Deancross

The Tower Hamlets Personality Disorder Service

Guidelines for Referrers

Overview of Deancross

Deancross provides a service for adults living in Tower Hamlets who either have a diagnosis of personality disorder or present with significant problems due to aspects of their personality, (for example individuals with severe and longstanding interpersonal difficulties which have a significant effect on their lives). A major aim of our service is to help people to find a way back into society and into active lives as far as this is possible.

Based in the community, Deancross offers an assessment and treatment service based on the Mentalization Based Treatment model, a modified psychoanalytic approach. It is open from 9-5 Monday to Friday. The therapeutic work in the programmes focuses on facilitating patients to explore and understand how they mentalize, that is, how they think about, reflect on and understand feelings and experiences, both their own other people’s. Patients may have experienced abuse, neglect, trauma and loss, and are left with considerable difficulty in sustaining satisfying relationships, leading a fulfilling life, or valuing themselves. It takes motivation, a willingness to challenge longstanding patterns of belief and behaviour, and sufficient time in a challenging and supportive environment to bring about therapeutic changes.

Assessment

When a referral is accepted, patients will be written to in order to contact Deancross and choose an appointment time. Our assessments may evaluate suitability for our treatment programmes or alternatively we may provide consultation over complex presentations (which may include direct assessment) and “second opinion”/management recommendations for these complex cases.

Treatment

Deancross offers three specific levels of intervention to aim to meet the different needs of individuals.

1. The intensive group programme is for patients who require more intensive intervention. It provides a twice a week psychotherapy group and individual sessions fortnightly. Patients are offered a place for 18 months.
2. Deancross offers a variety of once-weekly groups, dependent upon current cases open to the service.
3. We believe that group treatment is most beneficial to service users with Personality Disorder and therefore individual treatment is offered with a view to preparing service users for group treatment. We offer individual treatment as a stand-alone intervention only for difficulties that group treatment would not be optimal for, and individual treatment is considered on a case by case basis.

# Guidelines and Criteria for Accepting Referrals

# The patient should be resident in Tower Hamlets and over 18 years of age

* The patient is willing to consider a psychological approach to help with their difficulties
* The patient is willing to consider working in group treatment.

Careful consideration is given to clients with the following problems as they may not be appropriate for the actual programmes although this would not necessarily exclude them from assessment or consultation.

* Patients whose primary presentation is alcohol or drug use/dependency
* Patients with an extensive forensic history or current history of violence and with an extensive history of dissocial personality disorder
* Patients whose primary presenting difficulty is an eating disorder. We recommend that referrers of patients who self-harm regularly through bingeing and purging, or who have a BMI less than 18 consider referral to eating disorder services
* Patients with a primary presentation of psychosis
* Where the presenting complaint is a crisis or emergency that needs immediate attention
* Situations where a person’s housing is very unstable or unsafe, including threat or actual domestic violence

We are happy to discuss potential referrals by telephone and can be contacted on 02081215468. We endeavour to respond to calls within 24 hours. A duty worker will always be available between 4 and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

# *Procedure for Referral*

Referrals may be made by writing to the address below, or by emailing [DeancrossPDS@.nhs.net](mailto:DeancrossPDS@.nhs.net) Currently, we accept referrals only through a single point of entry, the CMHTs local to Tower Hamlets. At the current time, we accept 4 referrals per month per CMHT. We are very happy to discuss cases that seem appropriate with any health professional and consider how a referral might be made. Referrals are considered according to the following criteria:

* All referrals must be made with the full knowledge of all those involved in the patient’s care, including the agreement of the GP or Consultant Psychiatrist as relevant.
* If you work in specialist team or in primary care, we ask that make the referral through the CMHT associated with the patient's GP. The CMHT can screen and assess or refer to Deancross as appropriate. Please contact the referrals co-ordinator at Deancross if you require further direction or clarification.
* Any referral sent to multiple services (i.e. our service and others) will be kept on hold until one of the services is designated as most appropriate. If that is not our service, we will not process the referral until the designated service indicates it is appropriate to do so.
* We do not accept self-referrals.

The following information is very helpful for Deancross referral screening:

* Patient demographics and contact details
* Presenting complaint; amongst these should be indications of difficulty managing feelings and attendant problematic ways of coping, in the context of interpersonal difficulties.
* That the patient meets, or is thought likely to meet, criteria for Personality Disorder, most likely Borderline Personality Disorder (DSM-V), the criteria are as follows:
  + Frantic efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment
  + A pattern of unstable and intense interpersonal relationships characterized by alternating between extremes of idealization and devaluation
  + Identity disturbance: markedly and persistently unstable self-image or sense of self
  + Impulsivity in at least two areas that are potentially self-damaging (e.g., [substance abuse](https://www.clearviewwomenscenter.com/substance-abuse-center-women/), binge eating, and reckless driving)
  + Recurrent suicidal behaviour, gestures, or threats, or self-mutilating behaviour
  + Affective instability due to a marked reactivity of mood (e.g., intense episodic dysphoria, irritability, or anxiety usually lasting a few hours and only rarely more than a few days)
  + Chronic feelings of emptiness
  + Inappropriate, intense anger or difficulty [controlling anger](https://www.clearviewwomenscenter.com/bpd-symptoms.html) (e.g., frequent displays of temper, constant anger, recurrent physical fights)
  + Transient, stress-related paranoid ideation or severe dissociative symptoms
* The impact of the patient's difficulties on their functioning; a rule of thumb is for this to be moderate to severe to require Deancross intervention.
* All referrals must include current risk and if possible risk history, including self-harm, suicide attempts, or harm to others.
* Any difficulties the referrer experienced in engaging with the patient.
* Whether diagnosis and referral to Deancross has been discussed with the patient (we would always recommend that this be the case).
* Any recent psychiatric or psychological reports.

Once accepted, a choose and book letter will be sent to the patient, inviting them to call to book an assessment meeting. We aim to meet with patients within 6 weeks of receipt of referral, and referrers will be kept updated of the progress on an on-going basis.

At the end of assessment, a full summary, including a formulation of difficulties and agreed treatment plan will be sent to the patient, referrer and all those involved in their care. For patients who are not offered direct treatment, the assessment report would include recommendations for the patient's treatment by the referring team.

If a patient is offered a place on one of the treatment programmes the service will formally take over the care coordination of that patient, at an initial clinical review within the service. Up until that point we ask that referrers continue to provide a service to cover the patients’ needs, including crisis management.

**Deancross**

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