

Practitioner Health and Personal Wellbeing

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General Practitioner and Forensic Physician

Lucy Henshall

- ▶ Graduated University of Sheffield
- ▶ Trained in General practice in Lincolnshire
- ▶ GP Partner Suffolk 20 years
- ▶ Suffolk LMC member for 19 years
- ▶ GPC Education, Training and Workforce Policy Group co-opted member
- ▶ East of England Clinical Lead for Practitioner Health
- ▶ Founder of www.welcomebacktowork.co.uk
- ▶ Member of RCGP Council since 2019

Martin von Fragstein

- ▶ Graduated University of Nottingham
- ▶ Trained in General Practice
- ▶ Acting Medical Director Sue Ryder Hospice
- ▶ Associate Professor Primary Care
- ▶ Clinical Director and Consultant in Substance Misuse
- ▶ Clinical Lead and Consultant Forensic Physician
- ▶ Returner to General Practice
- ▶ Medical Practitioner with NHS Practitioner Health



Practitioner Health

A CONFIDENTIAL Mental health service for

- **Doctors**
- **Dentists**
- **Retired doctors returning to practice**
- **Medical students starting clinical practice**

**Open as normal England
wide
(remote consultations)**

Email: Prac.Health@nhs.net

Tel: 0300 030 3300

NHS workforce wellbeing



Practitioner Health



Wellbeing
Resources


Workforce
Wellbeing
Resources




Events Calendar



Support Services &
Access to Therapy



Covid-19 Workforce
Wellbeing Videos



Webinars and
Podcasts



Wellbeing Apps

Brief history of PHS

- ▶ In 2000 Daksha Emson killed herself and her 3 month old baby.
- ▶ Subsequent Inquiry highlighted the barriers to care experienced by doctors
- ▶ These barriers are related to personal, professional and institutional stigma.
- ▶ CMO addressed the need for a sick-doctor service and funding found for a pilot service
- ▶ 2008 Hurley Group won the tender to deliver the first NHS funded service for doctors and dentists in Greater London



