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2020 / 21

# Impact on Teesside

Year 1 Quality Report

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## Executive Summary

Impact on Teesside is a partnership between Alliance Psychological Services Ltd, Insight Healthcare and Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind which was established to provide a psychological wellbeing and therapy service to residents of Teesside commissioned by Tees Valley CCG. The psychological wellbeing and therapy service consists of a core Improving Access to Psychological Therapies service, an integrated Long Term Health Conditions / Persistent Physical Symptoms service, wellbeing and counselling service, a recovery-based service and support for complex needs who do not meet the criteria for secondary care or do not wish to access it.

The aim of combining these services into a collective provision is to ensure patients are able to access the right support for them at the right time without having to be transferred between services and providers.

The service was mobilised just as the first lockdown happened due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was already a challenging process, and this made it much more difficult. The repercussions were felt throughout the year with staff working from home and having to home school their children at the same time! People accessing the service being unable to attend face to face sessions and having to get to grips with online and telephone therapy instead. Multiple changes to lockdown rules, including social distancing, isolations, mask wearing and the need to make our premises covid safe meant a delay in being able to offer the services we had planned. Despite these challenges the staff working within Impact have given it their all and we wouldn't be where we are without them.



## Service Values

We want anyone who is struggling with their mental health and is suffering from anxiety, stress or depression to be able to reach out and access our support whenever they need it. Our team will listen to your story and understand your needs, before working with you to develop your skills and coping techniques to help you make positive changes to your life.

We know how hard it can be to trust someone and open up to them. Our values are at the heart of our organisation and our team practices them each and every day.

### **Generous**

We're focused on you and will always invest our time listening to you and your story.

### **Understanding**

We never judge, we simply try to understand and in turn help you to understand your situation and experiences.

### **Compassionate**

We want everyone we work with to feel safe, comfortable and relaxed. We genuinely care about you and your wellbeing.

### **Professional**

While we're empathetic, kind and caring our team is made up of trained and qualified professionals who have significant experience and expertise in mental health.



## Services Provided

### **Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)**

The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme began in 2008 and has transformed the treatment of adult anxiety disorders and depression in England. IAPT is widely recognised as the most ambitious programme of talking therapies in the world and in the past year alone more than one million people accessed IAPT services for help to overcome their depression and anxiety, and better manage their mental health.

#### Low Intensity Therapy

Our low intensity talking therapy can help people to take control of their mental and emotional health by teaching them how to make positive changes to their lifestyle and develop new coping tools utilising Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

Our therapists or psychological wellbeing practitioners (PWP's as they are sometimes called) will work with people to understand how they're feeling and the way it's affecting their everyday life. Then, through a mix of face to face sessions, telephone or video calls, along with workbooks, self help guides and online therapy courses, they will learn how to 'self manage' their mental health issues. Group work is also offered within this area of the service.

#### High Intensity Therapy

Impact offers a variety of high intensity therapies for people when low intensity therapy hasn't been effective, or the issues being presented are of a more complex nature. High intensity interventions include:

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
- Counselling for Depression (CfD)
- Interpersonal Therapy (IPT)
- Eye Movement Desensitisation & Reprocessing (EMDR)
- Groups

#### Long Term Conditions

Psychological therapy has been shown to improve outcomes for people with a range of long-term conditions such as diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder who also have a mental health problem such as depression or anxiety. There is also strong evidence for the use of therapies to support people with medically unexplained symptoms. We support people in this pathway by offering talking therapies and group sessions, tailored to meet the needs of those experiencing physical health problems.

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## **Counselling and Wellbeing**

For clients who require support but do not meet the clinical criteria for the Core IAPT pathway, we also have the Counselling and Wellbeing pathway. Counselling is all about listening and then helping to find ways to deal with emotional issues.

It can be hard to open up and share thoughts and emotions. It can sometimes be harder still to share feelings with a family member or friend. We know it's often easier to talk to a trained professional as they are not personally involved and provide objective, unbiased support. Counselling is offered for a range of issues including:

- Bereavement
- Relationship breakdown
- Gender or sexual identity
- Anxiety and depression
- Stress

## **Foundation and Recovery**

Recovering from poor mental health is a unique journey. Every person is different, so everyone's recovery is different too. The one thing that is constant though, is that everyone deserves to live a happy and healthy life that fulfils them.

It's important to recognise that there's not just one road to recovery. Different to therapy, support with the Recovery and foundation pathway offers an individualised service that includes peer support, self-care and holistic practices to help support good mental health and general wellbeing.

### **Recovery**

The Recovery pathway offers an alternative to traditional therapies and counselling and is primarily for those clients who have struggled to engage with therapy in the past and have a history of accessing secondary care services.

Clients are allocated a Recovery Worker who can help with issues such as:

- Using drugs or alcohol to cope with thoughts and feelings
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Difficulty in gaining access to other services
- Struggling with money or housing

### **Foundation**

The Foundation pathway provides practical support in managing mental health issues such as:

- Feeling lonely and isolated
- Struggling with mental health
- Looking for practical ways to manage difficulties

## Recovery College

The Recovery College provides support through learning and provides a number of short courses to learn about managing wellbeing and mental health. These include:

- Coping techniques
- Emotional resilience
- Confidence building
- Mindfulness

## 3 + Pathway

Impact also operates an additional pathway called 3+. This pathway is for clients who may have previously accessed other forms of therapy which have not been helpful, may have a mental health diagnosis such as personality disorder or bipolar disorder and may have had involvement with secondary services but are not currently suitable for secondary care. They may have higher levels of risk that would not normally be in the remit of a primary care service. Clients accessing this pathway will be offered support from an experienced practitioner who is usually trained in multiple modalities of therapy and can offer an integrated approach to therapy to meet the client's needs.

At the start of the service Impact worked in collaboration with Tees, Esk and Wear Valley (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust to deliver a pilot which saw employees from TEWV working within the primary care service to smooth the transition for clients between primary and secondary care. Whilst the pilot did not continue, many of the positive working practices and relationships remain which include weekly huddles between primary and secondary care services. These huddles provide a space to discuss options available to clients and to ensure they access the most appropriate service for their needs.

