

CLEAR Adult Service Evaluation Report

April 2022 to March 2023

This evaluation and report was completed by Nicola Henderson, Clinical Psychologist and CLEAR Evaluation and Quality Lead with contributions from Dr Lexi Painter, Adult Clinical Lead.

The information which has contributed to this report has been based on the CLEAR adult waitlist referrals and assessments undertaken within the timeframe identified and the routine outcome measures which are completed within the adult service.

During the reporting period, the Adult Service Waitlist had periods of closure in response to sustained high self-referrals; in order to manage the timeframes for waiting to be seen and funds available the waitlist was closed. The communication of closure and re-opening of the Adult Waitlist was made on the CLEAR website and at point of contact. In these periods, referrals with spot purchase and from the Victim Support pathway were progressed. The waitlist closure periods during the reporting period were in March 2022 until 01 June 2022, and in August 2022 through to start of October 2022. The impact of this has been less overall referrals from the previous year and therefore less clients overall in counselling/therapy within the year. At the time of reporting, the Adult service waiting times are 4-months for client-centred counselling and trauma-focused therapy and eight weeks for EMDR psychotherapy.

Demographic and service delivery information

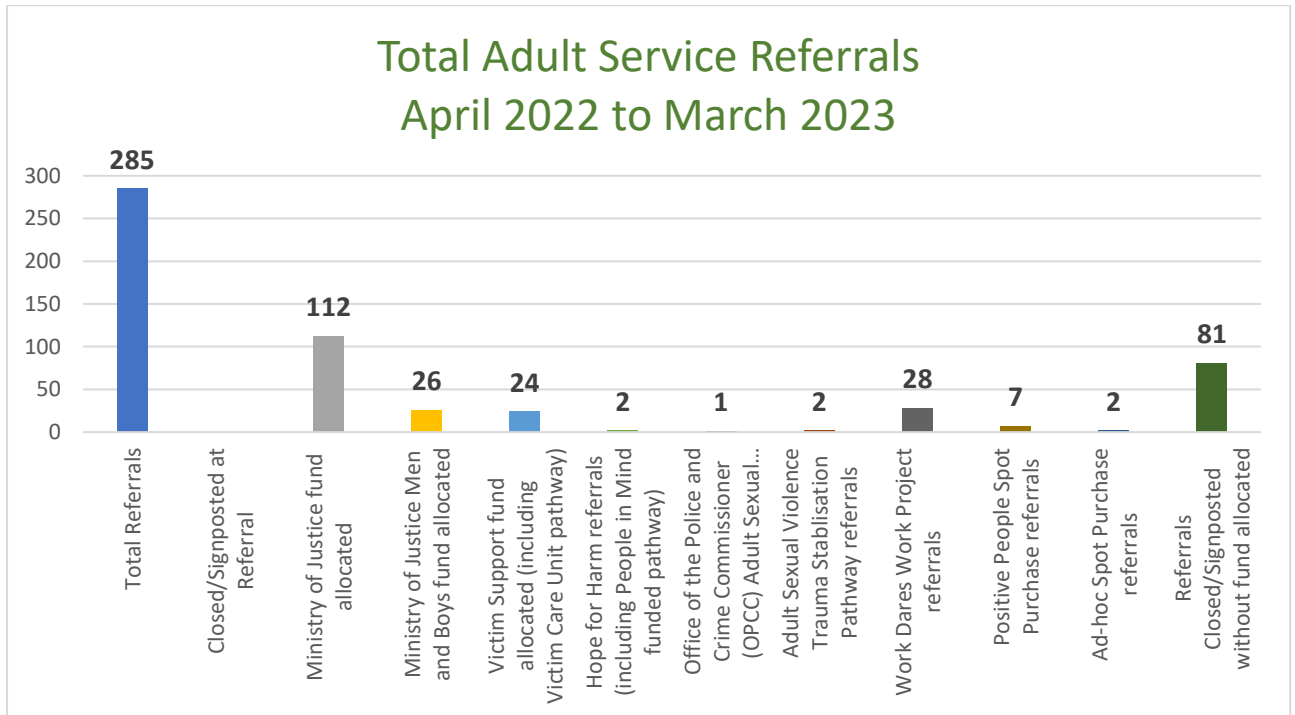
The total referrals received (includes all referrals to the Adult waitlist; Self-referrals, the Victim Care Unit pathway, People in Mind Hope for Harm and Project work referrals e.g., Who Dares Works, Trauma Stabilisation project and Spot purchase referrals within the year time period of 01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 was 285.

