



Our Impact

2023 – 2024



Finding Hope

When Alice was first referred to Lifelink by her doctor (GP), she had been experiencing a low, depressed mood for almost nine months. This developed following a relationship breakdown and separation from her husband.

Alice had been prescribed anti-depressants by her GP to help her cope with the constant low mood. She was struggling to find hope for her future or for those of her teenage children. She had been signed off work for several months and was struggling to see a way to go back, which was causing her significant stress relating to future finances. At her first session, our counsellor explained what counselling could be helpful for, explained what to expect and listened carefully to the difficulties that Alice described.

By exploring Alice's difficulties with her, it was evident that she had been struggling to remain emotionally available and supportive for her children through their parents' separation. The counsellor enquired about who Alice could call on for support and comfort. Her mother was the only real supportive factor in her life and through this realisation, Alice decided she would invite her mother to stay with her for a few weeks as an additional form of support, which would help her find more energy to engage with the children.

Alice missed her second session with us without cancelling; she was in hospital. Alice's mother had found her lying on the floor unconscious that morning after overdosing on prescription medication and phoned an ambulance who took her to hospital. The hospital psychiatrist advised Alice to continue her sessions with Lifelink because the NHS could not offer her any other immediate access to counselling.

It emerged that the day Alice had attempted suicide was after she had seen her former husband and his new partner on Facebook, laughing together and enjoying a foreign holiday. Despite the pain it caused her, Alice seemed unable to stop herself from fixating on her ex's social media.

The counsellor worked with Alice over a number of weeks to identify the link between the rejection she felt in the present, from the abandonment of her husband, and the rejection she had experienced as a young child when her father walked out on her family when she was only seven years old. As Alice grew stronger and more aware of the connections she was making between the two experiences, the counsellor began to gently challenge Alice to consider her individual resources and strengths and assets. To see herself as a person with autonomy and agency in the world, not just one half of a couple.

By her final session, Alice had removed her former husband from all her social media accounts, returned to work again and was thinking about volunteering for a children's charity. She reported that she and her children were conversing more and feeling more able to discuss the hard times they had been through over the last year.

Alice thought that her children being more open and honest with her again about how they were feeling was an important sign of things moving in the right direction.





Looking Ahead

For people like Alice, services like Lifelink play a vital role. This is just one story from a huge range that our therapists and support staff hear each day.

From young people experiencing abuse, to refugees seeking safety, to those who find themselves in prison, and those who find themselves in need of support for the first time in their life. We support people who may otherwise struggle to access services and support the NHS and local authorities to meet the needs of the communities in their care.

Lifelink respond to the changing needs of these communities, offering wellbeing education and therapeutic services that can help people find stability when they fear they may be falling.

At a time of political change and with the uncertainty that brings with it, Lifelink can remain a constant presence in communities who need to know where they can turn for support. The reality is that demand for our services is high, which indicates the emotional struggles that are prevalent in so many lives. Whether it be bereavement and loss, stress and worry, relationship difficulties, low mood or hopelessness, Lifelink is there to support.

We stand in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy's main goals – a stronger vision for the UK's mental health, improving access to a wider choice of therapies in schools and the NHS, and appropriately supporting and funding services and practitioners. Whilst we know that the UK launched a suicide prevention strategy in 2023, the impact of this is clearly yet to be seen.

We are a resilient, flexible and creative organisation that will go the extra mile to ensure that even in the face of a global challenge, we remain available to deliver mental health and wellbeing services to those in need. We work with compassion to increase our impact on the lives of adults and young people who take that first brave step to engage with us and put their faith in us as we support them to be a healthier, happier version of themselves.

We are increasing our flexibility and agility through the development of our Social Enterprise: Lifelink Workwell. Our ability to generate unrestricted income through trading commercially give us the opportunity to remain that constant for Alice, and others, rooted in our passion for working in communities and supporting people who might otherwise struggle to access services.

Our services are constantly improving and adapting due to the feedback from people who use them. Over the next year we will explore ways in which we can implement suggestions including updating and relocating some venues to enhance their facilities or accessibility of location and to continue to invest in the development and wellbeing of our valued staff team, who are at the core of our business.