## Special Interest Groups

Impact has a number of special interest groups (SIG) focussing on developing specific areas to better support clients accessing the service. These include:

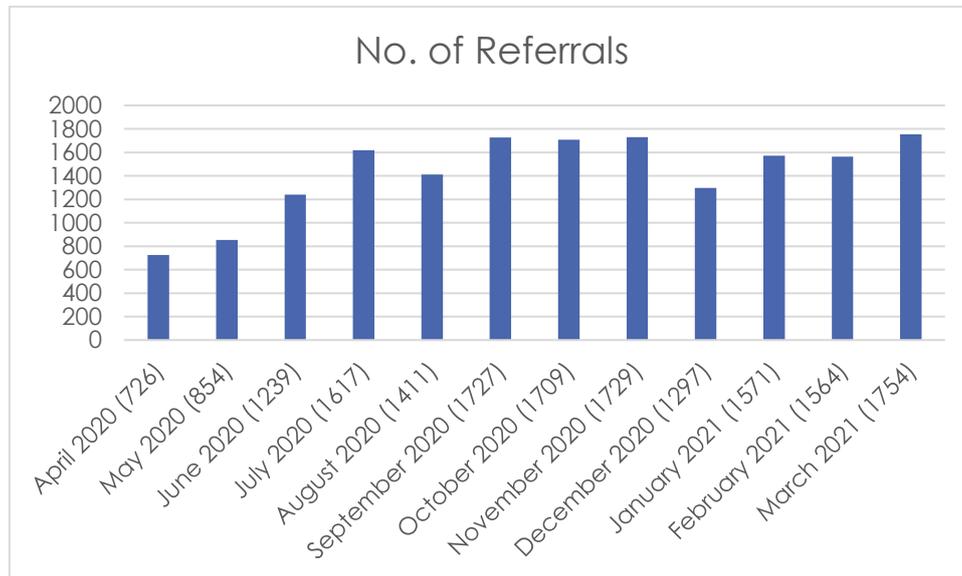
- Perinatal
- Vulnerable young people and students
- Vulnerable older people

We continue to review the service regularly and will create SIGs as they are required to ensure the highest quality of care. However, SIGs do not interfere with the services we deliver to all clients, and we persist in finding ways we can develop and improve.

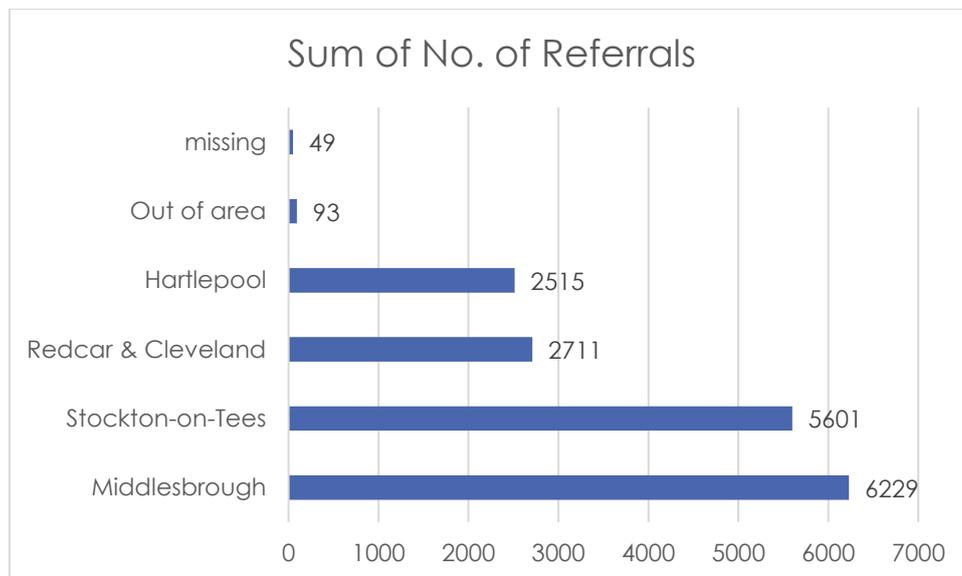
## Performance and Achievement

### Referrals

From April 2020 to March 2021, Impact received a total of 17198 referrals.



Referrals started low due to the new service being established and the coronavirus pandemic. However, referrals soon picked up and have remained consistent throughout the year apart from the usual seasonal dips.

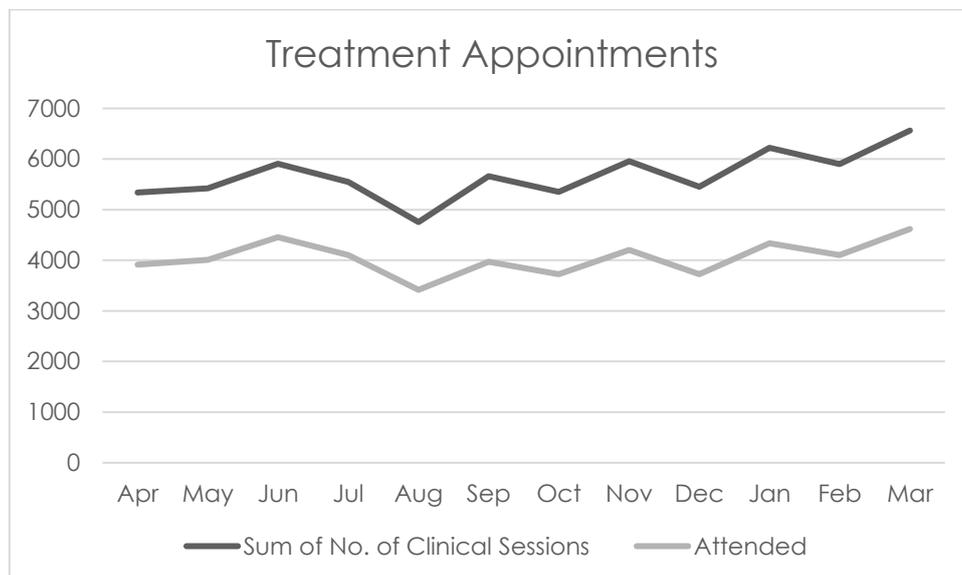
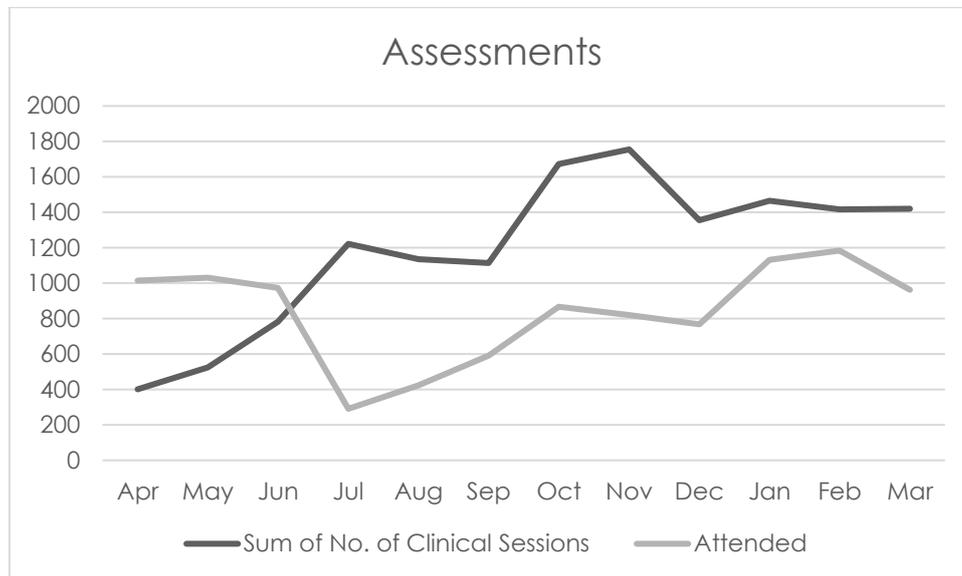