While undertaking the processes of referral coordination and allocating for assessment and therapist/counsellor, there were 57 referrals which were signposted as CLEAR was identified as not being the appropriate service, or the client was not ready for a counselling intervention e.g., client in mental health crisis, presenting with psychotic symptoms or physically unwell. Further, 21 professional referrals were closed and a request made for the client to make a self-referral as required by the adult service.

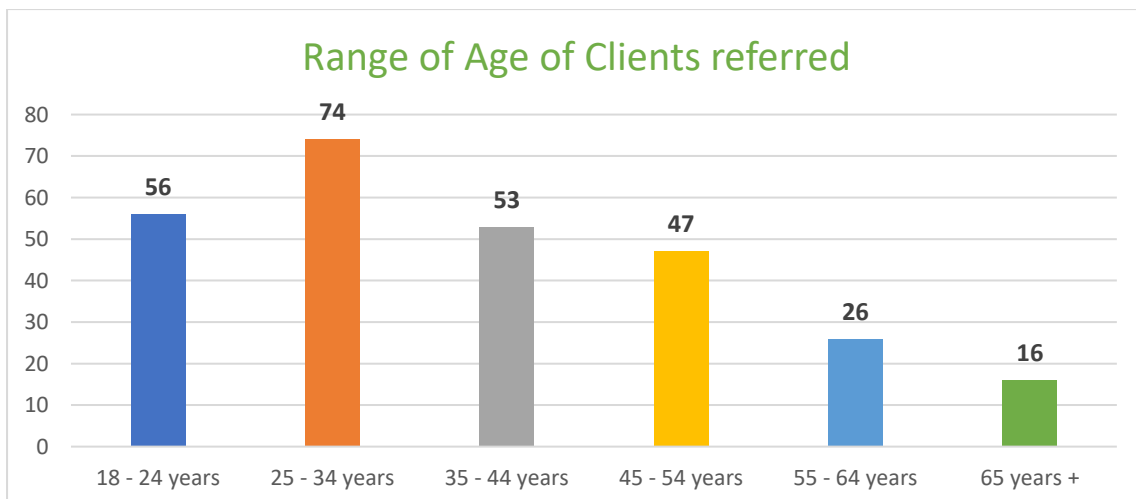
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From the total referrals, 207 females, 68 males, and two transgender clients were referred. For eight clients gender was not recorded on referral. The age range for all referrals was from 18 to 73 years; 56 in the age range of 18 – 24 years, 74 in the age range of 25 – 34 years, 53 in the age range of 35 – 44 years, 47 in the age range of 45 – 54 years, 26 in the age range of 55 – 64 years, and 16 were 65 years +. The age was not recorded for nine referrals.



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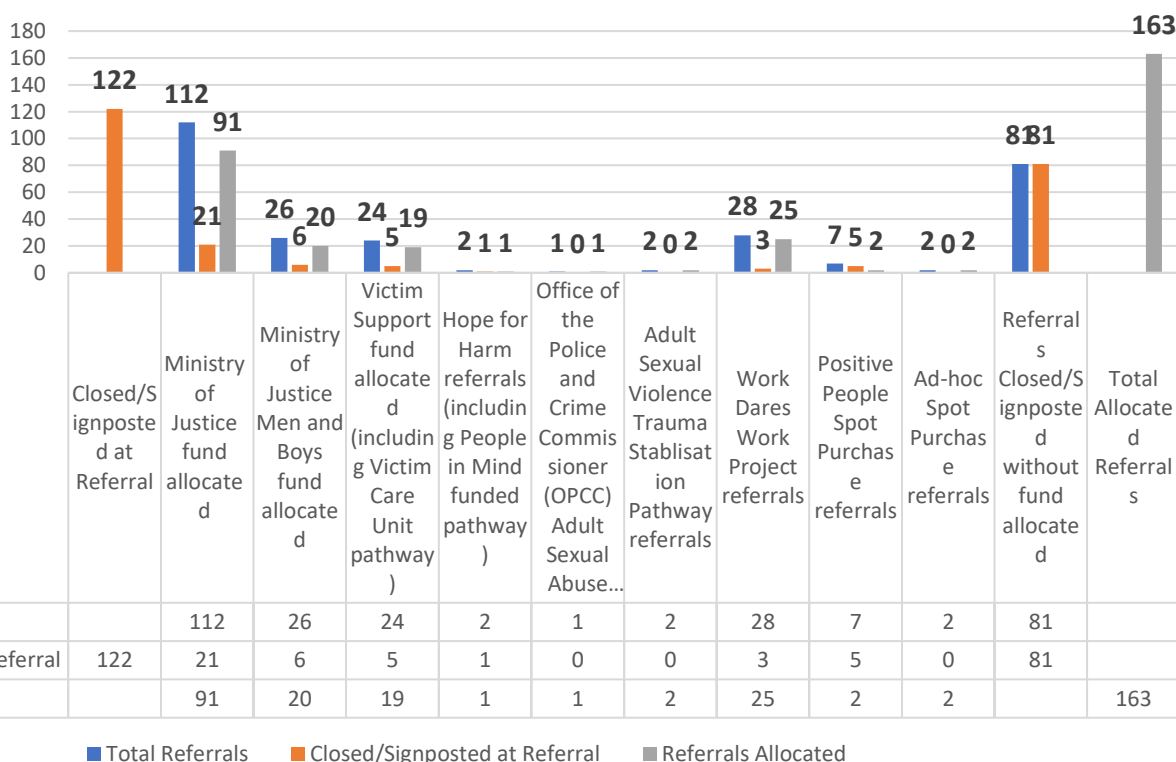


