

MENTAL
HEALTH
INNOVATIONS

shout

85258

Impact Report

October 2017 - March 2021



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“Mental Health Innovations has grown the Shout 85258 text messaging service incredibly rapidly from scratch to become an indispensable source of free, 24/7, mental health support. The service is truly national, being accessed by beneficiaries from every region across the UK and with reach into every community.”



ED WRAY

Chair of the board of trustees,
Mental Health Innovations



About Mental Health Innovations

We are a charity that uses digital innovation, data-driven analysis and the experience of clinical experts to improve the mental health of the UK population through the provision of digital tools, support and resources.

We were founded in November 2017, with the support of The Royal Foundation, following the Heads Together campaign which identified the potential that digital tools offer in supporting people struggling with their mental health.

- Our mission is to use data-driven analysis, clinical expertise and technological innovation to develop and sustain pioneering digital products and services that meet underserved needs and that improve the mental health of the UK population.
- Our vision is that everyone in the UK has access to the digital mental health services that they need and can access appropriate, high-quality support quickly and efficiently through the power of technology.

We aim to be a diverse and inclusive organisation with a creative and empowered team who can develop and deliver high quality services that can be accessed by a diverse range of the UK population.

Our trustees

ED WRAY

Chair

AJAZ AHMED

Trustee

DR AMY SHI-NASH

Trustee

CHARLES MINDENHALL

Trustee

DOMINIC FLYNN

Trustee

DR JEAN O'HARA

Trustee

PROFESSOR PETER FONAGY

Trustee

SIMON WEAVER

Trustee

DR UMA VAIDYANATHAN

Trustee

Foreword

As a Clinician and a Former Health Minister, I know first-hand that there is no health without mental health. I have seen the burden of mental health in children, adolescents and adults and it is clear that the advances in physical health that I have witnessed in my career have not been fully matched in mental health.

Amidst the current global crisis, we have seen a rise in the number of people struggling with significant mental health, financial, social, and physical health burdens, and the potential toll has come to the forefront of our minds.

Recent ONS data highlighted that around 1 in 5 adults experienced some form of depression in early 2021, more than double that observed before the coronavirus pandemic. Certain groups within society have been hit particularly hard, including young people, those on low incomes and people from racialised communities.

The impact of Covid-19 will exacerbate the current demand for mental health services, placing strain on the system, and making investment in prevention of heightened importance.

The rapid growth of Mental Health Innovations' first digital service, Shout 85258, directly addresses this need.

Accelerated by the pandemic, the service is already firmly established as a unique, UK-wide provider of free, 24/7 mental health support to an audience of largely children and young people, many of whom are not accessing traditional services.

The immediacy of Shout can be vital to preventing mental health crisis by supporting people as soon as they need it, with the unique power to reach previously underserved communities, providing unrivalled insight into why so many people, particularly the young, are suffering with mental health problems today and how best to help them.

At the Institute of Global Health Innovation, Imperial College London, we are privileged to partner with Mental Health Innovations in a shared vision for research and innovation to improve understanding of the mental health of the population. The unique opportunity afforded by the Shout dataset enables an understanding at scale of the needs and experiences of people in mental distress across the UK, providing an invaluable evidence-base for service development to support mental health.

Remarkable progress has been made to date, with a variety of impact being realised, for example:

- Providing support that is free for the people that access it and only costs £10 per conversation to deliver.
- Enabling 41 charities to give their audiences free 24/7 mental health support via a bespoke service. That's a benefit of £2.3m to the sector.
- De-escalating risk for thousands of people with suicidal ideation, saving families from immeasurable distress and saving the taxpayer millions of pounds.

These are some incredible achievements, benefitting thousands of people across the country, and although there is much work still to do, this success to date, together with a growing appetite to realise the enormous potential for heightened impact, augurs well for tangible progress ahead in tackling this most important challenge.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. V. Darzi'.

Professor The Lord Darzi of Denham, OM, KBE, PC, FRS
Co-Director, Institute of Global Health Innovation (IGHI),
Imperial College London

Introduction

There's no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a deep and enduring impact on the mental health of the UK population. In this protracted, turbulent period, much of which set the backdrop to our first three years as a charity, the work of Mental Health Innovations and our mission to improve the mental health of the UK population through technology has taken on ever increasing importance and significance.