The largest number of referrals have been from the Middlesbrough area, closely followed by Stockton-on-Tees.

## Appointments

### Assessments

Impact offered 14266 assessment appointments in the period.



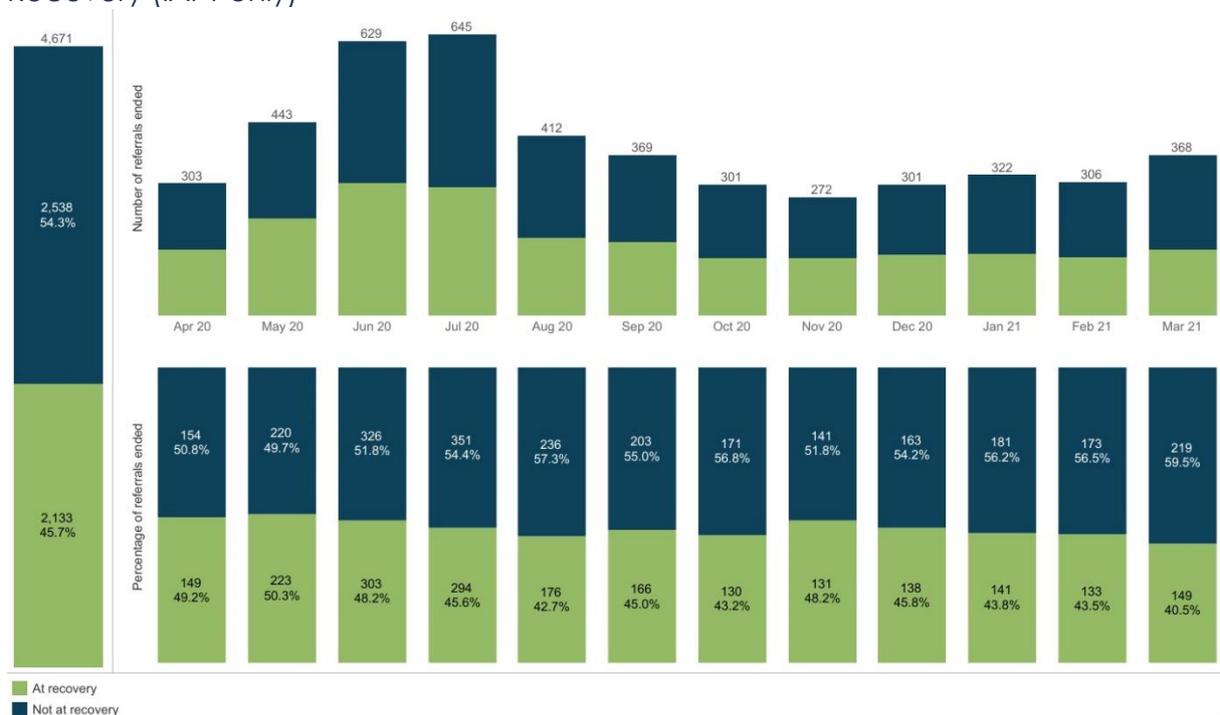
68072 treatment and follow up sessions were offered, and attendance remained consistent despite the pandemic, Impact adapted its method of delivery to try to accommodate the requirements of lock downs and isolation requirements and delivered sessions by telephone and video calls. The number of appointments offered continued to increase.

## Targets and Achievement

Entering treatment within 6 weeks of referral	75%	Referrals assessed within 10 days of referral	90%
Entering treatment within 18 weeks of referral	95%	Proportion of people completing therapy	70%
Prevalence (proportion of people with a level of need within CCG area who enter treatment)	22% (annual target)	Proportion of referrals with a problem descriptor recorded at assessment	85%
Proportion of people who completed treatment and moved to recovery	50%		

The targets in the above table are for the IAPT element of the service, however we apply the same waiting time targets across all pathways.