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A total of 110 (39%) referrals identified the client as having a disability, including learning disability, autistic spectrum conditions, and enduring mental health conditions.

Total Adult Referrals April 2022 to March 2023 Referral through to Allocation



Allocation and Process of Intervention for Clients from April 2022 - March 2023

The total allocation of referrals to counsellors and therapists was 163, with a majority (111; 68%) of adults having an initial assessment and being allocated a counsellor to access sessions through the Ministry of Justice Rape Crisis funding.

During the reporting period, in the Ministry of Justice Rape Crisis Fund including the Men and Boys (177 clients), a total of 107 completed their counselling intervention, recording ten or more sessions. There were 24 clients who disengaged from the counselling intervention after less than 10 sessions, a disengagement rate of 14% while nine clients did not engage or

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declined sessions following initial assessment and allocation. At the time of reporting, two clients remained on hold and 35 clients remained engaged and in progress in their counselling/therapy sessions. Within this client work, we are working with 41 males, 135 females and one transgender client.

During the reporting period, in the Victim Support Fund including the Victim Care Unit pathway (26 clients), a total of 20 completed their counselling intervention, recording ten or more sessions. There were three clients who disengaged from the counselling intervention after less than 10 sessions, a disengagement rate of 12%% while two clients did not engage or declined sessions following initial assessment and allocation. At the time of reporting, one client remained engaged and in progress in their counselling/therapy sessions. Within this client work, we are working with one males, and 25 females. Sixteen clients have experienced sexual trauma, with three clients experiencing domestic abuse and the trauma experience of seven clients were not identified.

During the reporting period, of the Clients funded by Spot Purchase (14), a total of seven completed their counselling intervention, recording ten or more sessions. There were three clients who disengaged from the counselling intervention after less than 10 sessions, a disengagement rate of 21%% while four clients did not engage or declined sessions following initial assessment and allocation. Within this client work, we are working with six males, seven females and one transgender client.

During the reporting period, in the Who Dares Works project (35 clients), a total of 33 completed their counselling intervention, recording ten or more sessions. There was one client who disengaged from the counselling intervention after less than 10 sessions, a disengagement rate of 2% while one client did not engage or declined sessions following initial assessment and allocation. Within this client work, we worked with 15 males, 19 females and one transgender client.

There is an overall disengagement rate of 12.3% for allocated clients across all funding pathways. This is a noteworthy reduction from the previous year disengagement rate of 20.5%