The stress and anxiety of the pandemic has taken its toll on large swathes of the population, particularly among children and young people. Demand for digital mental health support has grown exponentially in a time when face to face services have often not been accessible and when need for support has been exacerbated by challenging circumstances.

Our 24/7 text messaging support service Shout 85258 has been there round the clock to support increasing numbers of texters in moments of immediate need. In fact the number of daily conversations taken by Shout Volunteers has tripled since March 2019. By the end of March 2021 we had taken a phenomenal 668,435 conversations with 277,841 people needing 'in the moment' support with their mental health.

Key to scaling our levels of support and being able to respond to spikes in need during the pandemic has been the swift establishment of operations in New Zealand. Having a team of clinicians and volunteers on the other side of the globe has enabled us to continue to provide unbroken 24/7 support to those who need it, which has become increasingly vital as the vast majority of our conversations take place outside of the hours of 9am-5pm.

Crucial to ensuring we can continue to scale Shout 85258 and run a service that's truly national in its reach are our funders. In particular, I would like to thank our founding funders, including The Royal Foundation, Children in Need, The Mohn Westlake Foundation and those who have chosen to remain anonymous, whose faith in us enabled us to get up and running.

We deliver incredible value through our digital provision and have been able to extend the service to those who need it most through 41 third sector partnerships. Through these we allow other organisations to offer bespoke, 24/7 mental health support to their audiences, at no cost.

As we continue to extend and diversify the reach of Shout to audiences who are currently underrepresented in our texter base, but who are in significant need of mental health support, we're also turning our focus to building the reputation of Mental Health Innovations in delivering its unique data insights to the sector, and exploring the development of additional products and services that are built on our digital and clinical expertise, data insights and partnerships.

I would like to thank our brilliant, committed and hardworking team who go above and beyond to ensure that we can reach and support people when they need us most. This team includes the thousands of volunteers who give us their time and their compassion, enabling us to support over a thousand people every day. From the outset, we knew that Mental Health Innovations would stand or fall on our ability to find an extraordinary group of people, willing to support people in their darkest moments. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to each and every one of them.



A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large 'V' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Victoria Hornby

CEO, Mental Health Innovations

Our impact to date

Watch this short video to see how we've made an impact in the mental health sector, providing vital 24/7 support to those in need at a benefit of £2.3m to the sector.



“Mental health, the greatest health burden of the 21st Century, will never be tackled by specialist services, however much we invest in them. Mental Health Innovations’ Shout 85258 text messaging support service is a fantastic imaginative service which is both upskilling the community and making support available to the huge numbers that at any one time need assistance.”



PETER FONAGY, OBE

CEO of Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

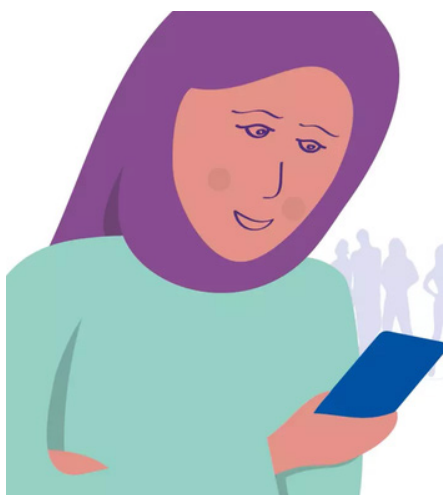


Our impact

October 2017 – March 2020

Over the past three years...

We've given hundreds of thousands of people immediate mental health support through the Shout 85258 text messaging support service.



668,435

Conversations with people in need of help

277,841

Texters supported

shout
85258

We've developed a workforce of clinicians with cutting edge digital health skills...



Built staff teams across the globe to ensure we're available 24/7...

71 staff based in the UK

12 staff based in New Zealand

And we've trained 6,910 volunteers, giving them skills and experience that they can take into the wider community.

55%

of our texters feel they don't have anyone else to talk to



74%

of our conversations are outside the hours of 9-5

We've been there for people to talk to in confidence, when they can't turn to friends, family or other services...

And our nationwide service has supported people across the whole of the UK.



64%

of texters are under 25



and 7% of texters are aged 13 and under

We've given 176,707 children and young people a free digital means of accessing help in a way that feels natural to them...

And during the Covid-19 pandemic we doubled our conversation numbers, providing unbroken access to mental health support for thousands of people.