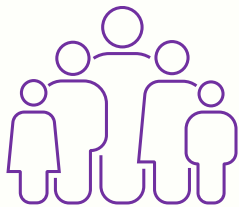


Our Impact

The overall aim of Lifelink is to improve the mental and emotional health and wellbeing of adults and young people, with our main goal being to empower young people and adults to manage their stress more effectively, reduce self-harm and/or thoughts of suicide, help them increase their emotional resilience, personal strengths, and resources, and enable them to develop to their full potential as active citizens in their communities.

By doing this we seek to improve the stress-related mental/physical health problems within local communities, to reduce people's need for illness services, to improve their general health, wellbeing, and quality of life in a lasting way and thereby reduce inequalities in health.

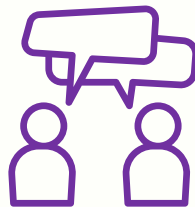
Over 100 staff contributed to the below during 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024



Supported over

13,500

young people & adults



7,590

One-to-One
Counselling



4,425

Wellbeing
Classes



1,550

Distress Brief
Intervention
Services

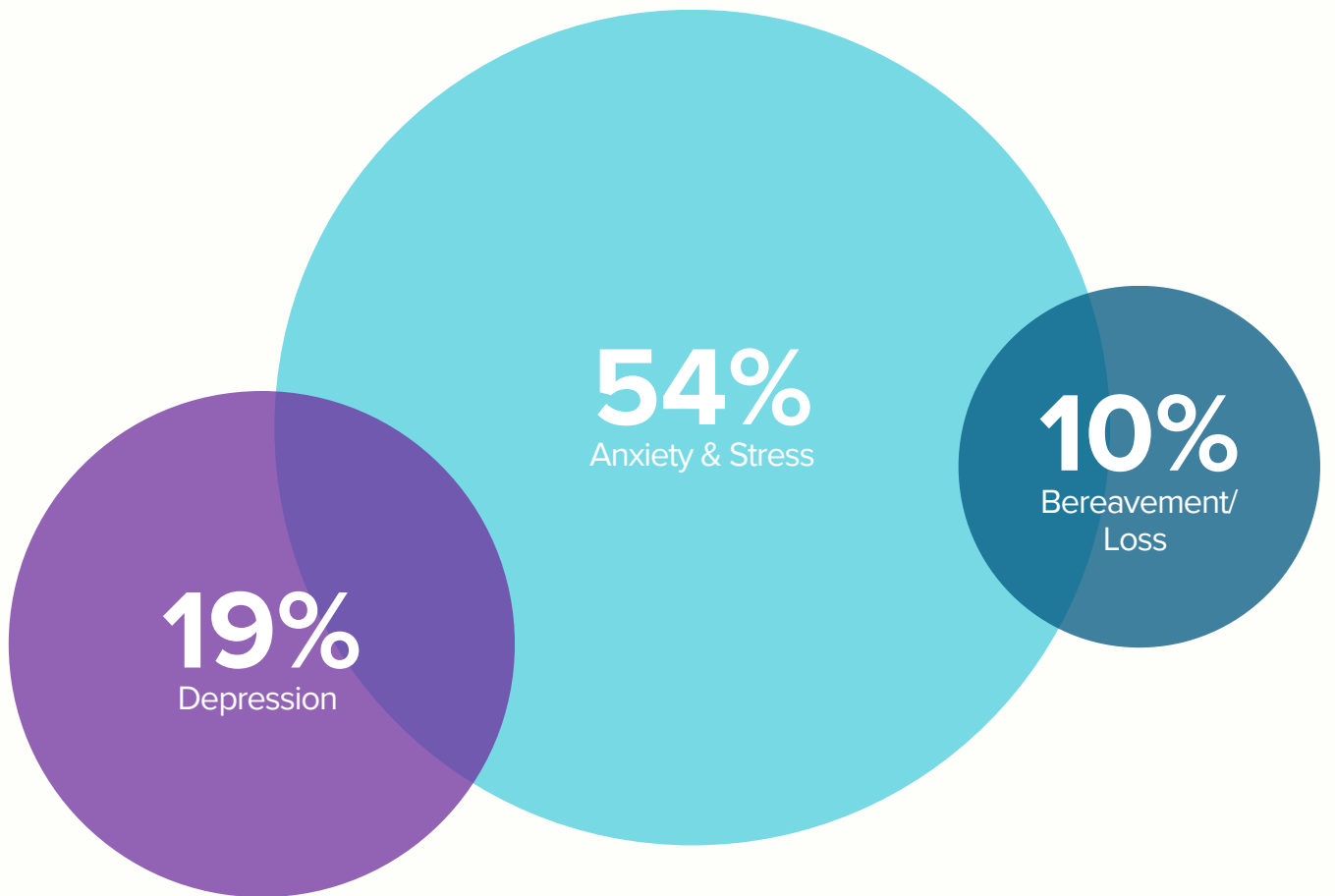
Helping people struggling to cope with everyday stress, anxiety, depression, and issues that are impacting their lives

