

Mental Health at Durham University

What support can I get at Durham? There is a lot of support available for students; you will need to navigate this independently, using each source of support for the right help.

Disability Support offers advice and guidance to students on disability-related support needs, registering a disability, and making adjustments around your studies as needed.

Academic departments can help you if you have concerns about your course or individual studies; if you are not sure who to approach, ask the department reception staff for advice.

College support staff at your College offer pastoral support and are available to discuss concerns throughout your time at Durham whether you live in College or elsewhere.

Can I have counselling? The University Counselling Service offers time-limited counselling to all students, at no charge. For further information see: www.dur.ac.uk/counselling.service/

What about longer-term therapy?

If you are looking for NHS psychological therapies, Talking Changes is a free self-help and talking therapies service which Durham University students can access as long as you are registered with a GP in the County Durham and Darlington area. The service offers treatment for common mental health problems such as stress, anxiety or depression, as well as panic, phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). You can self-refer online at www.talkingchanges.org.uk/online-referral-form/ or by phone: 0191 333 3300. Waiting lists can be long so we encourage students to do this as soon as they have registered with a Durham GP. If you are currently receiving therapy or counselling, we suggest you discuss with your current therapist what ongoing psychological therapy you may need.

Mental Health Advisers are based in the Counselling Service

They offer advice and support for students with longstanding and/or diagnosed mental illness. They can help with transfers or referrals into local NHS services and link you with University support. They also help students with mental health difficulties preparing for field trips or for going on a year abroad.

University Chaplains

Chaplains offer pastoral, spiritual and religious support to students and staff of all faiths and beliefs, and none. They are either based in specific colleges or work across the university. The chaplains represent a range of faith and belief traditions, although each chaplain is available to everyone.

How do I find private therapy?

Some students opt to find a private therapist locally; we advise using therapists accredited on these sites only:

- www.bacp.co.uk/
- www.psychotherapy.org.uk/
- www.bps.org.uk/
- www.counselling-directory.org.uk/

Some students opt to continue with existing therapy via Skype while they are in Durham, and have some face-to-face sessions in vacations. This can be beneficial for continuity but is problematic if you need support in Durham as most services will not duplicate if you are already receiving treatment elsewhere.

How do I register with a Durham GP?

Students are encouraged to start registration with a medical practice in Durham before arrival; information will be provided as to the process for submitting a NHS Family Doctor Services Registration Forms (GMS1) to the Claypath and University Medical Group in due course. If you cannot register in advance then opportunities for registration are available on campus and at medical practices after arrival.

I'm under mental health services at home. Can I be transferred to Durham?

If you are currently under CAMHS or adult mental health services, you should discuss your ongoing treatment and support needs with your care coordinator. You can request referral into Durham City adult mental health services (called the Access Service) via your Durham GP, and it is helpful to bring with you any letters or summaries about your mental health condition/s which will be useful for a GP making referrals for you.

I'm having treatment for an eating disorder, can I get this transferred to Durham?

If you are currently receiving specialist NHS eating disorders treatment and your worker/s in that service feel you need ongoing treatment and monitoring from a specialist team, they can request for you to be transferred to the NHS eating disorders service covering Durham City. Information is available at:

- www.teww.nhs.uk/services/eating-disorders-community-service-for-adults/

Your current worker could call them to discuss your ongoing needs when you return to Durham. The service offers various sorts of treatment and support, and can see students on campus for convenience. Alternatively, to be referred into the eating disorders service, you would need to register with a Durham GP and request a referral. It is wise to bring with you any letters/summaries about your eating disorder, as these will be useful to a new GP. The GP may continue to monitor you, and the way to be referred back into NHS eating disorder services, if you need this in the future.

Durham University has guidelines on safe thresholds for students studying with an eating disorder; you can find these at:

- www.dur.ac.uk/resources/counselling.service/mhadvice/DurhamUniversityEatingDisordersBriefingNotes4May2020.pdf

We encourage prospective students to be aware of our thresholds for safe study with a low BMI