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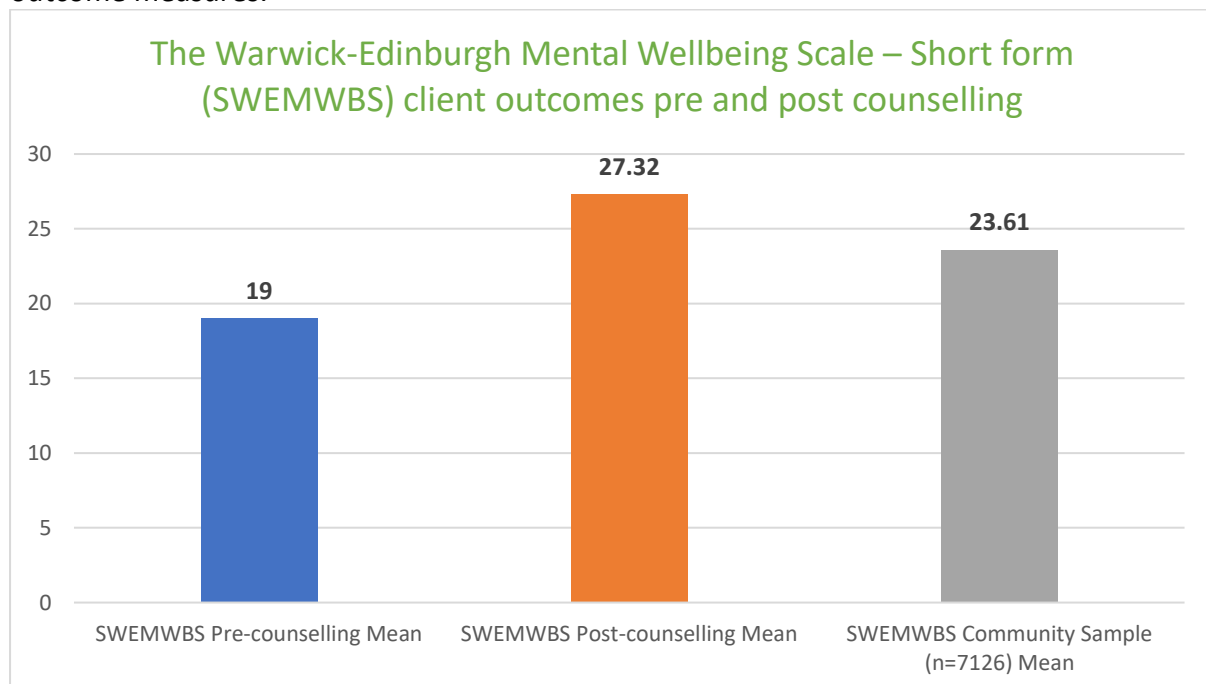
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Outcome and effectiveness of service

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale – Short form (SWEMWBS)

The CLEAR adult service routinely uses The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale – Short form (SWEMWBS)¹ which was developed to enable the measuring of mental wellbeing in the general population and the evaluation of projects, programmes and policies which aim to improve mental wellbeing. Clients are asked to complete this measure on assessment and at every session throughout all the counselling and therapy interventions; the routine measures are voluntary and the choice to complete these is made each session. We are able to then measure pre- and post counselling mental wellbeing to examine differences at the individual level and compare outcomes to those reported in community.

The SWEMWBS analysis is from observations across all clients who engaged and completed counselling/therapy interventions during the reporting period, and completed pre and post outcome measures.



¹ For further information and published research on the SWEMWBS, you can refer to <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/>

