

# Enter & View Report

Hestia Mental Health Flexible Support Service (MHFSS)

13 February 2024



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Visit Details	
<b>Service Visited</b>	Hestia Mental Health Flexible Support Service's Valentine's Day special event at The Lounge, Anerley Town Hall, Anerley Road, SE20 8BD
<b>Service Manager</b>	Kellicia Brown and David Griffiths
<b>Date &amp; Time of Visit</b>	Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> February, 13:00 – 15:00
<b>Status of Visit</b>	Announced
<b>Authorised Representative</b>	Graham Powell
<b>Lead Representative</b>	Charlotte Bradford

# 1. Visit Background

## 1.1. What is Enter & View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake and report on 'Enter & View' (E&V) visits.

Mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the visits enable trained Authorised Representatives (ARs) to visit health and care services such as care homes, hospitals, GP practices, dental surgeries and pharmacies.

E&V visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but can also be made when services have a good reputation.

During the visits we observe service delivery and talk with service users, their families, and carers. We also engage with management and staff. The aim is to gain an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Following the visits, our official 'Enter & View Report', shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators, outlines what has worked well, and makes recommendations on what could work better. All reports are available to view on our website.

### **1.1.2 Safeguarding**

E&V visits are not intended specifically to identify safeguarding issues. If safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with safeguarding policies. If at any time an AR observes anything they feel uncomfortable about they will inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

If any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

### **1.2 Disclaimer**

Please note that this report relates to findings observed during this specific visit. It is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed on the day.

### **1.3 Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Bromley (HWB) would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this E&V project to take place, and our AR who assisted us in conducting the visit and putting together this report.

### **1.4 The purpose of this Enter &View**

Hestia – Life Beyond Crisis is a charity that supports adults and children in crisis across London and the surrounding regions. It provides a range of services and outreach support including safe houses for victims of modern slavery and refuges for victims of domestic abuse.

Hestia helps people with a range of mental health conditions and experiences. It supports individuals with learning, physical and sensory disabilities, or long-term conditions, to live independently. It also helps people who have been released from prison to re-integrate in the community and provides recovery focused support to enable people to make positive decisions around their addictions.

In Bromley, we were asked by the council to conduct an E&V solely focusing on the Mental Health Flexible Support Service (MHFSS). Therefore, this report is not an observation of all the services Hestia delivers in Bromley. These include Housing (Tenancy Sustainment Service), Mental Health & Complex Needs (Mental Health Flexible Support Service), Modern Slavery Response (Outreach Support), Offenders &

Rehabilitation (Orwell House) and Volunteer (Phoenix Project). Further information can be found on their website; [hestia.org/bromley](http://hestia.org/bromley).

The purpose of this visit was to gain a general sense of satisfaction. The nature of the E&V visit, taking place at an MHFSS day event, meant that most of our engagement was through general conversation with individuals throughout the day. We were also given some completed staff and service users questionnaires when we arrived at the event.

## 2. Information About the Service

### 2.1 Hestia Mental Health Flexible Support Service

The Mental Health Flexible Support Service (MHFSS) is a service for adults (aged 18+) with mental ill health, which supports their resettlement into the community following discharge from hospital. A floating support worker works with service users to meet their individual needs.

The service aims to move mental health service users away from reliance on hospital and residential care, towards personalised, community-based support.

Although Hestia support is based on the individual's needs, generally they support service users with:

- Tenancy sustainment
- Independence skills
- Accessing financial support and budgeting
- Accessing training and employment
- Attending appointments (including health appointments)
- Housing advice
- Accessing local services and community activities including faith-based activities.

Whilst this list is not exhaustive, the main aim of their service is to support service users to become more independent.

### 2.2 Ratings

The Hestia MHFSS service is not subject to CQC as they do not provide care.

## **2.3 Service Users**

Hestia service users receive outpatient treatment for their mental ill health concurrently with their use of Hestia services.

Hestia offers a minimum of 300 support hours per week. In terms of referrals, a Care Coordinator refers a person to a panel of representatives from Bromley Council and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust. There is an assessment process for people referred to Hestia to determine their suitability. Service users are funded Individually through panel approval for costed care.

At the time of the visit, Hestia was receiving between three and five referrals a month. In the last six months, the service has supported 50 – 60 service users. The majority of users (17) are aged 50–59, twelve aged 60–69 and five aged 20–29. 61% of the users are male and 32% female.

The majority of service users are White British (65%), followed by Black British – Caribbean (11%), Black British – African (9%), and White Other (5%).

Note: Hestia has a structured end of support review for planned discharge. During a discharge meeting, Care Coordinators will refer service users to alternative community support if applicable. Unplanned discharge happens through hospital admissions or death.

## **2.4 Staff**

The MHFSS has a team of staff from a variety of cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. There are currently nine staff: one service manager, one team manager, one senior floating support worker, two permanent floating recovery workers, three agency floating staff, and one part time agency worker working 16 hours a week.