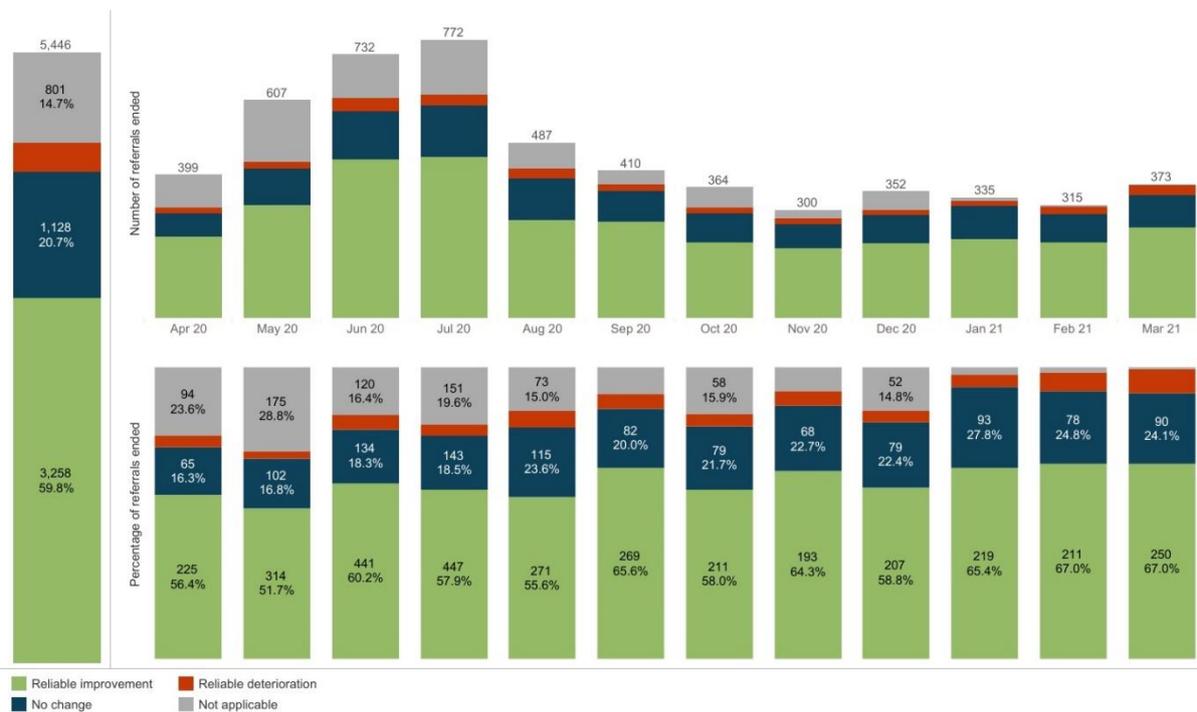
## Recovery (IAPT only)



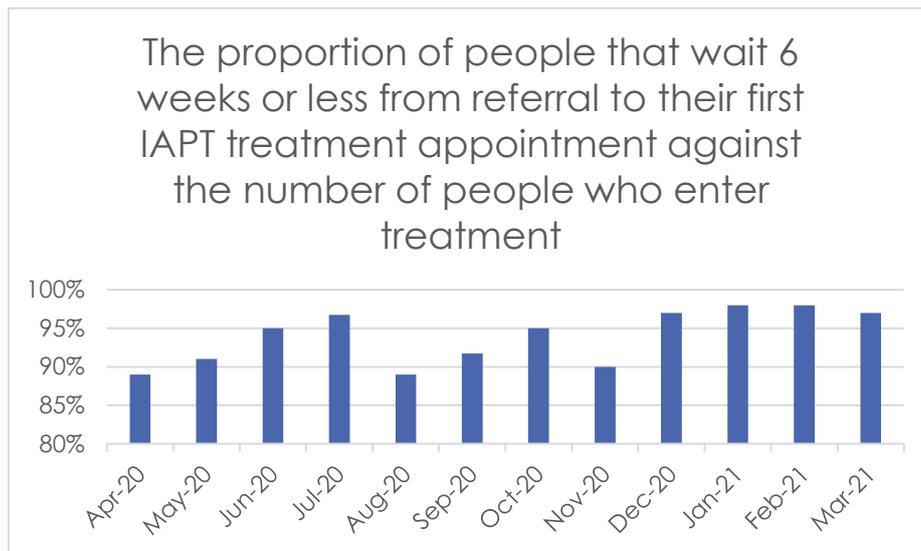
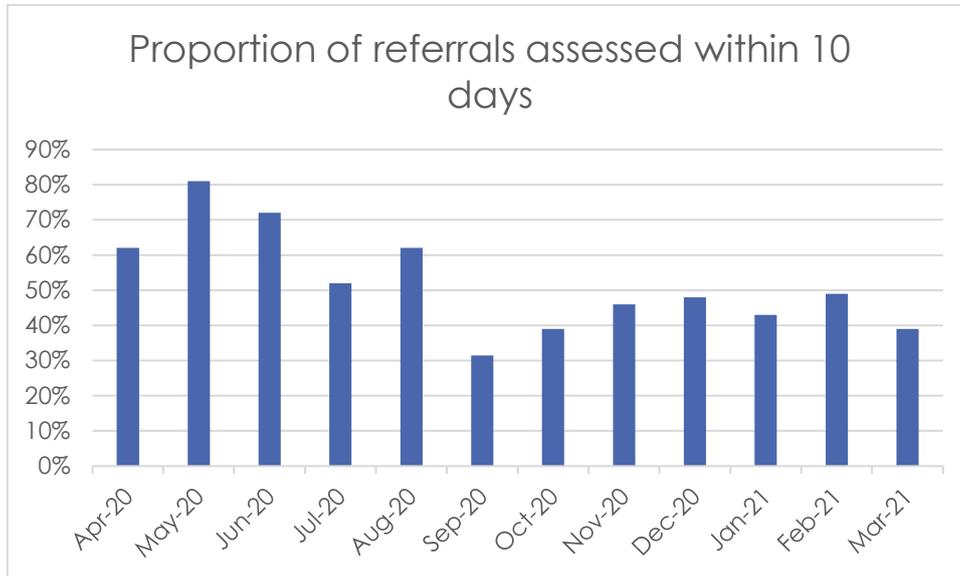
'Recovery' has a specific clinical meaning within the IAPT context linked to a reduction in symptoms measured using questionnaires throughout therapy. Meeting the expected target for clinical recovery has been a challenge from the outset. Clients were transferred into Impact from providers within, and external to, the Impact on Teesside partnership. Some of these were part way through treatment, some were

