



Speak to a psychologist at a time that suits you.

We caught up with **Laura Scarrone Bonhomme** to learn more about what support is available, from one of the expertly qualified psychologists at Smart Health.



Head of Mental Health Services at Smart Health and HCPC registered Clinical Psychologist

Hi, Laura.

Can you briefly explain what the psychology sessions on offer usually involve?

Customers start by requesting a consultation with a psychologist through the Smart Health web portal or by phone. They're asked to briefly describe the issues which have led them to reach out for mental health support. In order to ensure our client's safety, self-referrals are triaged by a GP 24/7. Should customers be suitable for the service, they are asked to complete a quick ID verification, after which an appointment is arranged.

With their booking confirmation, customers are sent a bio of their allocated psychologist – detailing their experience and specialism. The psychotherapeutic process starts before speaking with the psychologist and for this reason, customers are provided with a 'how to best prepare' letter including questions that would help focus the session, as well as a relaxation exercise. Psychologists track the progress of clients using validated questionnaires, so that one appreciates the impact of the therapy over one's wellbeing.

What does the triage involve?

Based on the information offered in the self-referral, a Smart Health GP will review and identify if there is anything of immediate concern or risk to the patient. In these circumstances, the GP will contact the customer straight away to have a conversation to possibly recommend a different course of treatment, or to support accessing local crisis services.

For example, chronic and complex conditions, such as PTSD or Personality Disorders require longer term support and often benefit from in-person session or video-consultations – which are outside the remit of our service. On any case, the clinicians at Smart Health will ensure that the client is guided to access the right type of treatment.

Can a Smart Health GP refer someone straight to the mental health service?

Yes – this is often the case when the client has firstly accessed a Smart Health GP consultation. Sometimes GPs identify that a client would benefit from addressing psychological elements. For example, a customer might seek a GP consultation to address their difficulties sleeping, and the GP might recognise the impact of life stressors over the client's ability to self-regulate and sleep, therefore, referring them to our Psychology Team.

After requesting mental health support, how quickly does the first session take place (on average)?

This varies depending on the method used to book the service but, essentially, there are two points of contact with the Smart Health admin team.

The quickest way is to call and speak to the customer service agents. From this point, the GP triage takes place and they are sent a link for ID verification.

Once the ID verification has happened, the customer can then expect a call from admin team within a couple of days. Consultations are delivered Monday to Friday between 9am and 5:30pm.

How long are the appointments?

All consultations are 50 minutes long, this is standard practice.

We do offer 90 minute consultations to minors (under 18 years old).

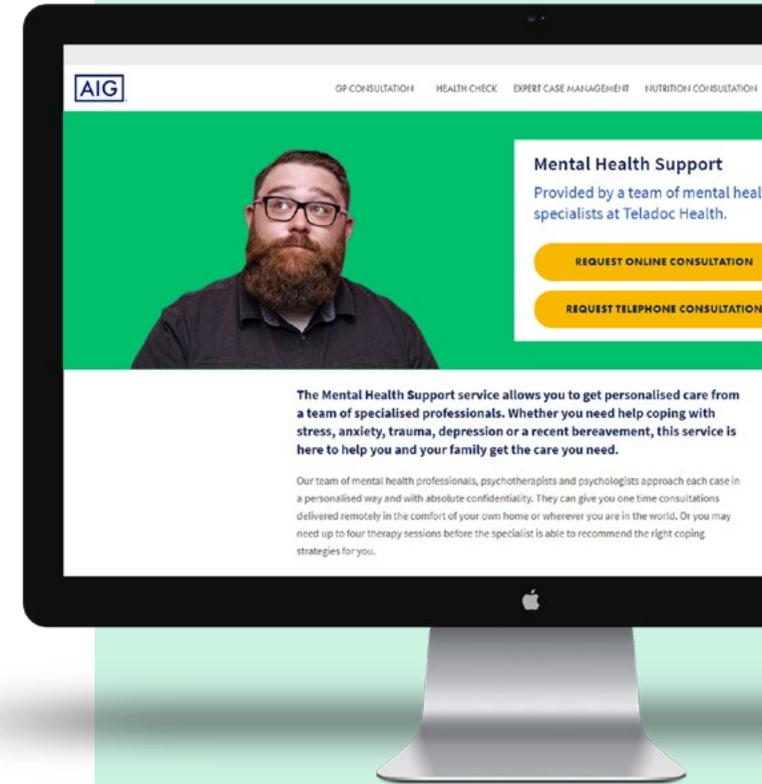
Mental health is just as important as physical health, but still many of us don't always access help when we need it. Every week, one in six people will experience a mental health problem¹. But with Smart Health, AIG customers can speak to a psychologist at a time to suit them.

What happens after the four sessions are completed?

In most cases, the patient will reach their goals in fewer sessions but if issues still remain and it is clinically appropriate, in exceptional cases, an extension can be considered. If, after this, more sessions are still required, we will recommend some further support outside of Smart Health.

Alternatively, we might offer the patient some alternative resources for them to use at their own leisure. The Smart Health psychologists have actually written and developed around 30 resources so it can still feel familiar to the patient.

If the patient feels good after the four sessions but thinks they might need more help in the future, we would recommend the type of sessions they should look for. Whether that be NHS, private treatment or other services.



To book your consultation visit:
aiglife-smarthealth.com/en/mental-health-support

¹McManus S, Bebbington P, Jenkins R, Brugha T. (eds.) (2016) Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014. Leeds: NHS Digital.

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