All Hestia staff and agency staff are DBS checked.

# **3. Summary of Findings**

The E&V visit was carried out on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2024 by two E&V ARs at a Valentine's Day special event organised by the MHFSS team in The Lounge at Anerley Town Hall. All service users were invited to have food, enjoy karaoke and play a variety of games.

The visit was announced and planned in partnership with Hestia. In preparation, we shared a poster, announcing the E&V, and copies of questionnaires explaining the purpose of the E&V in further detail.

Note: Anerley Town Hall has good facilities for community events, including a kitchen for food preparation, and toilets. Transport links are readily available (bus and overground train).

## General Environment

### Notes

The general impression, at the Valentine's Day special event, was of a happy atmosphere for both service users and staff.

### What worked well?

- Welcoming environment
- Cleanliness is well maintained
- Staff were receptive and proactive, readily providing information and attending to the needs of the service users
- Refreshments and food were offered to all service users, staff and Healthwatch ARs.

### What could be improved?

- More activities to stimulate service users' interest e.g. board games.
- Easier identification of staff, as they do not wear identification (ID) badges.

## 4. Service Users' Feedback

During the E&V visit, 14 service users shared their feedback with us.

### 4.1 Service Users' Feedback

Service users expressed a high level of satisfaction with the service they receive from Hestia MHFSS. All stated that they are treated with dignity and respect, feeling listened to if they raise any concerns or questions.

### **What has worked well?**

- Service users have a say in the type of activities they undertake
- Staff are encouraging, prompting service users to take their medication and keep active.

### **What could be improved?**

- More, and a wider range of activities could be offered.

## **4.2 Service Users' Selected Comments**

*"Regular in-person visits. Encouraged to perform my tasks and superb assistance as regards to my medication."*

*"Helping me to do the things I need help with."*

*"The service is going well; staff members are treating me well."*

*"Activities encourage me to keep busy."*

*"Sometimes I'm unsure about what we should do and end up just talking. I wish there was a bit more consistency".*

## **5. Family and Friends' Feedback**

We received feedback from six family members/friends of service users.

### **5.1 Family and Friends' Feedback**

Family members expressed their satisfaction with the service provided to service users. All said they have been kept informed about their relative or friend e.g. ill-health.

All fed back that their relative/friend is treated with dignity and respect by staff and management.

### **What has worked well?**

- The service is willing and able to adapt activities for different users' needs
- Concerns that friends/family have raised are listened to by staff.

### **What could be improved?**

- As above, more, and a wider range of activities could be offered.
- The number of days service users can access MHFSS could be increased.

## **5.2 Family and Friends' Selected Comments**

*"Would be nice to increase the number of days from one day to two."*

*"Always been totally happy and satisfied with the care and communication given by staff. A great team."*

*"Continuing support would improve service delivery."*

## **6. Staff and Management Feedback**

We received feedback from nine staff members, including one member of the management team.

### **6.1 Staff Feedback**

Overall, staff gave positive feedback about the MHFSS services provided. A week of staff training and induction is arranged prior to starting in post. Hestia and agency staff undergo different training programmes; agency staff do not receive training from Hestia.

Some staff members said they need more training, such as safeguarding training for managers, health and safety, crisis response, housing support, and drug and alcohol awareness.

One staff member commented that the budget is too small - which restricts activities and events.

### **What has worked well?**

- All staff are confident that service users are treated with dignity and respect.

- All staff are aware of how to raise safeguarding issues.

### **What could be improved?**

- Staff training provision could be increased and diversified.
- Hestia and agency staff could be offered the same training.
- Agency staff training could be clarified.
- The budget for activities and events could be increased to enable Hestia to further develop their offer.

## **6.2 Selected Comments from Staff**

*“Overall, it is a good service, and the people are taken care of.”*

*“We really help people and doing the best that we can.”*

*“Manager is very proactive.”*

*“Community events are flat, needs more excitement.”*

## **6.3 Management Feedback**

Management shared generally positive feedback about MHFSS service provision. They are fully satisfied that it meets service users’ needs but are concerned about the adequacy of the varying staffing levels (staff and volunteers). We spoke further with their Area Manager who informed us that Hestia is commissioned to provide a service based on their operational needs. Their staffing model is based on those needs, and they are funded accordingly. The current staffing model is deemed appropriate according to their contract. Unfortunately, they are unable to increase staffing without an increase to their income from Bromley.

### **IT systems and patient records**

Hestia uses INFORM software. managed by their IT department. A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is used separately from Hestia’s main internet framework to document service users’ activity. All staff are trained in the proper use of IT systems, patient records, GDPR and confidentiality.

### **Engagement and Inclusion**

Service users are encouraged and supported to make friends. Some service users enjoy playing pool, while others like the coffee club or walking. Staff welcome and respond to requests for help.

