

## Self Harm

This factsheet provides an insight in to self-harm and highlights some of the resources that are available. Some of the information has come from the National Mind booklet on Self-Harm [www.mind.org.uk/help/diagnoses\\_and\\_conditions/self-harm](http://www.mind.org.uk/help/diagnoses_and_conditions/self-harm)

If you have injured yourself quite seriously or are feeling suicidal and need to see someone immediately, go to Accident & Emergency (A&E) at Northwick Hospital, Watford Road.

### What is self-harm?

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Self-harm is a means of expressing deep distress in a way not possible in words. It can bring relief, which may be short-lived and which may evolve in to feelings of disgust or guilt at the self-harming action. It can be felt as a safety valve or a release of tension; as a punishment or as a way of having some control.

There are many ways in which people harm themselves, including overdosing on drugs, abusing drugs and alcohol, as well as causing the body harm through eating disorders (NOTE: Link to Harrow factsheet on this topic) This factsheet addresses distress demonstrated by such actions as cutting, scratching, burning; swallowing objects and self-beating.

### Why do people self-harm?

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There are various reasons as to why people self-harm. These include experiencing sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, intense pressure, being bullied, assaulted or because some people feel isolated and don't have any support or someone they can talk to.

Some people may feel numb, and the sight of their own blood may invoke them to experience a feeling, so that they feel alive again; the blood flowing may wash away bad feelings. Some people may feel disconnected from their lives or experience flashbacks of certain incidents, and by self-harming they are able to ground themselves back into reality. Others may find their emotional pain to be too excruciating and would rather experience physical pain, which can be easier to deal with. Some people may self-harm because for them it is a form of punishment for events that they believe they are responsible for, such as a sexual assault.

Those who self-harm often feel peaceful and calm afterwards, which replaces the distress they had experienced before they self-harmed.

What should I do if I've injured myself and need immediate medical assistance?

You should see your GP, who should address your injury refer you to a counselling service. If you have harmed yourself severely, you may be referred to psychiatric services, as your GP may feel that you will receive more adequate care from them.

If you feel that it's an emergency, then you should go to A & E. The A&E department at Northwick Park Hospital in Watford Road is open 24hrs to treat urgent physical and mental health problems.

## Support and Help

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Your distress is very difficult to talk about, but if you have been able to tell a doctor, you may be able to spend some time with a counsellor who will explore your reasons behind your behaviour and see how else you could deal with things that distress you. Harrow Factsheet on Counselling & talking treatments (Link: <http://www.mindinharrow.org.uk/mhd/infodetail.asp?ID=11>). If you have been using this method of coping for a long time, you may ask to be referred to a specialist unit for help (See below). There are also a number of self-help and mutual support organisations, including websites and Forums, details of which are below.

## Statutory Services (Referral by your GP):

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### Harrow Assessment & Brief Treatment Team

839 Honeypot Lane, Stanmore HA7 1AT

020 8951 3770 (9am-5pm) and then 020 8869 2304 (5pm-9am)

West: Atkins House, 19 Marshall Close, Harrow HA1 4DH Tel (020 8422 9443 (9am-5pm), 020 8869 2304 (5pm-9am)

Website: [www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-assessment-and-brief-treatment-team](http://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-assessment-and-brief-treatment-team)

An assessment of their mental health needs will be carried out by a member of the team, feedback given, and time-limited treatment offered if appropriate.

### Harrow Home Treatment Team

Mental Health Unit, Northwick Park Hospital, Watford Road, Harrow HA1 3UJ

Tel: 020 8869 2690 for referrals from professionals only. People wanting to self- should go to Accident & Emergency (A&E) at Northwick Park Hospital, Watford Road. HA1 3UJ

Website: [www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-home-treatment-team](http://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-home-treatment-team)

The team helps avoid admission to a mental health inpatient ward by providing intensive support to people in acute mental crisis in their homes.

### Crisis Recovery Unit

National specialist service for people who persistently self-harm. Aims to help them gain greater understanding of the meaning and to better tolerate distressed feelings. Referral from local mental health service.

Outpatients, Maudsley Hospital Denmark Hill SE5 8AZ

Inpatients: Dower House, Bethlehem Royal Hospital, Monks Orchard Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 3BX

Tel. (both units): 020 3228 6000

website: [www.slam.nhs.uk](http://www.slam.nhs.uk)

### Harrow IAPT (part of the national Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme)

This is a free, confidential NHS service, which provides psychological treatment for depression and anxiety disorders.