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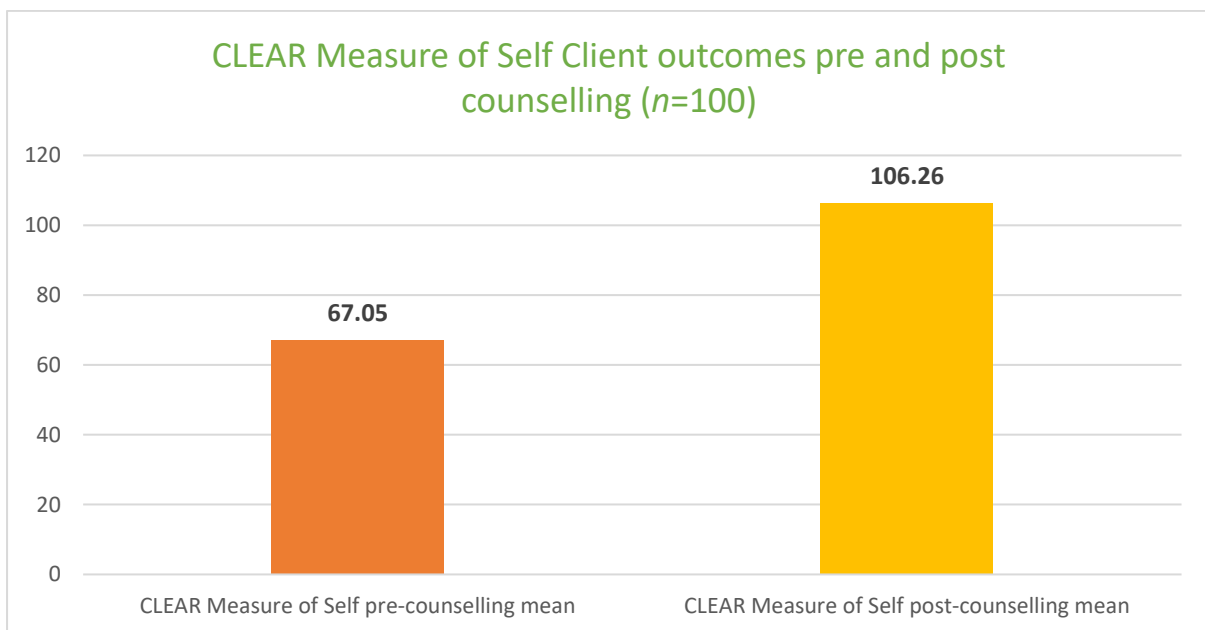
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The outcomes show a significant difference in mental well-being between pre-counselling SWEMWBS (*Mean* = 19.0) and post-counselling SWEMWBS (*Mean* = 27.3) scores ($t(61) = -6.34, p < .001$). The Cohen's *d* effect size of ($d = -0.320$) demonstrates a small effect of the counselling intervention on the basis of improved mental wellbeing. This is a small sample size ($n = 19$) with a contributing factor being current access to recorded sessional data during and post transition into the CLEAR database. A comparison is made with the Mean ($M = 23.61$) of SWEMWBS Community Sample ($n=7126$).

The CLEAR Measure of Self – an in-service questionnaire

The CLEAR Adult service routinely asks for clients to complete a 16-item questionnaire pre and post counselling intervention which explores the client's perceptions of self, confidence, and future. It also asks the client to reflect on their experiences of counselling. The items are scaled 0 – 10, 10 is strongest agreement with positive perceptions therefore a higher total of the 16 items means a stronger positive perception of self, confidence and future.



There are outcomes from 100 clients completing this questionnaire pre and post their counselling intervention which show improvements in perception of self, confidence and future; pre-counselling (*Mean* = 67.05) compared to post-counselling (*Mean* = 106.26). This is a significant difference ($t(df) = 198 = -9.73, p < .001$) and has a small Cohen's *d* effect size ($d = -0.312$).

The clients' reflections of experiences of counselling and the personal impact of counselling.

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I'm feeling more in control of things - what I want to do, relationships, feelings, behaviour. My anxious feelings aren't coming up as often. I know myself and what I want better. I'm able to say no and not trying to please people all the time. I've learnt about relationships: not going too fast, not rushing, not trying to mould myself to something they want. It's been helpful to have someone neutral to talk to. I've realised that I deserve to have people listen to me. Before I thought no one cared and there was no point as I wasn't worth it.

I have gained an enormous amount through these sessions. I have been dealing with current trauma which has been frustrating at times but has actually helped me recognise behaviour and reactions that are not helpful anymore. I feel able to be in the world as myself. I feel truly that I am OK. This is new to me but I feel safe navigating a future for me and mine that is hopeful - Thank you

I have got a part of me back that I thought I had lost. I have gained confidence and resilience from my sessions and come away far more positive.

it has been good to have the space to talk about the past as I have never mentioned before and for you to listen to me and did not judge me. I know understand that this is not my fault and I am able to use the compassion you have taught me. When I think about my childhood. I'm now able to understand that my mum was not well. And was not able to look after us.

Massively helped me to recognise my triggers and deal with them and how to manage my anxieties in a more healthy way and how to tell the naughty voice in my head to shut up!

It has been good to learn about neuroplasticity, and the fact that it is possible to rewire my brain. I am empowered to seek out further information on how adverse childhood experiences can affect you as an adult, and how to untangle what can sometimes feel like a very jumbled mess. I am still very much working on this, and it is going to be a process, but I greatly appreciate all the support thus far. If possible I would like to be signposted to support systems after CLEAR, as I have been having some with managing relationships in the workplace, especially with my line manager who I can often feel triggered around/by.

I feel like I have untangled a lot of things. I feel like I have progressed. I am more accepting of myself. This has been so helpful and good for me to see progress. I have connected with counsellor and am thankful for my sessions.