95%

increase in conversations over one year:

Jan 2020

23,301 conversations

Jan 2021

45,434 conversations

Our vast dataset lets us rapidly analyse mental health at scale across the UK.

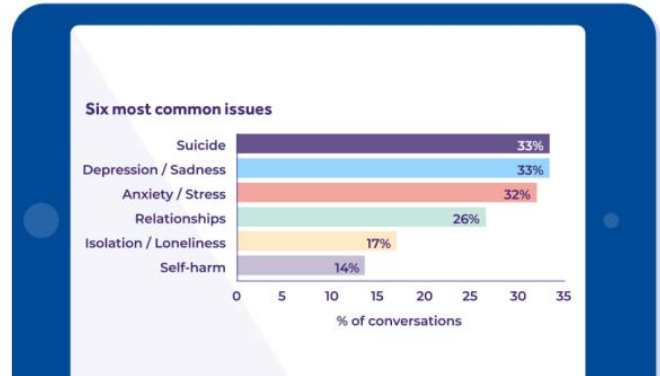
We've supported people with issues ranging from depression and anxiety to self-harm and bullying, and we've de-escalated risk for thousands of people with suicidal ideation.

83%

of texters who mention suicide found their conversation helpful

70%

felt more calm afterwards



We convened the sector to offer round-the-clock 360 mental health support to frontline workers through the pandemic...

And through social media we've given hundreds of thousands of people somewhere to turn for 'in the moment' mental health support.

12,824 followers

59,072 followers

16,048 followers



£10 cost per conversation

41 charity partnerships

£2.3m benefit to the sector



As a digital service we're delivering incredible value, which means we can give people free support at any time of day or night, at a cost to us of just £10 per conversation.

We've enabled 41 charities to give their audiences free 24/7 mental health support by offering them a bespoke support service at no cost. That's a benefit of £2.3m to the sector.

Spotlight: the Shout 85258 service

Shout 85258 is a free, confidential, 24/7 text support service for anyone in the UK. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope.

Trained Shout Volunteers are overseen by Clinical supervisors to take text based conversations with people in immediate need of support, de-escalating risk and providing a safe space to be listened to without judgement.

The service launched in May 2018 as a pilot before a public launch in 2019 and since the pandemic, demand for the service nearly doubled, going from 750 conversations per day in January 2020 to more than 1,400 per day in January 2021.

6,910

Shout Volunteers trained since launch

668,435

Conversations with people in need of immediate mental health support

95%

increase in conversations from January 2020 to January 2021

Shout service statistics

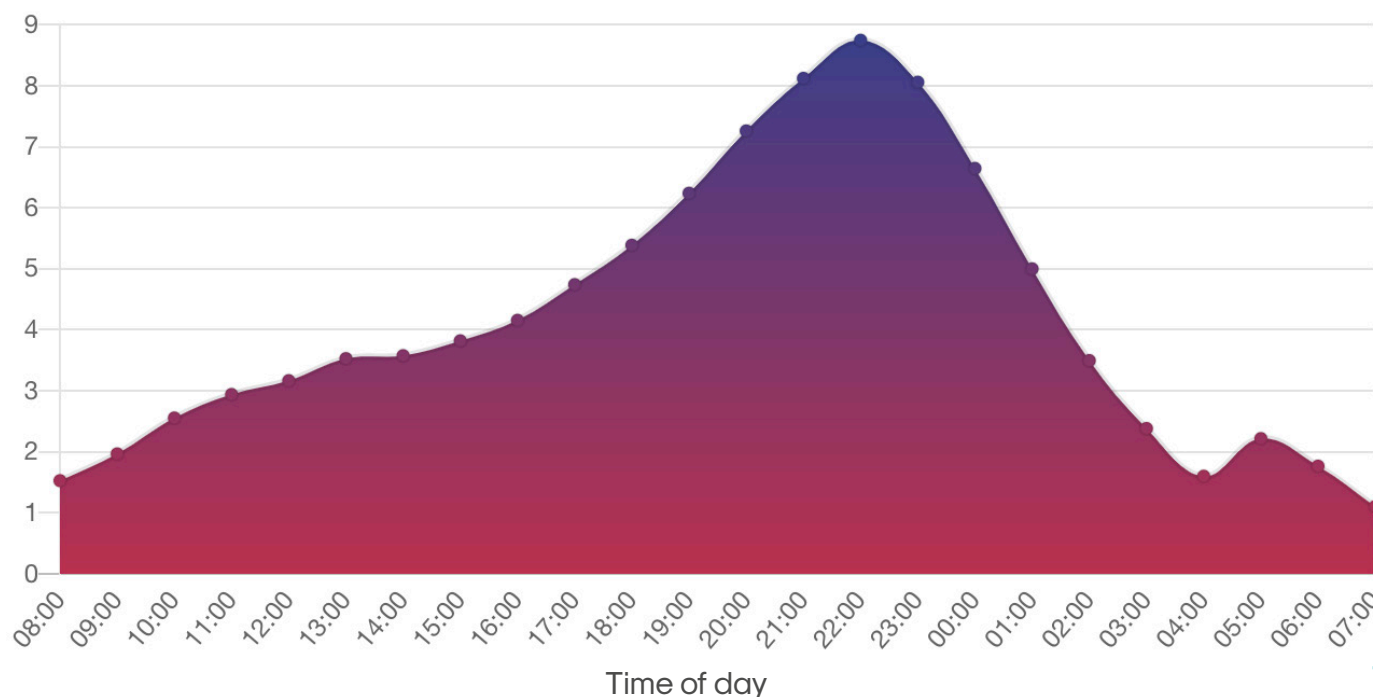
Demand for the Shout service comes predominantly at night, when face to face support and services aren't available, with people contacting us from across the UK. 87% of texters find their conversations helpful.

