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Contract

NHS SY ICB - Crisis Text Line Service

NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

F03: Contract award notice

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-009495

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04e829

Published 14 March 2025, 3:30pm

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

197 Eyre Street

Sheffield

S1 3FG

Contact

Procurement department

Email

syicb.procurement@nhs.net

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKE32 - Sheffield

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.southyorkshire.icb.nhs.uk/>

Buyer's address

<https://www.southyorkshire.icb.nhs.uk/>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Body governed by public law

I.5) Main activity

Health

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

NHS SY ICB - Crisis Text Line Service

Reference number

SYICB/ICS/NS/25/72

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 85312500 - Rehabilitation services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

A high quality Crisis Text Service will provide timely, accessible, and effective support including a range of interventions tailored to meet the diverse needs of service users

including:

- Providing a clinically led service with Mental Health Practitioners undertaking the text based conversations.
- Providing a service that caters to individuals across all age groups, ensuring that no one is excluded from accessing support.
- Recognising that crisis can occur at any time and to anyone thus ensuring that the crisis text service operates 24/7, 365 days a year.
- Offering the following range of support interventions to address the diverse needs of service users: Text based crisis intervention, emotional support, referrals to appropriate services, safety planning and risk formulation.
- Ensuring appropriately qualified Mental Health Practitioners undertake comprehensive training that covers essential topics such as active listening, de-escalation techniques, suicide risk formulation, risk assessment and safety planning across all ages.
- Ensuring clinical supervision and support for staff
- Mental Health Practitioners completing training that addresses the diverse needs of all age groups and populations to ensure that all individuals receive culturally sensitive and inclusive support that meets their unique needs.
- Integration with NHS 111 – Mental Health Option and signposting to local crisis services across South Yorkshire.
- Providing South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board with quarterly Service Quality Performance Reports which detail the number of texters and conversations, escalations, day of the week, time of the day, topic of conversations, demographic breakdowns, and user satisfaction.
- Providing ongoing support from a Partnership Manager, including marketing resources, quarterly review meetings, check-in calls, email support, contract review meeting and responses within 24 hours.
- Being committed to working collaboratively with SYICB and other local partners to introduce more efficient and innovative ways of working.
- Supporting with insight for local and targeted promotion across South Yorkshire.
- Considering local feedback for service improvements.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)

Value excluding VAT: £765,000

II.2) Description

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKE3 - South Yorkshire

Main site or place of performance

South Yorkshire

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The description of the service is:

A high quality Crisis Text Service will provide timely, accessible, and effective support including a range of interventions tailored to meet the diverse needs of service users including:

- Providing a clinically led service with Mental Health Practitioners undertaking the text based conversations.
- Providing a service that caters to individuals across all age groups, ensuring that no one is excluded from accessing support.
- Recognising that crisis can occur at any time and to anyone thus ensuring that the crisis text service operates 24/7, 365 days a year.
- Offering the following range of support interventions to address the diverse needs of service users: Text based crisis intervention, emotional support, referrals to appropriate services, safety planning and risk formulation.
- Ensuring appropriately qualified Mental Health Practitioners undertake comprehensive training that covers essential topics such as active listening, de-escalation techniques, suicide risk formulation, risk assessment and safety planning across all ages.
- Ensuring clinical supervision and support for staff
- Mental Health Practitioners completing training that addresses the diverse needs of all age groups and populations to ensure that all individuals receive culturally sensitive and inclusive support that meets their unique needs.
- Integration with NHS 111 – Mental Health Option and signposting to local crisis services across South Yorkshire.
- Providing South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board with quarterly Service Quality Performance Reports which detail the number of texters and conversations, escalations, day of the week, time of the day, topic of conversations, demographic breakdowns, and user satisfaction.
- Providing ongoing support from a Partnership Manager, including marketing resources, quarterly review meetings, check-in calls, email support, contract review meeting and responses within 24 hours.
- Being committed to working collaboratively with SYICB and other local partners to introduce more efficient and innovative ways of working.
- Supporting with insight for local and targeted promotion across South Yorkshire.
- Considering local feedback for service improvements.

This notice is an intention to award a contract under the most suitable provider process.

The approximate lifetime value of the service is £765,000.

The dates that the contract will run are 1/05/2025 to 30/04/2030.