Our objectives

Improve mental health

Reduce stigma

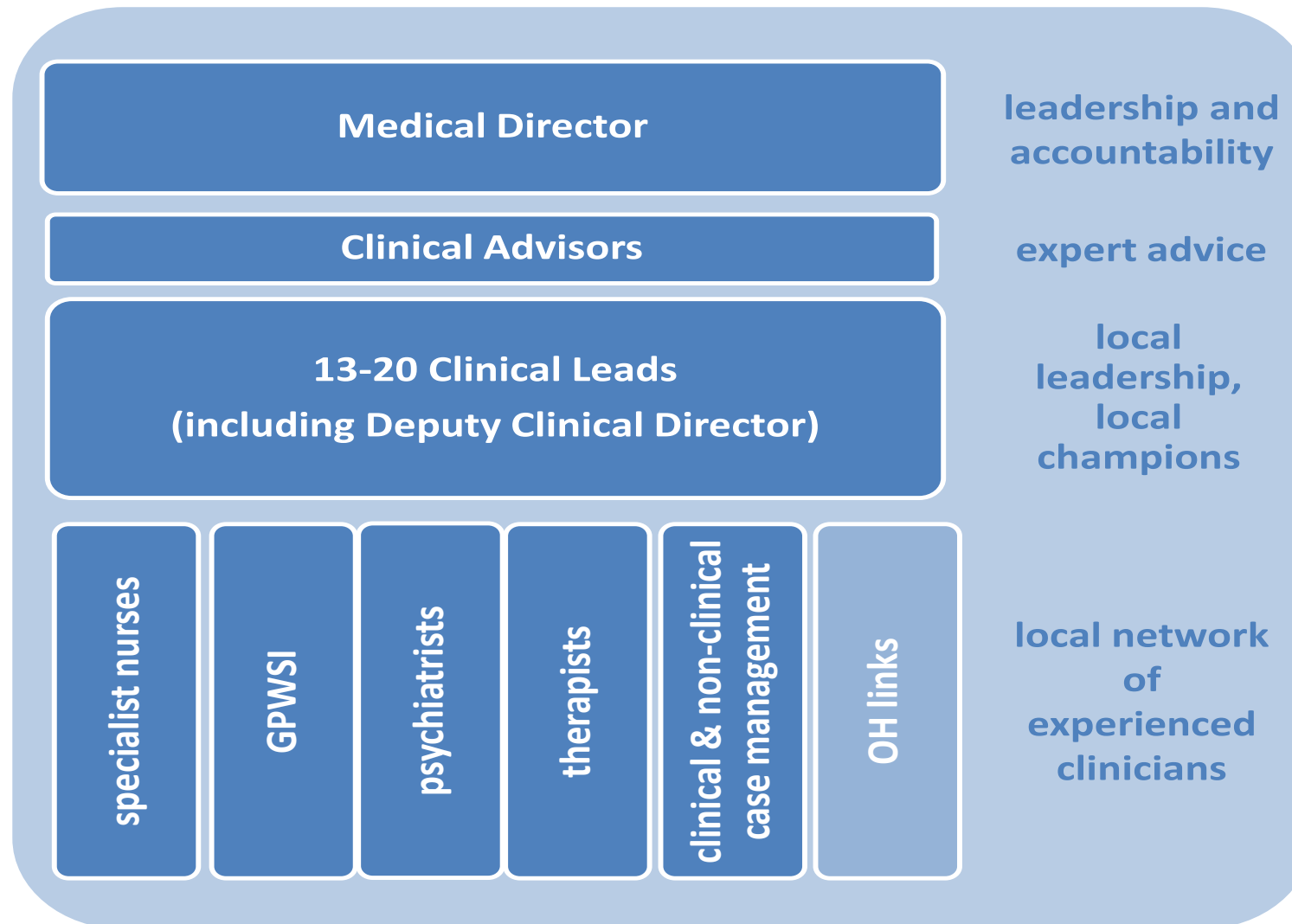
Retain and return to work



What is the service structure?



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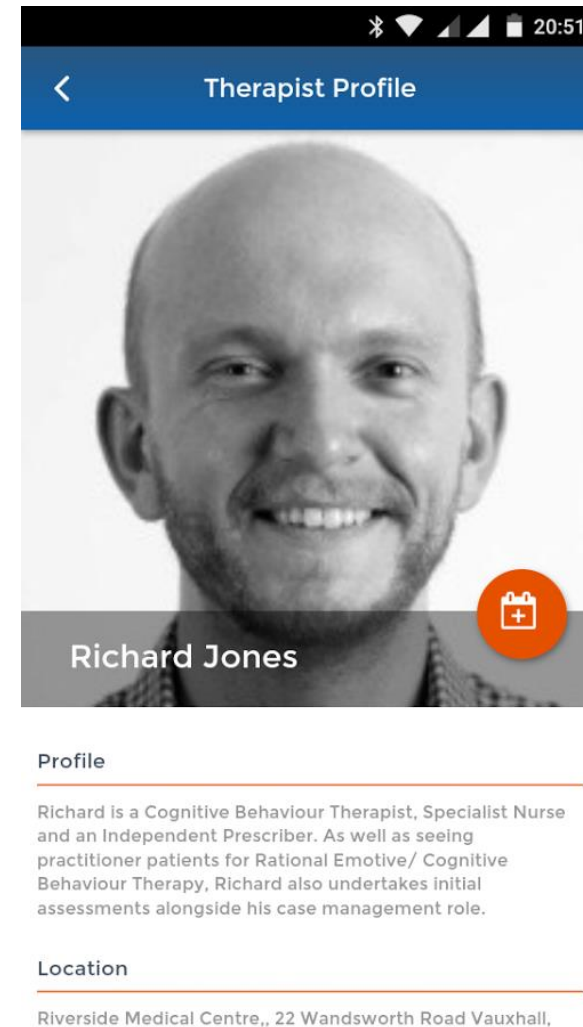
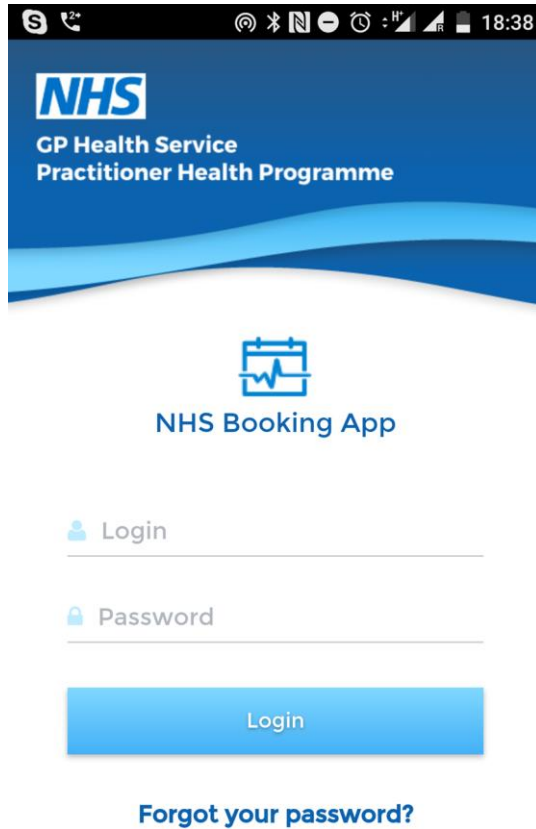
How to access Practitioner Health?

