: www.england.nhs.uk/costing-in-the-nhs/national-cost-collection/

Contact for more information:

Karen Hague MBE: k.hague@vidasheffield.org.uk m.07490 199643

References:

www.ncdv.org.uk/domestic-abuse-statistics-uk/
www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-67489129
www.england.nhs.uk/costing-in-the-nhs/national-cost-collection/

Glossary

BACP: *British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy*

DHSC: *Dept. of Health & Social Care*

MAPSS: *Mood, Anxiety and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Psychotherapy Service*