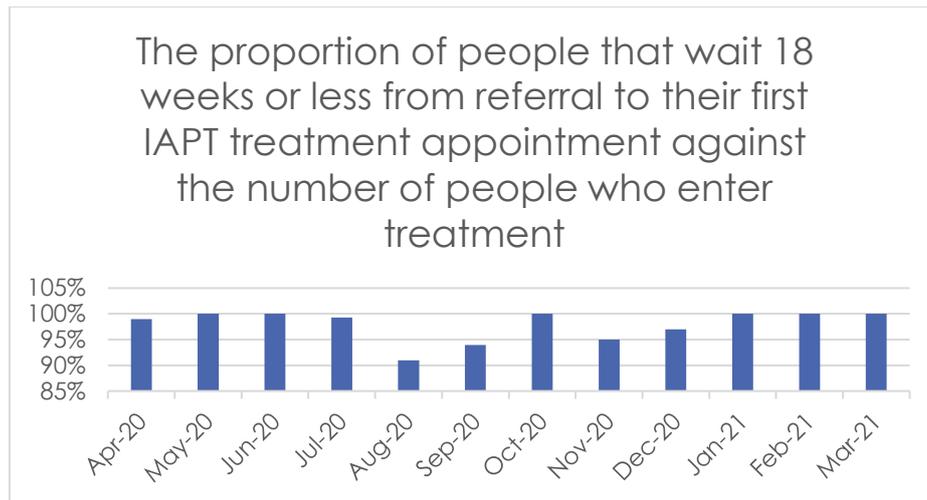
on waiting lists and had been assessed within different criteria which meant reassessments needed to take place to ensure appropriate support was offered. During this period the UK went into national lockdown and all staff were advised to work from home which also changed the way interventions were delivered as previously mentioned. The hard work and dedication of the team during this time meant we maintained a recovery rate just under the target set for the year. Whilst this is disappointing, it is still a result to be proud of given the difficult circumstances. Improving the recovery rate for our clients and reaching the target that has been set is a key priority for the coming year.

The following graphic depicts reliable change in clients who may not have reached the recovery target but have significantly improved at the end of treatment. This shows an overall improvement rate of 59.8%.



## Waiting Times





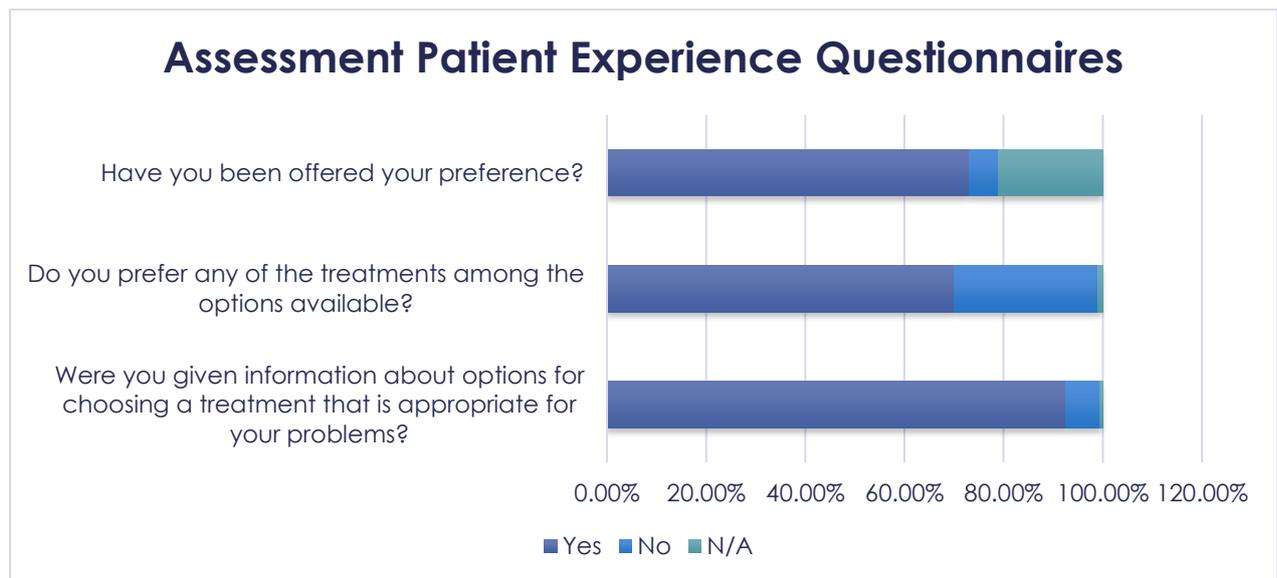
Clients are offered support calls following their assessment, to start them on their treatment journey and to provide them with support whilst waiting for therapy to start. However, waits for therapy and counselling are longer than we'd like, and this is also a target for the coming year. Over 6000 clients were transferred in to Impact during the initial mobilisation period for the service which equates to 6 months of anticipated activity. Some clients had already been waiting for treatment before being transferred into the service and it was a priority to ensure appointments were offered to these clients as soon as possible. This resulted in a delay in being able to offer appointments to new clients coming into the service and this has had a cumulative effect on waiting times.

Reducing waiting times is a key priority for the coming year.

## Feedback, Complaints and Compliments

Impact utilises IAPT standard patient experience questionnaires (PEQ's). The PEQ's are issued after assessment and after treatment is complete and provides the space for clients to provide honest feedback on the service they have received.

### Assessment PEQ's



Impact received 1034 completed questionnaires from clients.