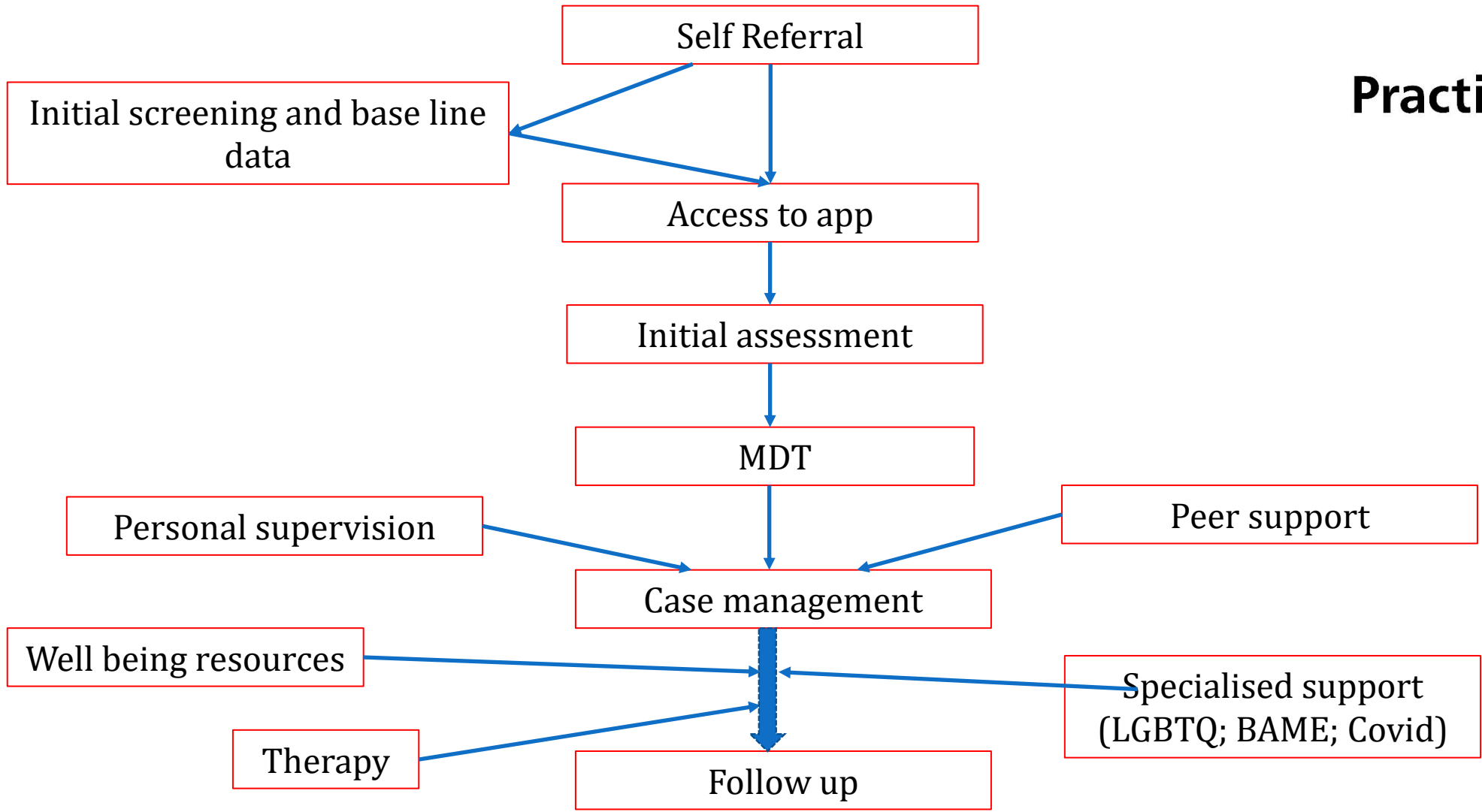
Practitioner Health

- ▶ National telephone number - **0300 030 3300**
- ▶ E-mail - **prac.health@nhs.net**
- ▶ Web – **www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk**