I have found my counselling invaluable. Its helped me see things a lot clearer and from a different perspective.

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Whilst anxiety and depression are still in my life I have a better handle on coping mechanisms and have been able to stop black out drinking which made everything worse. I feel able to maintain good relationships and have a lot of ambition for the future

Have got so much more from my counselling sessions than I was expecting. Understanding how far back my trauma goes, and how it has effected the decisions I have made throughout my life was a massive breakthrough. Also starting to learn how to stop blaming myself for everything and to start dealing with shame and guilt has been really important, as well as starting to explore healthy boundaries. I have been really surprised how much I have thought about and processed the things discussed during the sessions between them, and since they finished. I have gotten things from counselling that I do not know I even needed before I started.

I feel like I've made good progress, especially in regards to compassion to myself and dealing with repressed emotions. After each session I became more and more comfortable with expressing emotions, as well as dealing with them after the sessions – which is something that has never happened in all my years of dealing with therapy. I can't thank CLEAR and counsellor enough for the help I've received, but I'll do it again; thank you!

While I think it's a fluctuating state, I am now having periods where I feel more "in" and in control of my life. I also didn't realise I could feel like the memories are far away and that there would be beautiful moments.

I have benefited from the sessions in ways I would not have imagined. The journey has been hard but totally worthwhile and will continue.

I feel good about myself. I think I'm a very nice person. I've learned a lot and I feel so much more in control of myself and my future. if things get on top of me I think I have the skills to help myself and keep thinking the right way.

Definitely given me a better perspective - it just helps everything. Felt very safe

Made me see my self worth. Made me happier- speaking to someone and being heard. Made me feel less invisible.

The clients' reflections of difficulties in counselling.

I wish I made more use of the time, it took me too long to trust counsellor, this was my fault.

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Excellent opportunity. Only gives a taster, but I've been lucky enough in the short time we have had to resolve very old significant trauma. Not long enough, especially for people with complex PTSD.

Positive experience. I Was very anxious when I started coming and I feel much more relaxed now and have a lot more insight. I've learned a lot about myself and my relationships, past and present. I feel that the complexity of my past trauma is such that I would benefit from a much longer course of therapy but I am grateful for the sessions I have had.

I am unable to express things due to the way I am. Sorry.

CLEAR Service feedback by clients

The CLEAR Service Feedback questionnaire is embedded across all referral pathways and therapeutic interventions for clients. It aims to give clients an opportunity to share their thoughts on CLEAR as a service at the end of counselling/therapy. It asks what was good about their care, what could be improved, anything else to feedback and an overall rating of the service.

What was good about my care

My counsellor was really genuine and cared about helping me.

That is so hard because there is so much I feel connected, safe, listened to, a lot of information that has allowed me to run with myself. I had a moment in a session where everything fell into place. It was literally life changing and I have a different life now Literally everything about my life is different. It feels unbelievably safe and I felt very held. I feel empowered and stronger not to need external validation and be in a relationship that was made me feel invalidated. I think this will only have a positive impact on my children's life. Pregnancy work was helpful, I feel unbelievably connected to my baby, understanding some of the emotional pain I was in. After a couple of sessions with you I spontaneously wrote to my unborn baby#. I know I gained more head space for my unborn after our sessions started. I also stopped causing myself physical pain to cope with my emotional pain.

I felt understood and found that it really helped having support during the beginning of the investigation process. I'm not sure I could have coped without it! I felt like I always had a safe space to discuss how its impacted me.

It was good to know that I could talk about anything and not be judged.

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I felt totally supported by counsellor throughout my counselling sessions. I felt comfortable, I could confide in her about anything and she always made me feel at ease and supported.

Counsellor listened to everything I had to say without judgement, but was still able to point out and challenge me and the way I look at my flaws. Counsellor has helped me develop healthier coping mechanisms.

The room was private and counsellor was easy to talk to once I had the confidence to do so.

The counsellor was very good and I felt comfortable talking to her. I appreciated the sessions being flexible so I could have them in the evenings after work. The amount of sessions was really good and that they were free, everything has been really good. It has really helped me and made me feel so much better.

Everything! I was anxious about starting counselling, I did not think I would know how to talk about my trauma. The sessions were excellent and my therapist was amazing. She guided me gently to be able to talk about the things I needed to and gave me the tools and reassurance I needed to start making changes in my life. She started me on the journey to self compassion. She was supportive and gently challenging of my negative self beliefs. I felt very safe in my sessions and never judged. It was everything. I could have hoped for and more.