To date we've trained 6,910 volunteers who are taking the vital skillset they have been equipped with into wider aspects of their lives including personal and professional relationships.

Children, young people and adults contact Shout from across the length and breadth of the UK for mental health support.

Percentage of conversations by hour of day

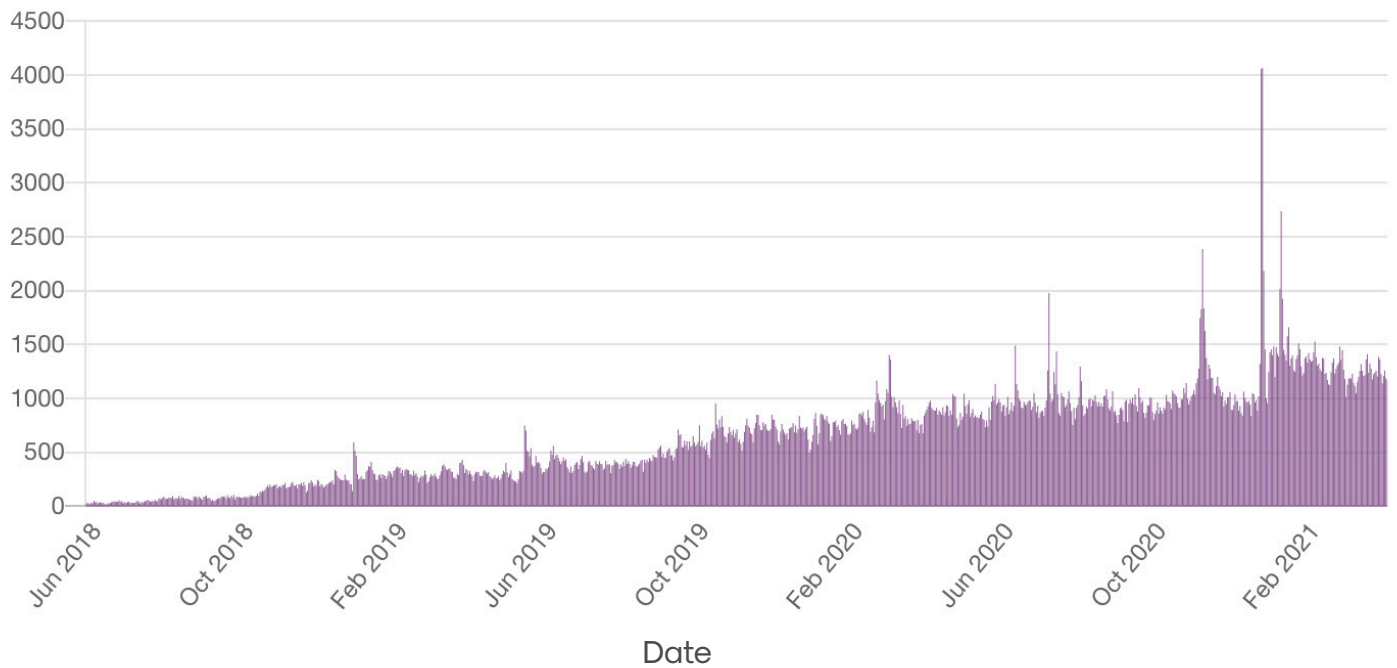
Mental health issues do not discriminate by time of day or day of the week. Shout Volunteers, including a team in New Zealand, take the largest number of conversations in the evenings when other helplines and services are not available.