#### **What has worked well?**

- Support is offered to individuals with diverse cultural identities.
- Provision is made for individuals with English as an additional language (EAL). At the assessment stage they ascertain an individual's language proficiency and set targets based on their needs. For example, they can access translation services and support an individual to attend ESOL classes.

#### **What could be improved?**

- Managers are unsure whether the overall MHFSS volunteer and staffing levels are adequate.

## **7. Recommendations**

Healthwatch Bromley would like to thank Hestia for their support in arranging our E&V visit. Based on the analysis of all feedback obtained, we would like to make the following recommendations.

### **7.1 Staff**

7.1.1 Staff do not wear ID badges.

*We recommend that management consider providing ID badges for staff with their name and role, to help distinguish them from service users and to make them an easy point of contact.*

7.1.2 The majority of staff members said they would like to do more training.

*We advise the management team to assess their current training programme, undertake a training needs analysis with staff and volunteers, identify relevant courses staff could take and provide these to further develop staff skill sets.*

7.1.3 Hestia and agency staff do not receive the same training.

*We recommend that management extends the training needs analysis to agency staff to identify and meet any training needs, to ensure that all staff, agency or Hestia, are appropriately and adequately trained to support service users.*

## 7.2 Activities

7.2.1 Feedback from service users, family and friends, and staff indicated that a wider variety of activities should be offered.

*We suggest that management regularly conduct surveys to gather feedback from service users, family and carers and work with them to design an inclusive and tailored activities programme.*

7.2.2 One family member asked for service provision to be increased from one day to two.

*We recommend that management discuss further with funders whether resources could be made available to provide additional days to support service users.*

## 8. Glossary of Terms

AR	Authorised Representative
CQC	Care Quality Commission
EAL	English as an Additional Language
E&V	Enter and View
LBB	London Borough of Bromley
MHFSS	Mental Health Flexible Support Service
NHS	National Health Service
VPN	Virtual Private Network
ID	Identification

## 9. Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the public and shared with our statutory and community partners. Accessible formats are available.

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences of health and care services, please contact us.

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Healthwatch was established in 2013 in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Within this legislation [Arrangements to be made by relevant bodies in respect of local Healthwatch Organisations Directions 2013] Healthwatch has a right to a reply within 20 working days to Reports and Recommendations submitted by Local Healthwatch to a service provider.

## Report & Recommendation Response Form

Report sent to	Hestia
Date sent	02/05/2024
Report title	Hestia Mental Health Flexible Support Service (MHFSS)
	Response (If there is a nil response please provide an explanation for this within the statutory 20 days)
Date of response provided	02/05/2024
Please outline your general response to the report including <b><u>what you are currently doing to address</u></b> some of the issues identified.	
	Please outline what <b><u>actions</u></b> and/or improvements you will undertake <b><u>as a result of the report's findings and recommendations</u></b> . If not applicable, please state this and provide a brief explanation of the reasons.
Recommendations	
1. We recommend that management consider providing ID badges for staff with their name and role, to help distinguish them from service users and to make them an easy point of contact.	All staff have ID badges. The team will be reminded to wear their ID badges at all times during work hours.
2. We advise the management team to assess their current training programme, undertake a training needs analysis with staff and volunteers, identify relevant courses staff could take and	A new training plan is completed every 12 months.  This plan includes feedback from staff who outline areas of training they feel they would benefit from. This then feeds into the organisational plan and training programme going forward.

provide these to further develop staff skill sets.	Individual training needs are recorded as part of staff supervision and fed back to Hestia’s training team.
3. <i>We recommend that management extends the training needs analysis to agency staff to identify and meet any training needs, to ensure that all staff, agency or Hestia, are appropriately and adequately trained to support service users.</i>	<p>We are currently looking agency staff being given access to Hestia’s online training platform.</p> <p>All agency staff need to have completed core training that is relevant to their post via their agency before starting with Hestia. This includes Safeguarding training.</p> <p>Agency staff have access to Hestia’s face to face training.</p>
5. <i>We suggest that management regularly conduct surveys to gather feedback from service users, family and carers and work with them to design an inclusive and tailored activities programme.</i>	<p>We will ensure that service users are included in the activity planning process.</p> <p>Hestia currently carries out an annual service user survey where service users and their family/carers are able to give feedback. This then is fed-back to local teams so that services can be tailored to the needs of our service users.</p>
6. We recommend that management discuss further with funders whether resources could be made available to provide additional days to support service users.	<p>Our service users support hours are based a care package that is agreed and determined by Oxleas and Bromley Council at a weekly panel meeting. Hestia aren’t part of this process.</p> <p>Hestia are told what hours of support an individual requires at the referral stage and after the individual has been discussed at the panel meeting.</p>
Signed	
Name	David Griffiths
Position	Area Manager