Selection of comments:

*"very professional and I feel very comfortable talking to people and they assure me that it is confidential"*

*"the time scale between being referred and being first contact was relatively quick the phone consultation was thorough enough and I was asked all the relevant questions thus to attain the information they require to ensure I receive the care that is tailored to my needs"*

*"I think it was fantastic understood fully how I felt did everything by the book"*

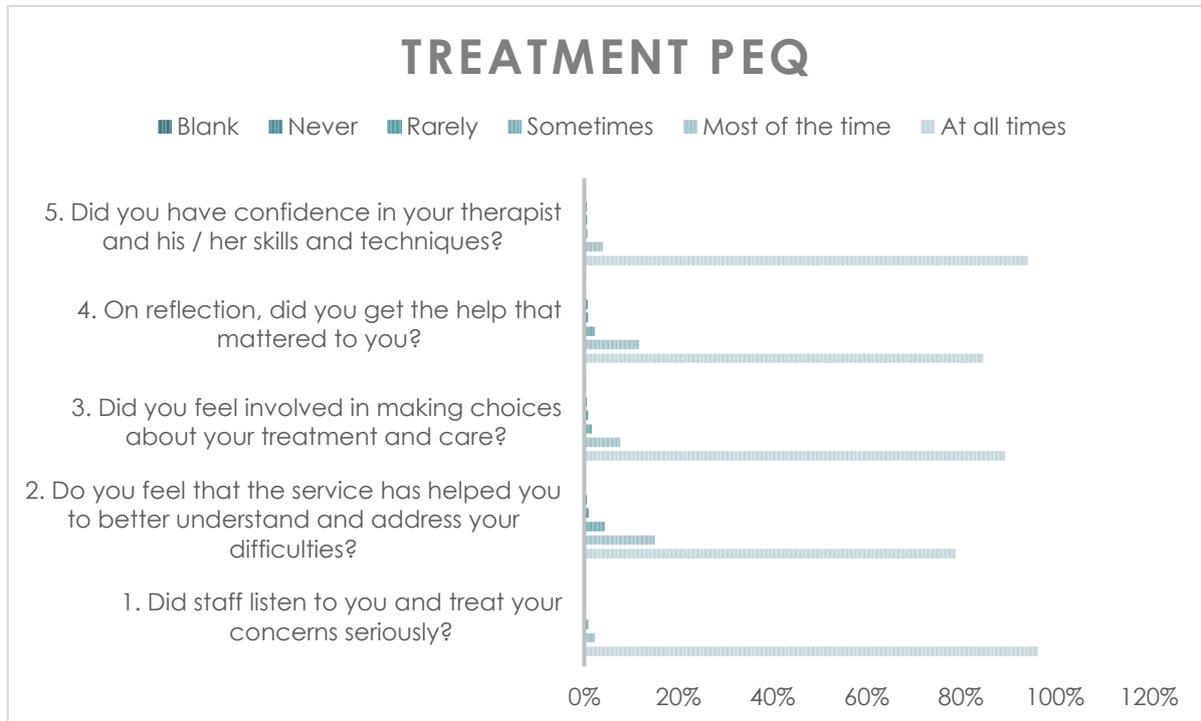
*"the young woman I spoke to showed me such compassion and empathy that I felt I'd known her a long time she was very professional and supportive"*

*"very good service was listened to and was offered options just great"*

*"the lady i spoke to was so friendly very caring and understanding she went through the options i have and help me choose the best one for my issues i find it very difficult to talk to people but i managed to talk to her with ease"*

## Treatment PEQ's

943 Clients completed an end of treatment PEQ.



### Selection of comments:

"X was so calming to me, I was in really bad place and now I'm living a much better and happier life, she listened to me, never judged me, just as easy to get on with, thank you so much"

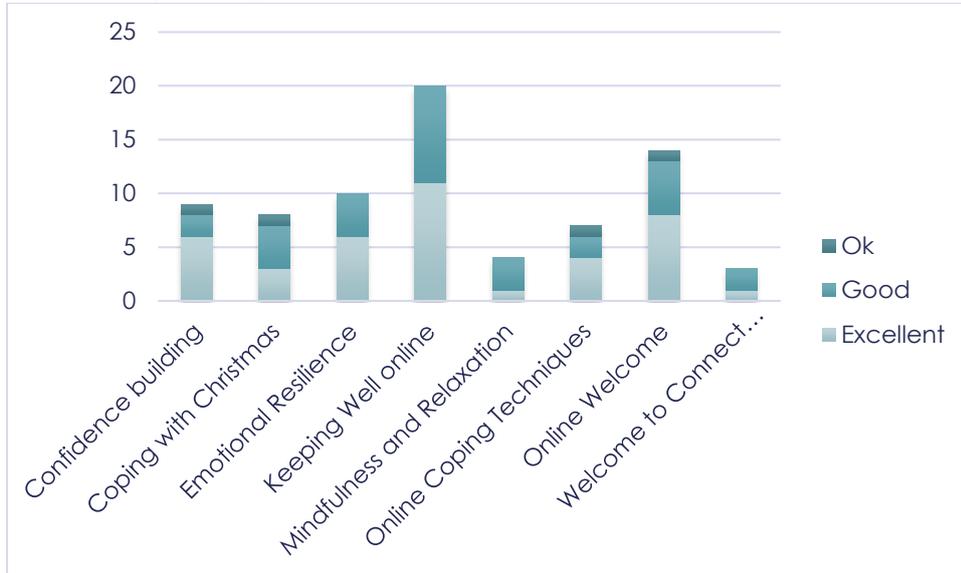
"My life has been transformed by the help and understanding of my counsellor. I have been given skills and strategies to use in situations that are difficult for me, and it works. I cannot believe how happy I am now, life is by far from perfect but I know how to deal with it now."

"I think my therapists went above and beyond, she helped me understand the anxiety and helped teach me the triggers and how to deal with the anxiety in steps. I really can't thank her enough for the help she provided me with."