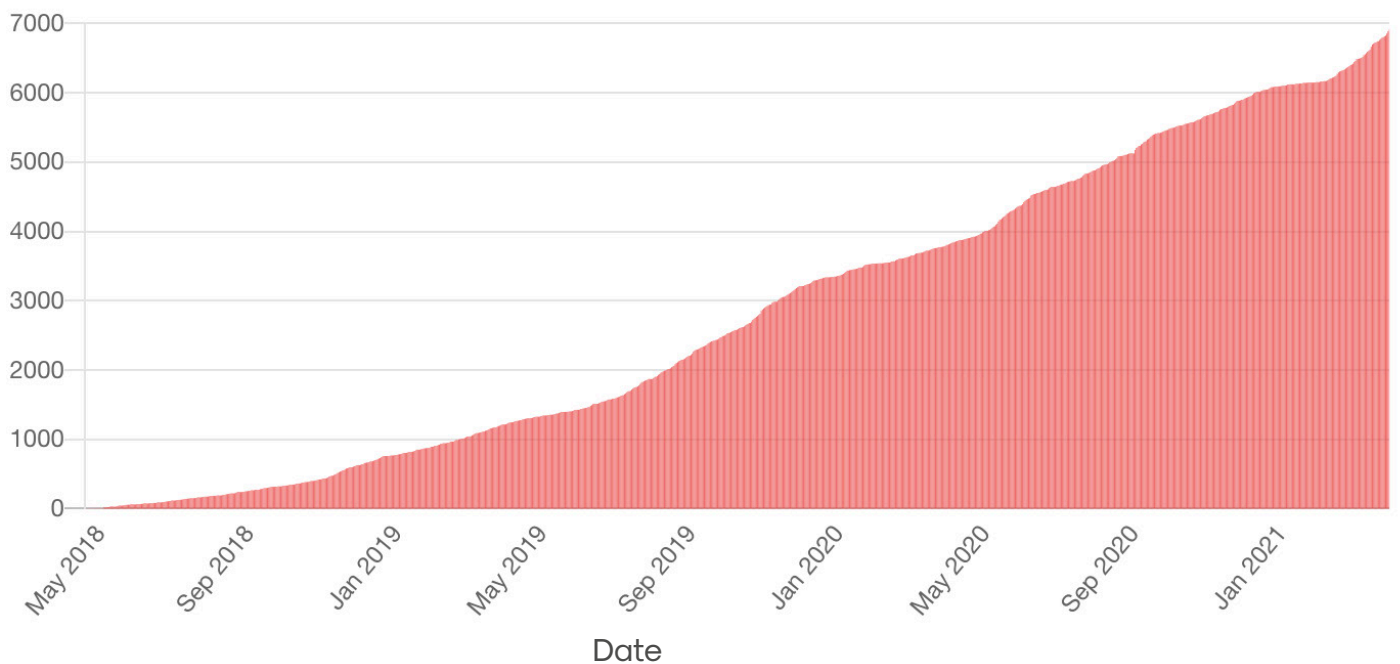
Number of conversations by date

From tragic news events to announcements about the pandemic, our busiest periods have been when there's a major news story or announcement that affects large numbers of people in the UK. The largest number of daily conversations was when the Tier 4 lockdown announcement happened before Christmas 2020.