Any time, any person, anywhere

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Primary reason for approaching the service



Categories of cases

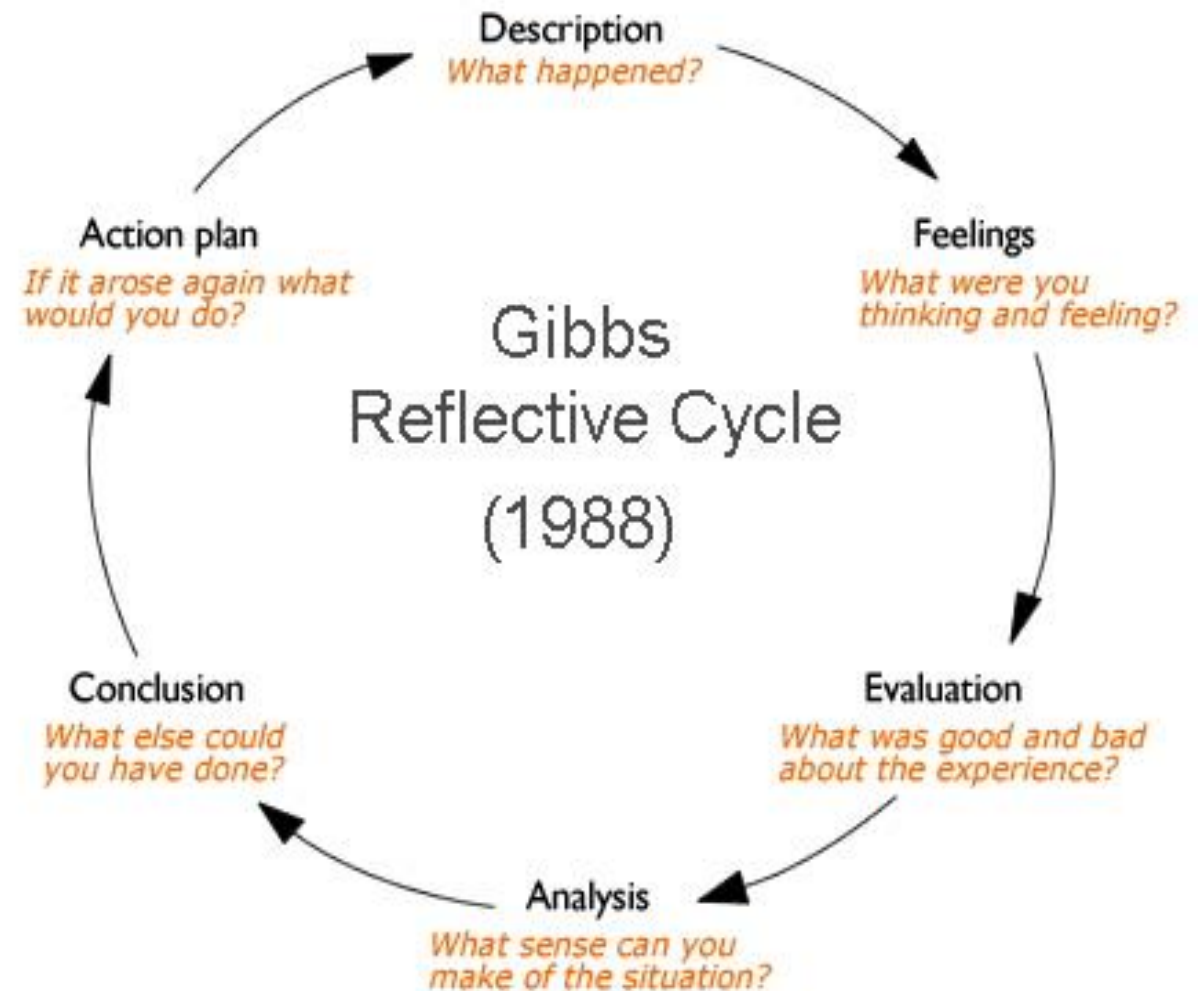
- ▶ **Mental Illness**
 - Psychoses – schizophrenia, bipolar
 - Neuroses – Depression, anxiety, phobia, eating disorders
- ▶ **Disability**
 - Emotional support for physical
 - Neurodevelopmental – Aspergers, autism, ADHD, dyslexia etc.
- ▶ **Addiction**
 - Alcohol, cannabis, class A, food, sex, gambling
- ▶ **Adjustment**
 - Life events – bereavement, divorce, trauma (including sexual assault), PTSD
- ▶ **Environmental**
 - Support, supervision, team dynamics, discrimination, bullying