This is a new service with a new provider.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Most suitable provider process with regard to the key criteria / Weighting: 100

Cost criterion - Name: Cost / Weighting: 0

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

II.2.14) Additional information

Mental Health Innovations have been deemed the Most Suitable Provider for the Crisis Text Line Service as they were the only Supplier who registered their interest, responded to the essential service criteria questionnaire, answering yes to all key questions.

This is a Provider Selection Regime (PSR) intention to award notice. The awarding of this contract is subject to the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply to this award. The standstill period begins on the day after the publication of this notice. Representations by providers must be made to the relevant authority by 26/03/2025. This contract has not yet formally been awarded; this notice serves as an intention to award under the PSR.

Key criteria 1. Quality and innovation - Weighting 40%

SHOUT is the UK's only free, 24/7 text messaging support service, powered by mental health innovations. The service is proven to reach new audiences who prefer to text and helps to take pressure off local crisis phone lines and face-to-face services. Using technology, Shout is accessible by communities across the length and breadth of the UK, reaching underserved populations who would not otherwise have a means of support.

In Shout's five years of existence, they have scaled the service to take over 2,900,000 conversations with more than 900,000 children, young people and adults who have needed immediate mental health support. Conversations with Shout's clinically-led service are taken by mental health professionals, overseen by Clinical Supervisors and a 24/7 qualified safeguarding team. Commissioning Shout enables ICBs to deliver against NHSE advisory specifications for implementation of 24/7 crisis text message services, integrated with their local services, including 111 phone service provision.

Implementation support

- Ongoing support from Partnership Manager, including quarterly review meetings, check-in calls, email support, contract review meeting and responses within 24 hours.
- Invite to Community of Practice Events and Quarterly clinical webinar for ongoing professional development and sharing key insights
- Local signposts for local texters and 'How to' guide to help you get the best out of your keyword.
- Mental Health Innovations lead or clinician to speak at one virtual event

Data and clinical insights

Bespoke keyword chosen by your organisation, or use of the 'SHOUT' keyword

- Service KPIs to be provided on a monthly basis, based on your keyword, including number of texters and conversations, active rescues, day of the week, time of the day, topic of conversations and demographic breakdowns.
- Detailed data and clinical insight report every six months including:
 - Demographic breakdowns (dependent on texters completing feedback survey).
 - Number of active rescues per month and breakdown of associated stages.
 - Most common conversation issues.
 - Number of conversations signposted to local services.
 - Conversation outcome details.
 - Where texters heard about the service.
 - A search for three agreed data or clinical topics with clinical insight and analysis.
 - Benchmarks of keyword specifics against two Shout datasets such as age or gender.
 - Texter feedback quotes directly related to your organisational keyword.

Key criteria 2. Value - Weighting 20%

HOUT statistics show 39% of conversations are related to suicide, 123,000 safety plans were co-created with texters who were at imminent risk of suicide and 1-2% of texter who were at imminent risk are referred to emergency services.

55% of texters have no-one else to talk to and 38% have never spoken to anyone about their mental health before.

Shout sees many individuals and demographics accessing the Shout service that do not use traditional mental health services, allowing us to reach them before they get to crisis

point and to de-escalate and safety plan.

Only 19% of texters require an onwards signpost to another service, due to Shout clinicians being experts in de-escalating and safety planning over text. Of these 19%, this may include other national charities or local services provided to MHI through the South Yorkshire directory of services of up to 20 local services for the population.

Key criteria 3. Integration, collaboration and service sustainability - Weighting 20%

Benefits of the clinically-led service include:

- Mental health professionals: to support texters in mental health crisis
- Dedicated service: quicker response times in busy periods and the flexibility to swiftly increase staffing levels to meet demand
- Integration with your 111 service: onward signposting to your keyword from 111 (option 2)
- Integration with local services: direct signposting to up to five local services
- Integration with local crisis helplines: direct signposting to local 111 24/7 helplines
- Bespoke keyword: chosen by your organisation
- Keyword information on the Shout platform: providing staff with context around the person they are supporting
- Keyword marketing consultancy: materials and tools designed and created by marketing experts to help you promote your keyword
- Keyword insight and trend reporting: anonymised insights and trends to help you understand the issues your keyword texters are facing

Please see section VI.3.0.1 below for further details on the Key Criteria.