Number of volunteers trained

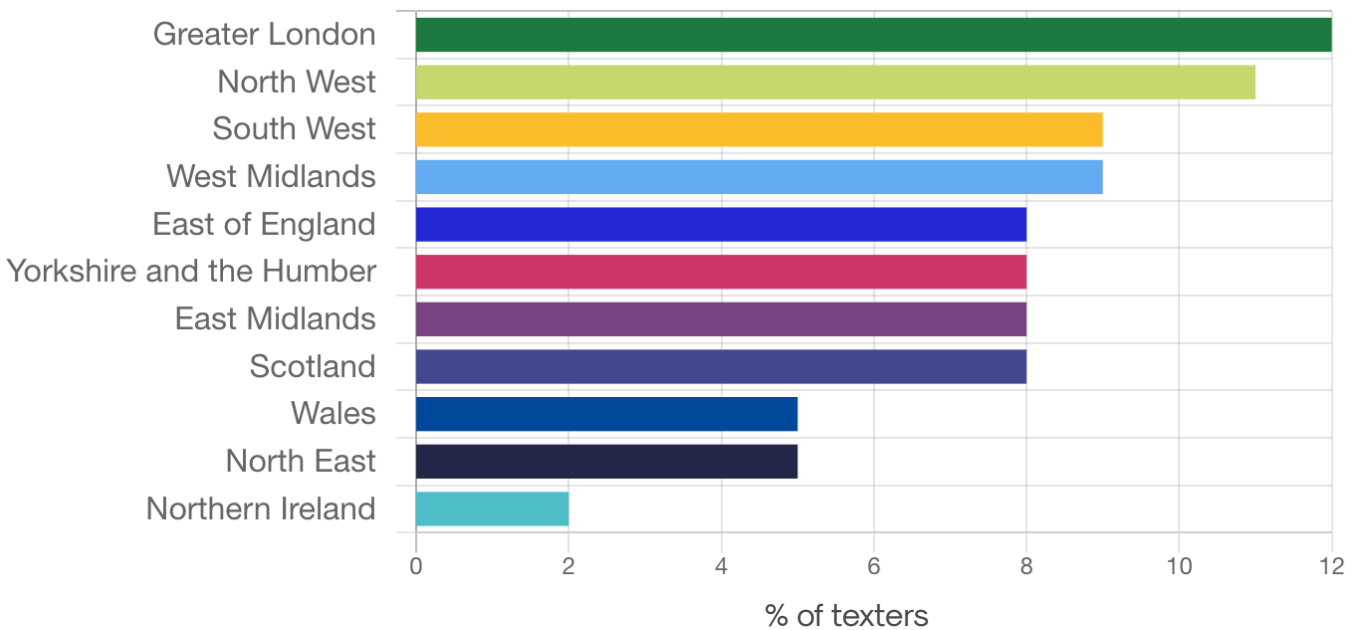
Shout Volunteers have 25 hours of training and receive ongoing coaching throughout their volunteering journey. They're supervised on the platform by clinicians and are highly skilled at taking texters from moments of distress to feeling calmer.





Texters by region

We have achieved UK-wide geographic reach with the Shout service, closely matching ONS data on population density.



Key dates for Mental Health Innovations

- October 2017** ● The Royal Foundation announces £2m funding for a new digital mental health charity as part of the Heads Together campaign
- November 2017** ● Mental Health Innovations is founded with Victoria Hornby as CEO
- May 2018** ● Shout 85258 service launches in pilot phase with The Mix
- June 2018** ● BBC Children in Need becomes a core founding donor with a grant of £1.5m
- May 2019** ● MHI establishes a research partnership with Imperial College's Institute of Global Health Innovation, Data Science Institute and Helix Centre
- May 2019** ● Shout 85258 launches publicly and over 11,000 people apply to volunteer for Shout
- May 2019** ● Our first New Zealand Supervisors join to support our 24/7 Shout service
- August 2019** ● Shout reaches the 100,000 conversation milestone
- November 2019** ● 1,500 Shout Volunteers attend a celebratory event with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge
- April 2020** ● We launch Our Frontline to support frontline staff in the pandemic, in partnership with The Samaritans, Mind and Hospice UK
- May 2020** ● Shout celebrates its first anniversary with 1,800 volunteers who have taken 300,000 conversations
- May 2020** ● Health Secretary Matt Hancock announces the availability of the Shout service for frontline workers
- November 2020** ● We reach our first half a million conversations and average 1,000 daily conversations a day
- December 2020** ● Covid-19 Tier 4 restrictions lead to our busiest 24 hour period on the Shout service to date with 5,174 conversations.
We launch our first Charity of the Year partnership with Pavers Foundation
- February 2021** ● We publish our landmark report, '[Half a Million Conversations Through a Pandemic](#)'
- March 2021** ● 2,800 active Shout Volunteers take an average of 1,400 conversations per day

Our partnerships

Kent Local Authority

Kent County Council commissioned Shout 85258 for the unique support the service offers to the 1.8 million people in Kent and Medway who have a large range of mental health needs and who represent a diverse community. Shout's 24-hour service allows residents to access support around the clock and the text-based nature appeals to a younger audience and has resonated with the local LGBTQ+ community. The clinical oversight of every conversation enables Kent to promote the service with confidence and the depth of data provided lets them shape how they target the service at different populations within the county.