Other Agencies Involved

- ▶ Health care – primary and secondary
- ▶ Mental Health – crisis teams, CMHT
- ▶ Addiction services – mental health; third sector
- ▶ Professional Regulation – GMC; GDC
- ▶ Educational – Deanery; supervisors; universities
- ▶ Workplace – occupational health
- ▶ Legal services

Reflective Techniques

- ▶ Mind Maps
- ▶ SWOT analysis
- ▶ SMART
- ▶ Positive v Negative
- ▶ Johari's window
- ▶ Balint



Patient characteristics

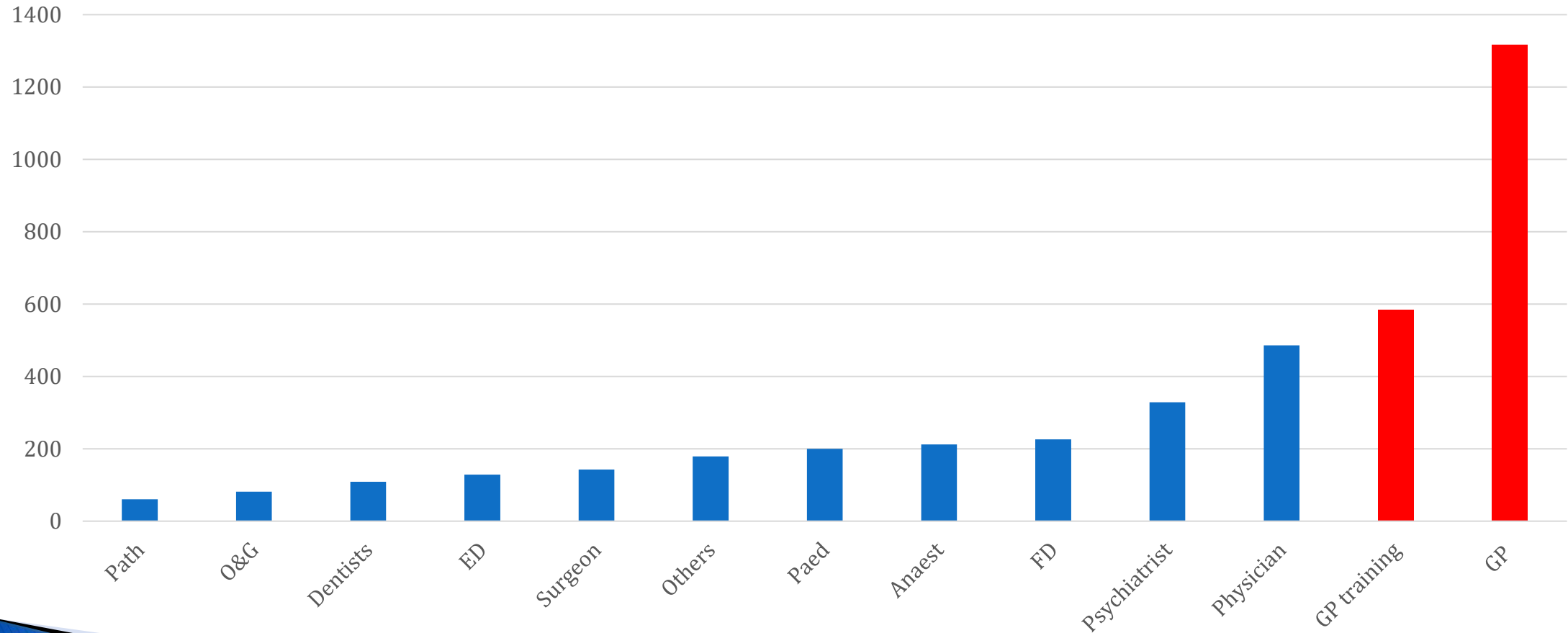
- ▶ Trainees – approx. 24%
- ▶ Females – 67%, Males – 32%, Unspecified – 1%
- ▶ 94% no regulator involvement
- ▶ At presentation:
 - 75% Working
 - 20% sick leave
 - 4% unemployed
 - 1% retired

