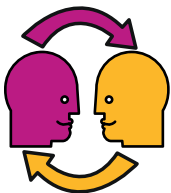
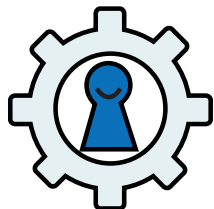


## What is a mental health peer support worker (PSW)?

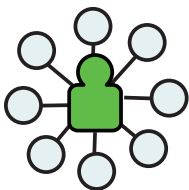
Mental health PSW roles are based on direct lived experience of mental health difficulties  
Mental Health PSWs can offer emotional and practical support to people going through similar kinds of experiences



They can use their own lived experience to connect with people and help them by giving them a sense of hope and wellbeing



They can support people to gain a sense of control over their lives



They can help people engage with, build connections, and feel a sense of belonging to their local communities



They can enable people to gain satisfaction in different parts of their lives.

Lived experience, and the knowledge gained from that experience, is the foundation of peer support, helping build connections between peer support workers and the people they work with.

Our team provides a service which covers the whole of Calderdale.



### Calderdale EIP, Insight Team

Laura Mitchell Health & Wellbeing Centre  
Great Albion Street  
Halifax HX1 1YR

☎ 01422 262333

📱 Search 'Calderdale Insight EIP'



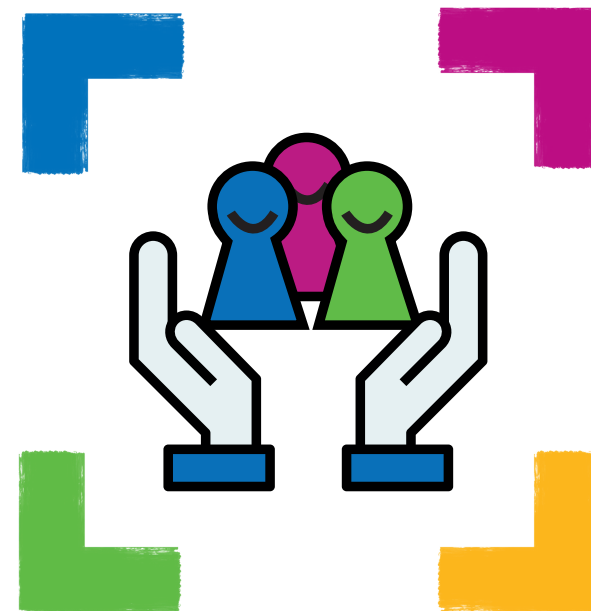
If you require a copy of this information in any other format or language please contact your healthcare worker at the Trust.

JOB NO 2176 JUL 21

**NHS**

South West  
Yorkshire Partnership  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Calderdale Insight early intervention in psychosis team



## Peer support A short guide

With **all of us** in mind.

## Why might you work with a peer support worker?

There can be different times you might want to work with a peer support worker. Here are a few reasons why you might want to:

- You may feel more comfortable talking to someone who has lived experience of mental health issues and knows how it feels to be under mental health services
- It's not uncommon for some people to feel 'patronised' or misunderstood when discussing their mental health issues. Speaking to someone with similar experiences can remove this feeling
- You might want to talk to someone who is on/has been on medication and how this made them feel

## How and when could you work with a peer support worker?

You could work with a peer support worker in many different ways; whether it's in person, over the phone or in a group setting. You could have support doing something in particular such as attending an appointment or trying out a new hobby that you're interested in.

As a team, we at Insight offer a holistic approach to you and your care, meaning medication only plays a small or non-existent part of your recovery. We focus on physical activities or groups that highlight how you can maintain a healthy life. If there's something in particular that you think may help, then let us know and perhaps we can support you in doing this.

## More about the Insight team

The Insight team is made up of professionals with many different skills, including doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) therapists, vocational and educational workers, support workers and now peer support workers. All of our team members work together and put the person in the centre.

As well as CBT, outpatient appointments and many other services, we provide a diverse range of activities and groups focused on improving the mental and physical wellbeing of our clients. Here are just a few groups/activities we offer:

- **Walking group:** This group was born out of lockdown. With the country effectively closing we were limited as to what we could do safely and now it is our most popular group running twice a week.
- **Rock climbing:** This mainstay activity within our service has been running for years. Our great relationship with ROKT in Brighouse continues to grow and our clients as well as some staff are currently gaining a qualification for free which enables them to safely climb with ropes without supervision!
- **Football:** This popular group sees people with all ability levels meet up to play the beautiful game. We have secured great facilities at Calderdale college to do this.



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Search 'Calderdale Insight EIP' to find out more

## Meet Insight's peer support worker



### Kieran Sullivan: My short story

I was 17 years old when I first experienced mental health issues. I was halfway through my A level studies, trying to fit in with the crowd and find my feet as a young adult. The pressures of life at home; college and everything in between, including some unwise life choices, led to me being sectioned. It was one of the lowest and scariest points in my life. I won't lie, it was difficult talking to nurses, doctors and other professionals, sometimes lying to them about how I felt. If I'm honest, I felt a bit scared about what might happen if I told the truth. I felt that they might be trying to 'catch me out' or 'trip me up'...but I soon learnt they were just caring people who wanted to help.

There were many ups and many downs during my time with mental health services. It wasn't a straight line to 'normality', but every moment was a learning curve. I managed to finish my time at college having earned qualifications. I found work doing many different jobs, working in retail and catering. I also went back to college to study health and social care and completed many employability courses. After spending a few years experimenting with jobs and trying to figure out my purpose in life I discovered that working with people was something I had a passion for. I suppose working with my mental health team helped me discover that working with people was what I wanted to do. So, I did! Never would I have thought that any of this was possible back when I was a 17-year-old but with hard work, patience and the right support I was able to achieve success and you can too!

If you would like to know more about me and peer support then you can email:

[kieran.sullivan@swyt.nhs.uk](mailto:kieran.sullivan@swyt.nhs.uk)