An average of 6 sessions, helping them manage their stress and mental health

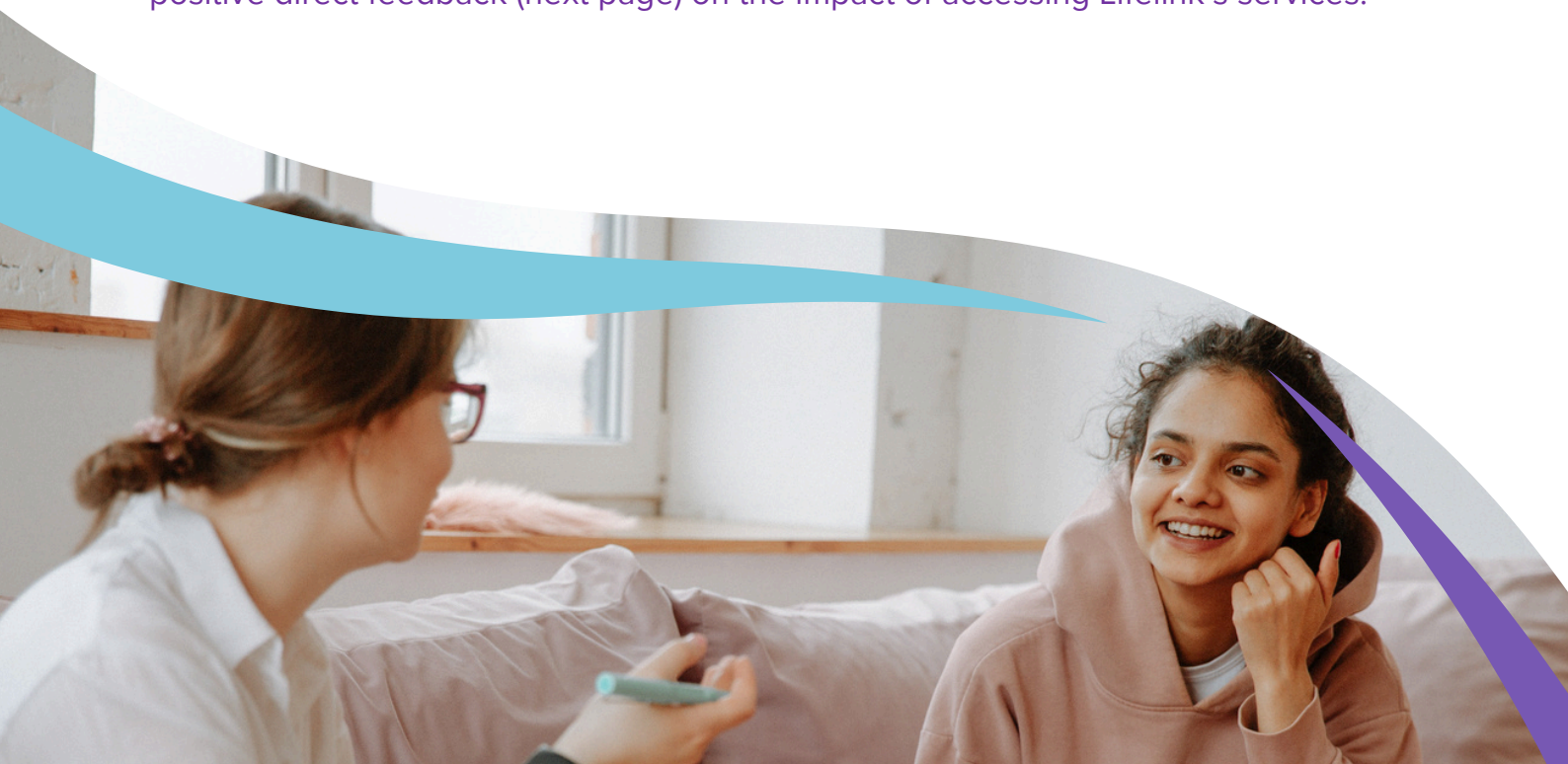
Delivered through 966 classes within communities & schools via virtual & face-to-face

