

Integrating advice in health settings

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Why things need to change

Citizens Advice helps people with mental health problems on a daily basis. This can be with accessing mental health services, but more often it is with other issues like welfare, debts or housing.

Mental health is the **number one health issue** for our clients nationally. In the past year we have seen a **9% increase** in clients reporting mental health problems.

We know mental health problems can mean people struggle to manage other aspects of their lives to do with benefits, housing, debt and employment. In turn, we know that these practical problems can worsen people's mental health, leading to periods of crisis or standing in the way of recovery.

We think mental health services need to do more to help people access practical support alongside their health care. Less than a third of people (32%) who access mental health services are referred to advice services, but twice as many (64%) said this would be helpful.

Additionally, services that interact with people with mental health problems, such as local authorities, employers and landlords, should provide better support.

What we are doing

We are working with mental health charities, professional health bodies, government departments and politicians to make the case for integrated advice in health settings.

Most recently, Sarah Wollaston MP, Chair of the Health and Social Care Select Committee has backed our call for a pilot.