<i>Age Range</i>	<i>%</i>
20-29	9%
30-39	43%
40-49	27%
50-59	18%
60-65	2%
Over 65	1%
Not stated	0%

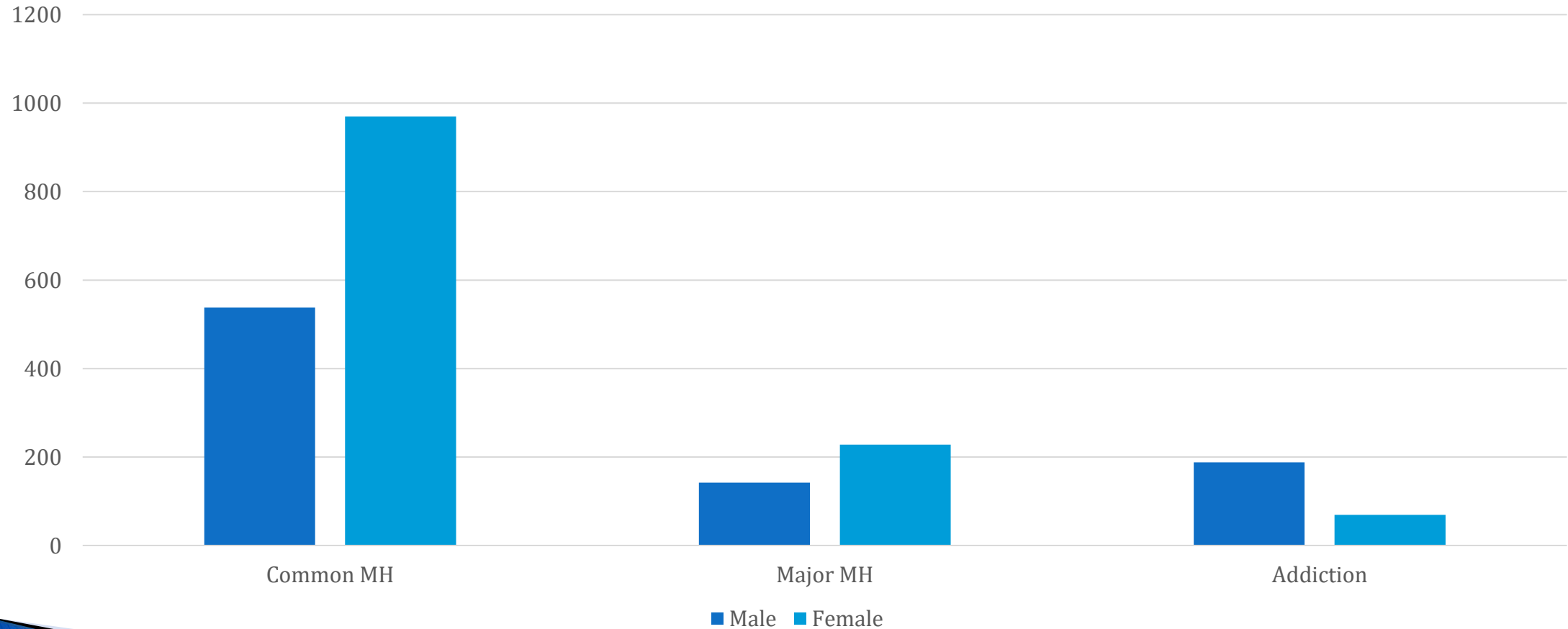
All Specialties but a changing picture



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Gender breakdown of categories



Outcomes

Improve mental health

Reduce stigma

Retain and return to work



Summary of feedback

- **93% likely/very likely to recommend PH to friends and family**
- **94% believe the service is confidential/very confidential**
- **88% believe the service has had a positive/very positive impact on wellbeing**
- **87% believe the service has had a positive/very positive impact on personal/family life**
- **85% believe the service has had a positive/very positive impact on ability to work/train**
- **79% believe the service has had a positive/very positive impact on ability to return to clinical practice**
- **78% believe the service has had a positive/very positive impact on intention to keep working as a doctor**

The Patient voice



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Why don't Doctors seek help?

