

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **New psychological therapies service for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people in Leicester officially launches**

A Psychological Therapies early intervention service specifically for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) people in Leicester is officially launched on Friday 17 May – which is also the International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO Day).

The LGB&T Open Mind service is provided by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, which provides mental health, learning disability and community health services for people living and working in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Working closely together with established local partners including the Leicester LGBT Centre, Trade Sexual Health and First Step Leicester, the new service promotes positive mental, social, physical and emotional wellbeing.

IDAHO Day is designed to raise awareness of the impact of prejudice and discrimination on the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people (LGBT) throughout the world and also on the lives of their families, friends and colleagues.

The LGB&T Open Mind Clinic gives people the chance to talk to a therapist who will help them to identify their problems and help them think about how they might deal with them.

This clinic removes barriers to care by offering a bespoke clinical service in a safe, confidential LGB&T friendly environment. It is for LGB&T people (or those who are questioning) over 16 years of age living in Leicester City who are feeling troubled, stressed, anxious/panic or depressed. The amount of treatment provided varies from person to person and depends on individual circumstances, but typically range from eight to a maximum of 20 sessions.

Norman Finlayson, head of the Open Mind service at Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, said: “We are very pleased to be working in partnership with local LGB&T services to launch this clinic. Research suggests that LGB&T individuals face health disparities linked to social stigma, discrimination, and denial of their civil and human rights. These experiences can be frequent, and have long lasting effects on the individual and the community.

“Discrimination against LGB&T people has been associated with high rates of psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, self-harm and suicide. This new service has been carefully built up and combines expertise in early intervention & diagnoses to provide a tailored service that meets the needs of those people who may need to access it.”

Together with a therapist, patients can talk about their concerns and then decide what might be the next best step. This may include self-help information; online courses that can be accessed from home or other local centres; services provided by voluntary agencies; individual sessions; workshops or therapy groups and specialist therapies.

It may be the case that none of these options are suitable, and it may be appropriate for a referral to other specialist services to be made, such as Trade’s established counselling service or one of the Leicester LGB&T Centre’s many social and support groups.

Ian Robson, CEO of the Leicester LGBT Centre, said: “Having a good understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender health is essential if we are to make any difference in improving the health inequalities of this forgotten group of people. Ensuring that staff working with LGB&T people are trained and have a thorough understanding of the issues and particular needs will support this goal. Involving LGB&T people in developing their services is a way to ensure we achieve success in reducing these inequalities.”

First appointments last around 30 minutes and take place at the clinic based at 29-31 Bowling Green Street, City Centre, Leicester, LE1 6AS. For access to this service please telephone 0116 295 2151.

The IDAHO Day launch of the new service underlines LPT’s commitment to fighting healthcare inequalities. Acting chief executive Sue Noyes said: “There is increasing evidence to show that people often have additional obstacles to overcome in accessing the health care they need, because of their sexual orientation. As a Stonewall diversity champion we have a commitment to help identify and overcome those obstacles so that we can meet the needs of all the communities we serve.”

**ENDS**

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#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) provides a range of health and wellbeing services mainly for people living Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The Trust serves a population of one million, has a budget in excess of £250 million and employs approximately 5,400 staff. For more information visit [www.leicspart.nhs.uk](http://www.leicspart.nhs.uk)

The LGB&T clinic is part of the wider Open Mind Service at Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust, which provides improved access to talking therapies, based on National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines for people over the age of 16 with depression and anxiety. The service aims to ensure people receive the most effective therapy necessary to manage their difficulties.

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**Our vision:** To become an integrated Foundation Trust with a passion for quality and excellence

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