Individuals supported during times of critical need

Within adult services, the top presenting issues were:



Contributory factors of interpersonal relationships, self-esteem, work or academic pressures and trauma or abuse. In school and youth services, the top presenting issues were anxiety, stress, depression and anger. Significant CORE* (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation) score improvements of 6+ were seen across all services, alongside positive direct feedback (next page) on the impact of accessing Lifelink's services.



Menopause & Me Wellbeing Class

“

I just felt so at ease as soon as I joined the group. It's refreshing to hear other people are going through it (some even more difficult) and I want to thank you for being patient and taking the time to help me today.

”

Financial Wellbeing Class

“

It is a really stressful time for me at the moment and I want to thank you for helping calm my anxiety levels slightly. We don't need to be perfect, but I now know I have the confidence inside me to get my finances into a stable state.

”

Counselling for Young People

“

I am handling fall outs with my friends better and changing how I think about things.

”

Adult Counselling

“

I really appreciate the service and the people that work for Lifelink. I'm just glad I came and asked for the help as that was the hardest thing for me to do. I now feel that I have the ability to cope with the tools and advice I was given.

”

“

I found my sessions with Lifelink to be very helpful. I've realised that talking through my issues now makes me feel better instead of being in denial and burying things away. I'm now looking forward to the future which is a new experience for me.

”

Heather's Journey

Heather's journey with Lifelink began in 2019, when she joined us as a youth counsellor.

From the beginning, Heather immersed herself in the youth counsellor role, focusing on developing skills and building rapport with the young people she supported. Shortly after joining Lifelink, the onset of COVID-19 brought about a shift to online counselling that posed new additional challenges. Despite this, Heather adapted quickly, and sought additional training and responsibilities through our clinical pathways programme.

The clinical pathways programme, designed as a progression route for counsellors with high potential, provided invaluable opportunities for development. Through it, Heather received coaching sessions from senior staff, helping to clarify her professional goals. When we advertised a position for a lead youth counsellor in 2022, Heather decided to apply, even though she was still working towards accreditation. With support from her mentors, Heather successfully secured the role, balancing her new responsibilities alongside completing accreditation.

Heather's role as lead youth counsellor involves being part of the senior clinical team, where she provides clinical support to other counsellors. This includes advising on casework, extending clinical support, and ensuring the quality and standards of counselling practices at Lifelink. Heather also plays a crucial role in training new counsellors, conducting in-depth reviews of case notes, and handling subject access requests to ensure confidentiality and compliance.

Heather's dedication to her professional development did not stop there. Recognising the importance of continuous learning, she pursued a qualification as a clinical supervisor, with Lifelink covering half the cost of the course.

As a clinical supervisor, Heather now supervises groups within Lifelink and external individuals, including from the Open University.



In addition to her supervisory role, Heather also took on the position of trainee placement coordinator, ensuring that new counsellors have the support and guidance they needed. Although she recently stepped back from this role to focus on teaching the Professional Development Award in Counselling Children and Young People (SQA) course, her commitment to mentoring and supporting trainees has remained.

When reflecting on her journey, Heather focussed on the importance of the supportive environment at Lifelink.