- ▶ Emotional, psychiatric and psychological illness is strongly associated with stigma
- ▶ Gender - "this doesn't feel very manly"
- ▶ Age related – older doctors less likely to have an inner dialogue of reflection
- ▶ Ethnicity – illness of the mind is taboo
- ▶ Super Doc – syndrome (no chinks in my armour)
- ▶ Pride – being bullet proof

Mental Illness

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- ▶ Is common in primary care and has increased in prevalence as a result of the pandemic
- ▶ One survey suggested that 85% of doctors and dentists have experienced some form of mental health problem during their career
- ▶ The subject however remains a taboo topic amongst the health care profession
- ▶ Leading to suicide, divorce, mental illness and addiction

Nature or nurture?

- ▶ One study supported the hypothesis that attitudes towards health seeking behaviour and self-prescribing are partially formed prior to commencement of medical training
- ▶ Doctors do not follow guidance when managing their own health and illness.
- ▶ In a study of medical students 4 main themes emerged
 - Not using usual patient pathways
 - Informal consultation
 - Self-treatment
 - Keeping going when ill

The reasons or assumptions underlying these beliefs?



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1. Time and resources, including wider issues such as responsibility to colleagues
2. Stigma and attitudes of others including regulatory bodies
3. Beliefs about themselves in terms of taking on the patient role and issues relating to coping and self-sufficiency
4. Behaviour and attitudes of peers;
5. Patient safety considerations;
6. Patients' views about sick doctors;
7. Barriers to accessing care; the ease of self-care, and uncertainty about ability to self-care

Society



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- ▶ Doctors are placed on a pedestal
- ▶ Doctors are the most trusted members of society
- ▶ Coronavirus has made us “heroes” on the frontline
- ▶ Doctors develop a dual persona
 - Decisive, knowledgeable and immune to normal problems
 - Normal trials and tribulations of life
- ▶ If these drift apart, it creates an increasing tension

Rising Tide

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- ▶ There has been an increasing recognition of doctors' health due to an increase in suicides and addiction
- ▶ Complaints process has been “brutal” in its management of doctors involved
- ▶ Increasing demands on health care are transferred to the care givers



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NHS Practitioner Health NHS Workforce Wellbeing

www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk

Tel: 0300 030 3300



@NHSPracHealth



**NHS Practitioner
Health**

Supporting the health of health professionals

Sources of Help and Support

- ▶ NHS Practitioner Health
 - <https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk>
 - www.first.you.org
- ▶ BMA
 - <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/your-wellbeing/wellbeing-support-services/sources-of-support-for-your-wellbeing>
- ▶ Sick Doctors Trust
 - <http://sick-doctors-trust.co.uk/page/addiction>
- ▶ British Doctors and Dentists Group
 - <http://www.bddg.org>

References

1. How would medical students manage their own health? S Ross, K Hanlon, J Cleland ASME 2013
2. Medical students' illness-related cognitions S Ross, M von Fragstein, J Cleland Medical Education 45(12):1241-50 · December 2011
3. Michael Myers

**Do you have any questions or
comments?**

Burnout

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- ▶ a state of physical or emotional exhaustion that also involves a sense of reduced accomplishment and loss of personal identity.