T Block, Northwick Park Hospital, Watford Road, Harrow HA1 3UJ

Tel: 020 8515 5015

Website: [www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-iapt](http://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/harrow-iapt)

## Voluntary Organisations

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### Depression Alliance

Address: Depression Alliance, 20 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4LX

Tel: 0207 407 7584 (office hours)

Email: [info@depressionalliance.org](mailto:info@depressionalliance.org)

Website: [www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org)

Self help group for those who have to live with depression. The group will be run and facilitated by its members with occasional guest speakers.

### Stanmore College counsellor

Stanmore College, Elm Park, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA5 3SD

Tel: 020 8420 7766

Email: [r.patashniki@stanmore.ac.uk](mailto:r.patashniki@stanmore.ac.uk)

Website: [www.stanmore.ac.uk](http://www.stanmore.ac.uk)

Hours Mon- Tues 9-5pm. Wed 9-12.30pm. Thurs 2-4pm. Fri 9.40am - 3pm.

Long term counselling, brief therapy and crisis counselling offered.

### The WISH Centre

The WISH centre runs the Girls Xpress! self help and support group for young women who self harm, aged 13-19. They offer peer counselling, advice and support and training. B.A.S.H, launched in Nov 06, is a self-help and peer support group for young men who self harm in harrow. To see our Directory of Services visit [www.thewishcentre.org.uk](http://www.thewishcentre.org.uk)

Address Unit 4A, Livingstone Court, 55 Peel Road, Wealdstone, Harrow HA3 7QT

Email: [info@thewishcentre.org.uk](mailto:info@thewishcentre.org.uk)

Tel: 020 8416 7277

### Hestia Women's Aid Harrow

Andrews Close off Bessborough Road HA1 3GE

Tel: 020 8422 1100 or 020 8864 7575

Email: [info@wahdvs.com](mailto:info@wahdvs.com)

Website: [www.ukrefugesonline.org/PublicServiceDetails.aspx?sid=6621](http://www.ukrefugesonline.org/PublicServiceDetails.aspx?sid=6621)

Opening times: Mon – Fri 10-6pm

Temporary, emergency accommodation to women and their children who have experienced or are exposed to domestic violence and or/abuse, also emotional support, advice, advocacy.

## Helplines

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### Harrow Samaritans (24hrs)

Tel: 020 8427 7777 or the National No: 08457 9090 9008457

44 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2SQ

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Website: [www.samaritans.org/harrow](http://www.samaritans.org/harrow)

### Bristol Crisis Service for Women

PO Box 654 Bristol BS99 1XH

TESS - Text and Email Support Service Monday - Friday evenings 7-9pm

Email: [bcsw@btconnect.com](mailto:bcsw@btconnect.com)

Website: [www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk](http://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk)

National helpline for women; self-help groups. Training courses for professionals

## Websites

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National Mind online Booklet 'Understanding self-harm'

[www.mind.org.uk/help/diagnoses\\_and\\_conditions/self-harm](http://www.mind.org.uk/help/diagnoses_and_conditions/self-harm)

### **Patient.co.uk Self Help Guide**

Rawdon House, Green Lane, Yeadon, Leeds LS19 7BY

Web: <http://www.patient.co.uk/health/self-harm-a-self-help-guide>

Project Spear - **also known as or related to** dsh.(deliberate self harm), autolesion, self-abusive behavior, self-harm (finding), self mutilate

### **TheSite.org**

Information on self-harm for young people and a section for professionals. It has a list of useful resources.

Web: [www.thesite.org/healthandwellbeing/mentalhealth/selfharm](http://www.thesite.org/healthandwellbeing/mentalhealth/selfharm)

## Websites with Forums

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### **National Self Harm Network**

PO Box 7264 Nottingham NG1 6WJ

Tel: 0800 622 6000 (7pm-11pm Thursday-Saturday, 6.10pm-10.30pm Sunday)

Email: [info@nshn.co.uk](mailto:info@nshn.co.uk) Support email: [support@nshn.co.uk](mailto:support@nshn.co.uk)

Web: [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

Survivor-led organisation, which offers support and understanding for those who self-harm, as well information for professionals, family and friends; also a forum on the site.

### **LifeSIGNS**

Web: [www.lifesigns.org.uk](http://www.lifesigns.org.uk)

Email: [info@lifesigns.org.uk](mailto:info@lifesigns.org.uk)

Voluntary organisation providing support for people who self-harm, as well as providing general information and training. Factsheets and booklets are available to download from the website. You can submit articles to their newsletter, and they also have a message board, which you can join.

### **Self-Injury and Related Issues**

Website: <http://self-injury.net/links/general/self-injury-related-issues-siari>

On the site there is a page with links to other websites which look at alternatives to self-harm for those who are trying to stop or are trying to find another way of coping:

### **Created by:**

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