

Guidance for Mental Health Model Groups 2026-2027 Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Community Development Support Model

Opening – Wednesday 1st April 2026 at 12noon
Closing – Thursday 30th April 2026 at 12noon
Late applications will not be accepted

Introduction

The Public Health Agency (PHA) has identified **non-recurring support** to address the themes of **Suicide Prevention, Self-Harm, Mental Health, and Emotional Wellbeing**, and has asked **Northern Area Community Network** to facilitate this process for the **Ballymena, Ballymoney, Moyle and Larne areas Areas**.

This model aims to support community-based initiatives that promote **positive mental health**, build **community resilience**, and strengthen local capacity to respond to mental health challenges.

Background to Support Model

This model will support the implementation of the **Protect Life 2 (PL2) Suicide Prevention Strategy for Northern Ireland**.

Protect Life 2 (2024–2027)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/protectlife2>

In particular:

Objective 4: Enhance community capacity to prevent and respond to suicidal behaviour within local communities.

Making Life Better – A Whole System Strategic Framework for Public Health (2013–2023)

This framework is fundamental to the health improvement work of the PHA. Key themes include:

Theme 3 – Empowering Healthy Living

Long-term outcomes include:

- Improved health and reduction in harm
- Improved mental health and wellbeing
- Reduction in self-harm and suicide
- People being better informed about health matters

Theme 5 – Empowering Communities

- Thriving communities

Theme 6 – Developing Collaboration

- Strengthened collaboration for health and wellbeing
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Department of Health – Mental Health Action Plan (2020)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/mh-action-plan-plus-covid-response-plan.pdf>

This Action Plan aims to improve and develop services to better support the population.

Objective12:

Encourage local initiatives and improve morale by creating a system that supports local initiatives, strengthens resilience, and helps people feel supported and respected.

Aims of the Model

This programme aims to:

- Encourage communities to be **proactive in promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing**.
- Support initiatives that **address contributing factors to self-harm and suicide**.
- Build **community capacity and resilience**.
- Provide opportunities for **community engagement, support and learning**.

We will support initiatives that address underlying **risk factors**, including:

- Isolation and loneliness
 - Financial hardship
 - Relationship and communication issues
 - Stress, anxiety and resilience
 - Bereavement support
 - Barriers to accessing services
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Who Can Apply?

There is a limit to what we can support.

Expressions of Interest **cannot exceed £1000**.

We wish to work with organisations within the **Northern Locality** (with the exception of the Limavady legacy council area, which falls within the Western area) to improve the emotional and mental wellbeing of communities. Community organisations are well placed to identify local needs and develop appropriate responses.

We particularly welcome Expressions of Interest from:

- Smaller community organisations
- Groups with low income
- Groups who may not normally access larger support programmes

If your application is successful, you may be asked to provide supporting documentation for example, your Constitution, Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, Vulnerable Adults Policy or other governance documentation.

Successful groups will be expected to:

- Work with the Community Network to deliver their project
- Encourage community participation
- Keep records of attendance
- Collect feedback from participants
- Contribute to a final evaluation report

Examples of What We Will Support

Examples include:

- Awareness sessions and coping techniques for promoting positive mental health
- Self-care and life-skills initiatives that help reduce anxiety
- Evaluated and evidence-based training programmes
- Workshops that provide information or skills linked to recovery pathways
- Initiatives linked to the **Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing**:
 - Connect
 - Be Active
 - Keep Learning
 - Give to Others
 - Take Notice

Initiatives may also address risk factors such as:

- Isolation and loneliness
- Relationship and communication issues
- Bereavement support
- Financial hardship
- Barriers to accessing services
- Stress and anxiety
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation

Training Opportunities

All successful applicants will be offered the opportunity to take part in **Community Development and Emotional Wellbeing training** delivered through the **SPDO Training Schedule 2026–2027**.

Monitoring and Evaluation

All projects must be completed and **evaluation reports submitted by Friday 26th February 2027**.

Groups will be required to collect basic monitoring information including:

- Number of participants

- Feedback from participants
 - Description of activities delivered
 - Outcomes achieved
 - Volunteer Hours
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Communications, Branding and Publicity Requirements

All publicity and promotional materials relating to supported projects must comply with the following requirements:

- **All posters, promotional materials, and publications must be approved by the Community Network prior to distribution.**
- Approved materials **must include the appropriate logos**, including:
 - Public Health Agency (PHA) logo
 - Community Network logo (Northern Area Community Network)
 - Any other relevant programme logos as advised.

Groups must also support promotion of the programme through social media by:

- **Tagging the Community Network and relevant partners in social media posts** relating to the support model.
- Acknowledging the support in all promotional materials and online posts.

This ensures proper recognition of the model programme and helps promote positive mental health initiatives across the community.

What We Cannot Support

The following will **not** be eligible:

- Counselling services (CBT life-skills programmes may be considered, but not CBT therapy)
- Website development
- Development of new training programmes
- Research projects
- Capital costs
- Loan repayments
- Bank charges
- Retrospective applications
- Complementary therapies that are not approved by the PHA
(See PHA quality standards: <https://standards.pharesourcehub.co.uk/>)
- Videography (e.g. DVDs, films), mobile apps or leaflet production
- General organisational running costs not directly related to the project
- Applications where equipment/materials exceed **50% of the total budget**
- Applications from individuals not part of a community organisation
- Activities promoting political or religious beliefs (*does not preclude faith based groups applying for activities related to the aims of the scheme*)
- Donations or entry fees where costs are already covered by the support
- Membership or affiliation fees
- Existing staff salaries
- Alcohol or excessive refreshments / hospitality costs

- Organisations delivering training to themselves (external facilitators must invoice)
- Outings or bus trips unless exceptional circumstances apply where transport is a barrier
- Applicants should note that we are unable to provide support for activities that have previously received provision through this programme.

Important Notes

- If a project is **fully supported**, participant fees or financial contributions **cannot be collected**.
- Excessive costs for refreshments or hospitality will not be eligible.
- Applications will only be considered from organisations **based within the relevant Community Network area**.

Submission Details

Completed applications should be returned to: grants@nacn.org

If you require further guidance, please contact your **local Community Network**.

Area project will be hosted within	Community Network you submit to	Email	Address	Telephone Number
Ballymena Ballymoney Larne Moyle	Northern Area Community Network	grants@nacn.org	25 Mill Street, Cushendall, Ballymena, BT44 0RR	028 2177 2100
Antrim Newtownabbey Carrickfergus	Impact Network NI	laura@impactnetworkni.org	Unit 6 & 7 Arches House, 38-40 Main Street, Randalstown, BT41 3AB	028 9447 8645
Coleraine	Causeway Rural & Urban Network	derek@crun.org	1 Brook Street, Coleraine, BT52 1PW	028 7034 4934
Magherafelt Cookstown	Cookstown & Western Shores Area Network	denise@cwsan.org	Floor 1, 34 The Square, Stewartstown, Dungannon, Northern Ireland, BT71 5HX	028 8773 8845

*please note the Limavady area within Causeway Coast and Glens cannot access support