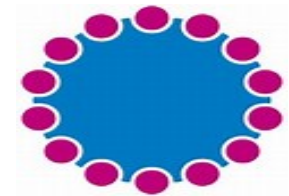


# Marianne Bolton & Sydney Nickerson

## Primary Care Network Occupational Therapists



### Enhancing Health Outcomes: The Vital Role of Occupational Therapy in Primary Care Settings

#### What Was The issue?

- Large numbers of the population do not meet criteria for mental health support under secondary care services, notably around support for moderate- severe depression & anxiety
- GPs often left to carry burden of care
- Increase in need for mental health support following COVID-19 pandemic

#### Why OT In Primary Care?

- Provides holistic approach to mental health care through use of OT assessment and intervention at the primary care level
- Minimizes exclusion criteria so individuals with the most complex needs are not excluded from care
- Flexibility in how, when, and where care is offered to find different approaches that suits the patient and their needs
- Highlight the value of OT's practical approach to improving upon and maintaining patients health & wellbeing

#### What Was Created?

- Within newly created ARRS roles (Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme), started to create pathway for mental health support under Primary Care
- Available to meet with people feeling more "stuck" with psychological help and not getting secondary support
- Within sessions, offering practical, focused, interventions around daily routines/activities and educating/coaching around practices that shift thinking

#### Breakdown (Jan 22' - Present)

##### Clissold Park & Shoreditch Park & City PCN

Average Caseload Size	20-35
Average # of Sessions Completed/Patient*	7
Average time in OT care	Around 17 – 19 weeks
Average time from referral to initial appointment offering	1 – 2 weeks

\*Where more than 2 sessions were completed

#### Impact On Patients And Primary Care Service

Swift interventions and flexible scheduling ensure that individuals are not left on lengthy waiting lists, creating greater opportunities for them to attend appointments. More options for Primary Care staff to link patients with NHS support for mental health.

Feedback from service users:

- 'Valued focus on daily routines as way of creating more supportive thinking/mental wellbeing'
- 'Have moved to better work opportunities as result of talking through limiting beliefs and building confidence in taking action'
- 'Finding greater acceptance about mood and life experiences'
- 'It has been helpful to talk about other goals in life rather than what happened in the past'

#### Where Do We Go From here?

Occupational therapists are uniquely positioned to adopt a holistic approach to care, making them an ideal complement to traditional primary care services.

We suggest that to enhance the development of this role and the support provided, these positions could be optimized to:

- Provide mental health support at the population level by facilitating community-based events and initiatives
- Co-work with psychology teams to help patients practically apply psychological work to daily life and occupations
  - Explore outcome measures that effectively capture the impact of the role