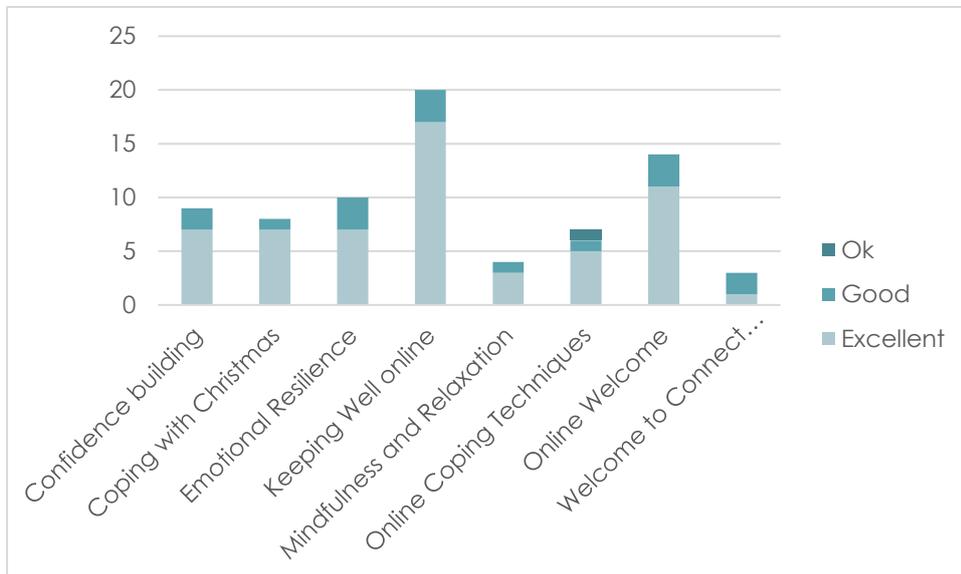
## Feedback for the Recovery Pathway

Attendees of the Recovery College courses were asked for their feedback on the following areas:

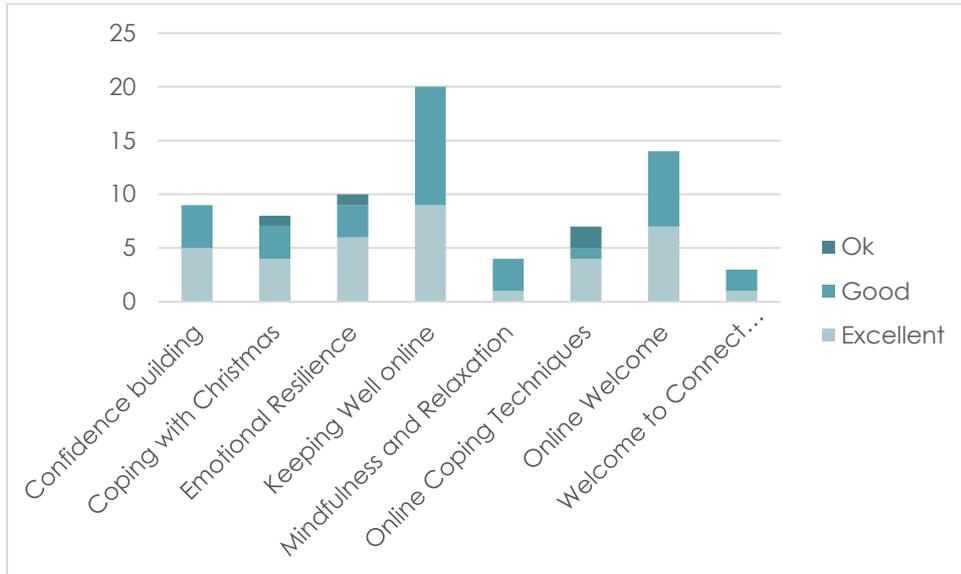
### What they thought of the course content



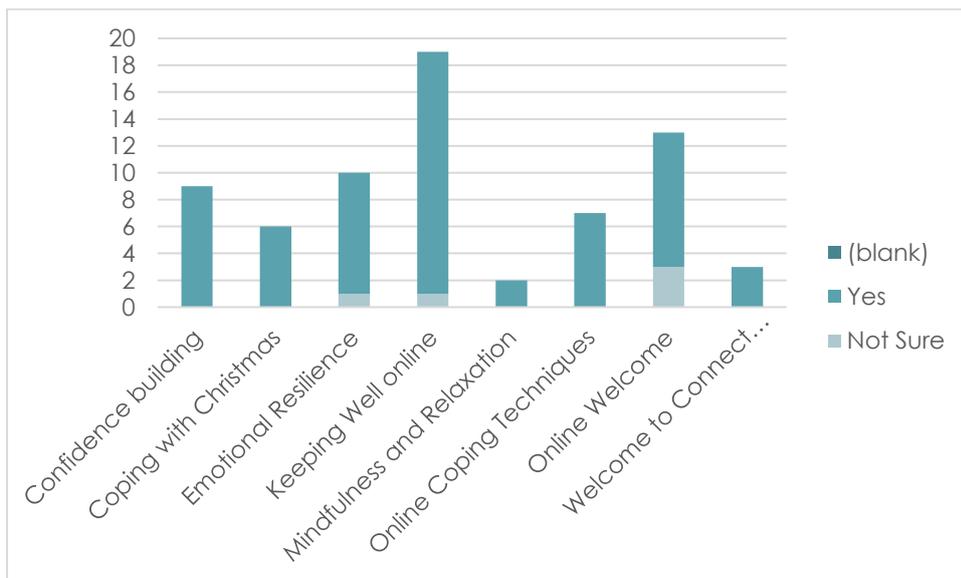
### How well the course facilitators communicated with them



### How well the course met attendees expectations



### Would they recommend the college to friends and family



The college has also set up a peer facilitator programme whereby people who have been through the service can learn how to provide peer support to others and enable them to facilitate peer support sessions. Feedback for this programme has been overwhelmingly positive.

Selection of comments:

*"Well run course which was informative and enjoyable."*

*"Really enjoyable, thank you. It's lovely to feel connected and able to learn in a group that is so friendly."*

*"your service is unlike any other service I've been referred to before and I've been referred to many other services.. Trust Me! Impact definitely stands out from the crowd by far."*

*"Friendly and inspiring"*

*"Really enjoyed all courses, thank you. It's really been a lifeline for me this year and has helped me to challenge myself. I've felt comfortable taking part with others in the group"*

## Complaints and Incidents

### Complaints

The service recorded a total of 9 complaints in the period. Complaints generally centred around the following issues:

- Complaints centred around communication. These included:
  - Being informed of accurate waiting times. Complainants have said if they had been informed of the length of waits, they could have better prepared themselves
  - Communication about appointments and not receiving calls at appointment times when expected
  - Not receiving any contact when calls had been promised
- Other complaints centred around staff conduct and the perception that they weren't being listened to
- Inaccurate information being provided which resulted in confusion

### Improvement actions:

As a result of these complaints the service has carried out the following improvement actions:

- Provided support to staff to enable them to provide clear and accurate information to clients at assessments and KIT calls about waiting times and ensure appropriate alternatives are offered.
- Provide support to staff to ensure they don't make promises they are unable to keep (e.g. that someone will ring at a specific time without consulting the person first)
- Ensure staff are documenting what they have done and why, particularly with treatment decisions.