Feeling supported, guided and held through the experience with a genuinely caring therapist. Feeling I was working with a congruent therapist who had my best interest at heart.

The whole process has been truly amazing, my counsellor, Heather, has helped me get back on track and make me re think my thought process. I can now think positively and move forward in my life. No longer thinking the glass is half empty, but more the glass is half full.

Safe space. Feeling heard. Understanding and compassion.

It helped me gain more confidence in myself to push for my goals

Very reliable, dependable. It goes without saying that I was so appreciative of the fact it was fully funded. Also, I found I spoke about things which had never come up before, and I think that was to do with the skill of my counsellor at allowing me to explore uncomfortable things in a safe space.

I didn't feel like a client, I felt as though they were there to support me and often referred to

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different techniques to use and helped steer me back when I was getting off course. They were super flexible when I couldn't be there physically and accommodated for that. They did not make me feel bad for not attending every session as I found them hard at times, just personally talking about things. They were completely understanding, and I always felt heard and understood by them. I am so grateful to have been paired with them.

Things that could be improved

No not at all - I just want more

Genuinely nothing. The timing worked perfectly, communication was perfect and the pace was perfect.

There is nothing I can think of, I am very content with the care I received

I don't think there is anything to improve, was all really good.

I wished I spaced them out more so had longer, but recognise my awareness only came from weekly sessions.

Not being able to continue working with the same therapist outside of the specified number of sessions.

Is it possible to put together a list of recommended therapists? Possibly ones that have been through your trauma training and that you can put stamp of approval to? There are so many therapists out there that are able to claim expertise but actually only have a little experience in trauma. A client need to know where to start looking after your initial help

I wish I had a longer block of sessions as I would be able to go into the more complex issues more

I always struggle with the fact that the sessions are only an hour. It often feels like as soon as I open up, it is time to finish. I also felt the decor in my counsellor's room wasn't appropriate for my age group, and it could sometimes be off-putting and make me less comfortable talking about adult topics.

I wish I could have had more sessions, that they could continue until a natural close point was reached.

Sometimes it was overwhelming and felt like too much to have a session.

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General feedback

I found the service fantastic and very supportive.

It was really wonderful. I feel so much better for all the support.

I could not have asked for better care and support. Thank you for all the help and support you have given me over the last few months. Best I could have hoped for : 10

When I started my anxiety was really bad, and made me feel physically unwell and exhausted and on edge all the time. I also had flashbacks very frequently which caused anxiety going to bed. Now I feel so much better, much more relaxed, more like my self before bad things happened. The flashbacks are much less and I have been given helpful methods to manage my anxiety and help bring me back to the present. I am very, very grateful and feel so much better, thank you.

I think I did more work in the 12 sessions than I did in three years with another therapist.

Truly amazing service, helpful and a real eye opener for me.

As well as talk therapy, I also was referred to the trauma informed yoga sessions, which was so great, and really valuable, thank you, I loved this.

I think it's the best thing I've ever had and I would advise anyone with PTSD to do the same.

Just a heartfelt thank you to CLEAR, especially my therapist

The overall (averaged) rating given by clients ($n=19$), where 10 = the best a client could hope for in the service was 9.8.

Learning and Goals from the year

There has been successful attainment of the goal from the year to transition CLEAR client information and records to the CLEAR database which will enable up-to-date clinical information for each client and clients' records being central, improving on our risk and safeguarding overview and management. The feedback from counsellors/therapists, administration and clinical team has been overall very positive which are reflected in the increased breadth and consistency of data collected. The follow-on goal is to widen the

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training for all staff on consistent and routine use of the database for input and recording client work including safeguarding processes and enabling more useful consent and contract records.

A goal for service has been to review adult client processes including the Referral to Assessment to Allocation process through a trauma-informed lens, ensuring clients are not having to repeat their trauma experiences and to test how and when CLEAR is considering Readiness for Therapy. This has been undertaken in the past 6-months with changes made to the referral form, which are more client-specific to capture complexity, appropriateness for CLEAR and readiness for therapy. Following on from this, the removal of an intake assessment as a Readiness for Therapy telephone contact is now being made by the Clinical Lead, supported by Hope for Harm and Clinical Placement Lead.

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