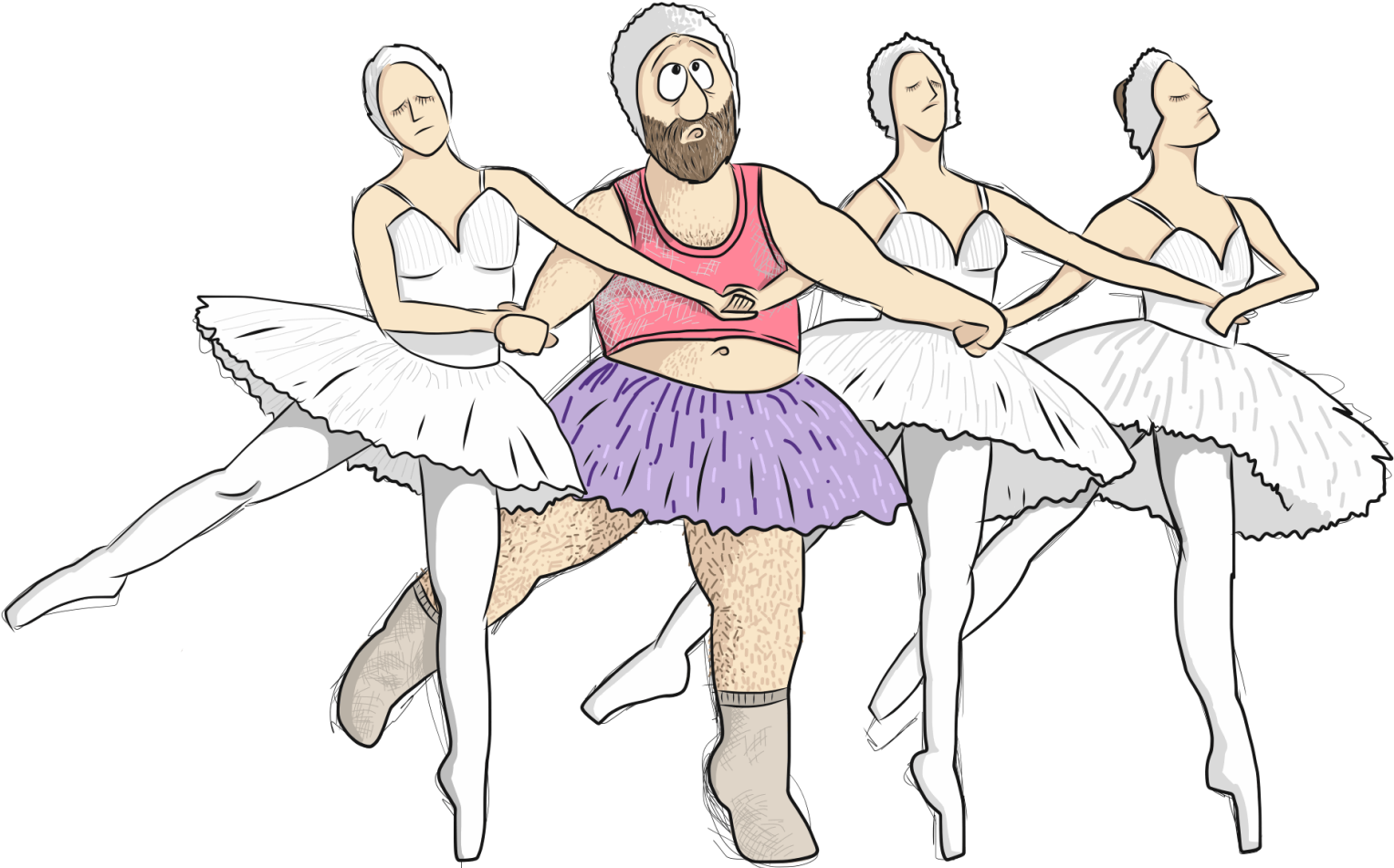
How to manage burnout?

- ▶ Working with purpose
 - Career strategy
- ▶ Perform job analysis
 - What is expected from you?
- ▶ Give to others
 - Helping colleagues
- ▶ Take control
 - Time-management
- ▶ Exercise
 - Helps with sleep and wellbeing
- ▶ Manage stress
 - Relaxation, meditation, mindfulness



Imposter syndrome

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Symptoms

- ▶ Extreme lack of self confidence
- ▶ Feelings of inadequacy
- ▶ Constant comparison to other people
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Self doubt
- ▶ Distrust in one's own intuition and capabilities
- ▶ Negative self-talk
- ▶ Dwelling on the past
- ▶ Irrational fears of the future

Leading to -

- ▶ Burnout
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Job dissatisfaction
- ▶ Addiction
- ▶ Low mood
- ▶ Depression

Suicide

- ▶ Suicide is an outcome that requires several things to go wrong all at once
- ▶ There is no single cause
- ▶ There is no single type of person
- ▶ Invariably a combination of key factors
 - Biological
 - Predisposing
 - Proximal
 - Immediate Triggers

Thank you for listening

Do you have any questions?