## Incidents and learning

Impact recorded 12 clinical incidents between 01/04/20 and 31/03/21. The majority of these incidents happened before the client was seen for assessment. We recorded and reviewed these incidents anyway as there is always an opportunity for learning from every incident.

## Findings

The following findings were identified during reviews and investigations:

- Communication with other services involved in a client's care doesn't always happen as it should.
- Decision making isn't always documented fully.
- Clinical notes aren't always reflective of a client's session
- Policies, processes, and procedures were not always followed with no indication why.
- Internal communication sometimes delays action.

## Improvement actions

The following improvement actions were identified:

- Ensure staff speak to clients about other services they are working with and gain consent to collaborate with them, explaining the benefits of doing so.
- Clearly document decisions made but also the process that led to them.
- Clinical notes training has been provided to all staff.
- Individual support offered to staff members involved in incidents.
- Improvements to communication channels within the service to ensure more direct and appropriate communication to specific pathways and areas of the service.

## System and Process Changes

As a result of reviews, the following actions have been taken:

- Review of the duty process to streamline support to staff for urgent issues such as risk and safeguarding and direct other tasks to more appropriate places.
- Trained leads and seniors in handling complaints and incidents.
- Provided training for all staff in record keeping and risk management.
- Changed the information management system that was being used to enable all records to be stored in one place rather than different systems for different pathways.

## Quality Assurance Forum and Governance

Impact has an established governance group which meets on a bi-monthly basis. All organisations involved in the Impact partnership are represented at the group and it has responsibility of approving policies and procedures to have oversight of complaints and incidents. Impact have also recently introduced a quality assurance forum. The purpose of the forum is to ensure all improvement actions are carried out and to they are of benefit to clients, staff and the delivery of the service. Now that the service is becoming more established and work is starting to return to offices and venues, audits will be implemented to assess the quality of services delivered within the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) guidance<sup>1</sup> assessing patient experience, clinical effectiveness and patient safety. Alliance was previously accredited by the Accreditation Programme for Psychological Therapy Services (APPTS)<sup>2</sup> and is working towards the same quality standards within Impact. Audits will be categorised within different quality domains:

- Clinical
- Operational
- Information governance
- Safeguarding
- Organisational



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<sup>1</sup> [Final-Quality-Improvement-QI-Tools-09-12-20.pdf \(hqip.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Accreditation Programme for Psychological Therapies Services | BPS](#)

## Quality Improvement Targets for 2021 / 22

The following improvement targets have been selected based on feedback received from clients using the service, achievement of targets set and complaints and incidents the service has received and been involved in over the last year. However, all areas of the service are monitored and opportunities to improve are sought at every opportunity.

### Decrease waiting times and provide more support to those clients waiting for treatment

Our main focus for 2021 / 22 is to reduce waiting times for support. We recognise the impact this is having on clients entering the service and have also identified a challenge in supporting clients whilst they are waiting for treatment to begin.

To achieve this target, we have received additional funding to employ mental health support workers to help in supporting those clients with higher level needs who are unable to tolerate current waiting times.

We are developing the website to include a 'client portal'. The portal will be accessible to all clients via a login that will be provided once the client is assessed. The assessor will be able to bookmark particular sections of the portal that they feel may be relevant, but clients will have access to all of the materials contained within it. This will include recordings of group sessions so if clients don't feel comfortable or are unable to attend groups due to time constraints, they will still have access to the materials the group covers. Within each section there will be things to watch and listen to, things to read and things to do. This will also help clients to prepare for therapy and gain a deeper understanding of what is going on for them.

We are also reviewing demand and capacity within the service to ensure capacity is utilised. This will be a big piece of work due to the different roles and pathways we have within the service, but it will help to eliminate any wasted time and streamline processes.

### Improve recovery rate and outcomes for clients

Our aim when providing services to clients is for them to achieve their desired outcome and to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

We will be working with staff in line management and supervision to help them to gain an understanding of the importance of monitoring client progress whilst in the service. Active monitoring will help to identify when improvements are not being made more quickly and make adjustment to treatment plans where needed.

We will also be creating more avenues to receive feedback from clients. This will include a feedback form on the website and meetings where clients will be invited to

provide their experience of the service and make suggestions on how we can improve.

## Increase access rates and face to face appointment provision

Our next target is to increase access of the service and face to face appointments. We have not actively promoted the service due to mobilising the service during a national lockdown and ensuring those clients who were transferred in were seen and offered appointments. This has resulted in us not hitting our access targets. We are working on improving our social media presence and creating a marketing campaign to ensure all residents of Teesside are aware of the service and how to access it.

Staff are now returning to work in offices and venues across the region. We are currently supporting this process and are increasing the face to face appointment provision for all clients. We have carried out Covid risk assessments and have equipment and procedures in place to ensure a safe environment. We carry out Covid questionnaires with all clients who are given face to face sessions and all staff have been offered the vaccine. Whilst we will continue to offer sessions via telephone and online, we understand the value of choice and face to face appointments.

In order to have a collaborative approach to quality improvement, leads and senior staff across the service were asked to produce their own priority areas to focus on in improving the service. The priorities are linked with overall service targets as well as improving client experience and safety.

## Conclusion

The first year of Impact on Teesside has been a challenging one. However, despite the obstacles faced, the service was mobilised quickly and adaptations to how services would be delivered were made to enable us to support the thousands of people who have come to us for help. Although waiting times are currently high, we hope to reduce these as much as we can whilst providing additional support to those waiting.

The staff employed in Impact have worked incredibly hard in getting clients into the service and receiving appropriate support to meet their needs. They have been a consistently dedicated team and we wouldn't be where we are without them, and we thank them for their enthusiasm and commitment to improving the lives of others.

We look forward to serving the residents of Teesside over the coming years and we welcome collaboration with other services to ensure clients are receiving the right support to enable them to manage their mental health and wellbeing.