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Award of a contract without prior publication of a call for competition in the cases listed below

- The procurement falls outside the scope of application of the regulations

Explanation:

This is a Provider Selection Regime (PSR) intention to award notice. The awarding of this contract is subject to the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply to this award. The standstill period begins on the day after the publication of this notice. Representations by providers must be made to decision makers by 26/03/2025. This contract has not yet formally been awarded; this notice serves as an intention to award under the PSR.

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.1) Previous publication concerning this procedure

Notice number: [2025/S 000-007312](#)

Section V. Award of contract

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

V.2) Award of contract

V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract

13 March 2025

V.2.2) Information about tenders

Number of tenders received: 4

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor

Mental Health Innovations

PO Box 78319, London, W10 9FE

London

W10 9FE

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

The contractor is an SME

No

V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot (excluding VAT)

Initial estimated total value of the contract/lot: £765,000

Total value of the contract/lot: £765,000

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

Written representations should be sent to: syicb.procurement@nhs.net

The decision makers were -

Programme Manager - Mental Health,
SYICB, Portfolio Director - Mental Health, SYICB,
SYB Provider Collaborative Director, SYB Specialised Commissioning Provider
Collaborative Hub,
Head of Public Health Barnsley Council & SRO for MHLDA - Barnsley Place ICB

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Please see below for a continuation of section II.2.14.1

Key criteria 4. Improving Access, reducing health inequalities and facilitating choice -
Weighting 10%

Key insights into existing usage:

- 63% are children and young people.
- 26% of school-aged texters are receiving free school meals.
- 55% have no-one else to talk to and 38% have never spoken to anyone about their mental health before.
- 18% identify as Autistic and 19% live with ADHD.
- 10% live with learning disabilities.
- 38% identify as LGBTQ+.

Clinical Supervisors are registered with a professional body and trained to Level 3 safeguarding. Shout has developed an additional internal Digital Safeguarding training which is undertaken by all clinical staff biannually. All Supervisors have access to our Safeguarding Panel composed of the Head of Safeguarding, a Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (SDSL) and five Designated Safeguarding Leads for advice and guidance at any time.

Safeguarding forums aimed at continued professional development are held monthly. Clinical Supervisors can discuss themes emerging in text conversations in these forums and the Safeguarding Team holds drop-in sessions for discussion of specific issues.

Conversations are routinely reviewed by MHI Coaches, Clinical Quality Panel and

Safeguarding Panels. Coaches are permanent Shout staff who provide support and advice to volunteers and clinicians when they are off the platform. Their role is to be a readily available point of contact for all volunteers and staff to ensure well-being and consistent feedback and improvement across the organisation.

MHI will continue to work on Translation services to be able to work with other languages. This will require 100% confidence in an online translation service. Currently, should someone text in with a different language we will translate that the Shout service is English speaking only and direct them to our website hosting multiple resources in multiple languages

Shout is a free text service, irrelevant of what network or phone you have, whether it is a contract phone or pay as you go the service is free to text. It doesn't require any data, Wi-Fi or registration to get access. It doesn't even need a smart phone.

According to USwitch, as of 2023, half of all nine-year-olds in the UK own a smartphone and almost all (98%) UK adults aged 16-24 now have a smartphone which will allow access to the Crisis Text Service.

Key criteria 5. Social Value - Weighting 10%

MHI are an organisation who are united behind their values and shared objectives, and:

- Encourage active contribution from staff to a supportive, positive and progressive organisational culture.
- Promote staff and volunteer wellbeing and facilitate continued growth in expertise, knowledge and professionalism.
- Put our service users at the heart of everything we do, including increased engagement of service users in the development and evaluation of our work.

MHI have a Diversity and Inclusion statement and are committed to equal opportunities for all.

‘Our goal is to be a diverse and inclusive organisation that is representative of the UK population at all levels, including our Board of Trustees, our staff, our volunteers and our beneficiaries’. We believe that diversity among our staff will lead us to have a creative and empowered team.

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Independent Choice and Procurement Panel.

Wellington House

London

SE1 8UG

Country

United Kingdom

Internet address

<https://www.england.nhs.uk>