“The best thing to say about Shout 85258 is that it is always there, for anyone in Kent and Medway. No matter what time of day or night, no matter how old you are, no matter what the issue is that you are worried about, there is always someone there to help. We don't have any other services like that. In an age of stretched services and during a pandemic where the mental health need of our population has risen, it is really valuable to know that there is always help available.”



TIM WOODHOUSE

Suicide Prevention Programme
Manager, Kent County Council

BBC Children in Need

BBC Children in Need has supported the Shout 85258 textline since 2018 with a grant of £1.5m over three years. The partnership has been exciting and instructive and has offered 24/7 support to children and young people across the UK who are struggling with their mental health and wellbeing. Shout has the capacity to collect a high volume of data that inform not only their own work but that of BBC Children in Need as a funder and the other projects in the portfolio of organisations in A Million & Me, a £10m proactive programme designed by BBC Children in Need to target early emotional support to 8-13 year olds. During the Covid-19 pandemic, access to expert, trained advice at any time of the day or night has proved critical for many and is highly valued by users and other providers alike.

“BBC Children in Need is delighted to be associated with the Shout text line which has offered vital support to so many children and young people across the UK, when they did not know where else to turn for help.”



PADDY SLOAN

BBC Children in Need

Vodafone Foundation

Vodafone Foundation supported Shout 85258 in 2019-20 with an employee fundraising campaign to #ShineALight for girls at risk. Vodafone employees took on a series of challenge events to raise money for the campaign's charity partners, including a nine-day cycle ride from Land's End to John O'Groats, an Icelandic trek, a 100km UK trail event and a Mount Kilimanjaro climb. In total they raised £211,664 for Shout.



"Shout perfectly fit our criteria for a charity that innovatively applies tech to address mental health. The importance of the service is obvious to fundraisers and donors alike, and really resonated with our employees. I knew we'd picked the right charity partner when one of our fundraisers told me he signed up because his daughter had suffered from an eating disorder. He was fundraising to show his support for Shout and in turn, help other vulnerable young people in future."



NATASHA DALTON
Vodafone Foundation

To discuss partnering with us email SupportUs@mhiuk.org



Our supporters

A huge thank you to those who have supported us in being a lifeline to those who are struggling to cope.

FUNDERS

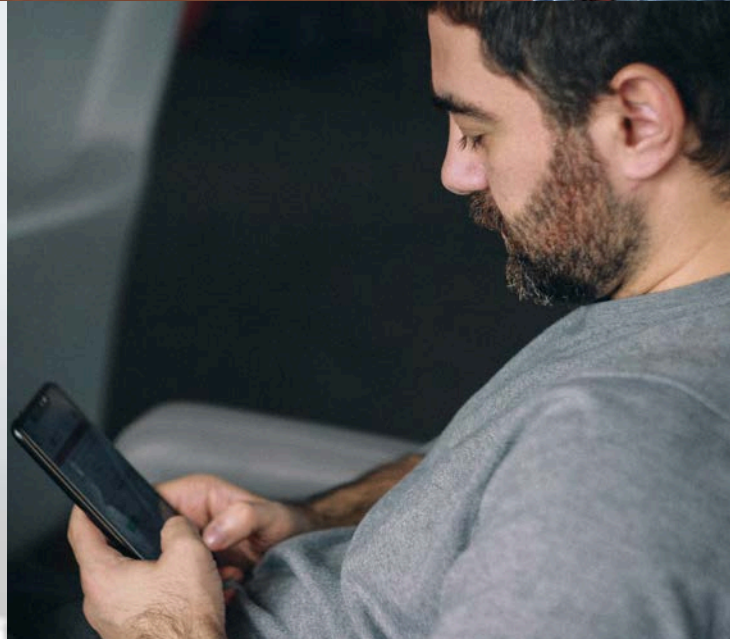


COMMISSIONED PARTNERSHIPS



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