The presence of senior clinical team members like Sam (our Clinical Manager) and Andy (our Clinical Director) boosted my confidence, enabling me to pursue opportunities I might have thought were beyond reach. Lifelink's commitment to professional development has undoubtably empowered me to grow in my career.

For me, the most rewarding aspects of my work are multifaceted. I truly value my direct client work, which I continue to do two days a week, and it remains my main passion in the mental health field.

Additionally, I take great fulfilment from seeing the growth and increased confidence of the new counsellors we support. Through providing professional guidance, I get to see their development first hand, and I know that that they'll go on to have their own Lifelink journeys.



Heather's ability to adapt to changing circumstances, embrace new challenges, and support others on their own paths underscores the commitment to making a positive impact that is found throughout Lifelink.

As she continues to teach, mentor, and counsel, Heather remains an integral part of the Lifelink team, shaping the future of our counselling practice through her expertise and passion.



Paying It **Forward**

At Lifelink, we are deeply committed to supporting the wellbeing of the residents at HMP Low Moss.

Our weekly wellbeing sessions, led by our dedicated training team, are designed to help residents manage the unique challenges of prison life. These sessions offer essential techniques to handle stress and anxiety.

Each week, residents benefit from relaxation sessions and a series of wellbeing sessions aimed at tackling the most challenging issues faced most often by inmates. These sessions are available across the year and are aimed to equip residents with the tools they need enhance their wellbeing and resilience during their time at HMP Low Moss.

The positive impact of these sessions was vividly illustrated by five dedicated residents who noticed a significant difference in their lives when our regular facilitator was temporarily unavailable to deliver the programme. Inspired by the benefits they experienced, these gym pass holders decided to give back. They organised a fundraising triathlon featuring 2 hours of rowing, 2 hours of cycling, and a 10k run. The event saw 24 residents come together, and one determined fund raiser even joined in despite fasting for Ramadan, encouraged, and supported by the Low Moss Physical Training Instructors.

2 hrs & 10k = £1,546

Cycling & Rowing

Run

The triathlon was a huge success, raising £1,546 with contributions from families, staff, and a prison-organised GoFundMe page. The residents proudly presented Lifelink with a cheque for the amount raised.

Lifelink then reinvested this money back into the wellbeing programme, purchasing high-quality relaxation mats, eye masks, and cushions to enhance the comfort and effectiveness of our service. Additionally, we commissioned a plaque, certificates and medals to honour the residents and prison employees who made this event possible.

The dedication of our wellbeing facilitator and the participating residents highlights the profound impact that Lifelink's support can have, even in the most challenging of environments.

“

I get a lot out of the class. It's really good for my mind and calms me right down. From coming to these classes I am a lot calmer, thank you.

Resident, HMP Low Moss

”



“

The feedback that I have received from participants of the course has been excellent. Alison communicates with people in an open and honest way and helps them understand their physical and mental bodies. Each participant of the programme has been full of praise for the relaxation and wellbeing service that Lifelink provides, and the way Alison facilitates it.

There have been many occasions in which individuals have requested to re-attend and instances of family members asking for more information on the service.

”

Adam McCormick, Life Skills Officer, HMP Low Moss

We're Here

Our free **one-to-one counselling service** gives clients the space and support to understand and manage feelings, thoughts and behaviour. Confidential sessions are available to adults living in a Glasgow city council tax area who submit a referral via our website or anyone referred via a Glasgow city GP.

Free **online wellbeing classes** are running throughout the year across a range of topics - Glasgow city residents can register directly for these classes via our website.

We provide **support to young people** through Glasgow's Youth Health Service and directly in schools across central Scotland. If you want to find out more about our youth services, please reach out via email or give us a call.

Lifelink is well positioned to be able to work with partners to deliver a united health promoting environment within **custodial care and residential settings**. For more info, please get in touch.

Our **corporate wellbeing** arm, Lifelink Workwell, is dedicated to supporting workplace mental health and wellbeing. If you're interested in creating a workplace environment that prioritises the mental health of employees, find out more at our website - lifelinkworkwell.org.uk.





Our vision is that people are healthier and happier wherever they live, work or learn.



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