

# Information Pack

## Youth in Mind

**Counselling and therapeutic  
support for children and young  
people**

January 2025

## Important information

Applicants must read this information pack before completing the application form. It provides organisations with information to help them decide whether to apply for funding.

### Overview

This contract funds a new counselling and therapeutic support service within the Youth in Mind (YiM) partnership, providing focused, short-to-medium-term mental health interventions for children and young people (CYP).

### Contract details

This is a 1+1 contract; it will be awarded for an initial one-year term, from June 2025 to May 2026, with the option to extend for a further year, subject to satisfactory performance and availability of external funding.

The value of the contract is £180,000 per annum.

### Enquiries

To ensure a fair and transparent process, we invite all interested parties to submit their questions via email to [yimtender@mindinbradford.org.uk](mailto:yimtender@mindinbradford.org.uk). All questions must be submitted by **10am Thursday 30 January 2025**, and no further questions will be accepted after this deadline. We will compile all questions and provide responses on **Tuesday 4 February 2025**. To ensure fairness and transparency, responses to all questions will be shared with all parties who register their interest. Please register your interest here: <https://www.mindinbradford.org.uk/youth-in-mind-counselling-and-therapeutic-support-tender/>

### Key dates

- Deadline for enquiries: 10am Thursday 30 January 2025
- Enquiry response: 5pm Tuesday 4 February 2025
- Application submission deadline: 10am Monday 17 February 2025
- Interviews: Monday 3 March 2025
- Final decision: 5pm Friday 7 March 2025
- Service commencement: Monday 2 June 2025

### Please note

The TUPE Regulations 2006 (as amended) may apply to this contract. Applicants are advised to consider the potential implications of TUPE as part of their proposal. Further information on TUPE can be found on the UK Government website. Applicants are encouraged to seek independent legal advice if necessary.

We reserve the right to amend the application process, extend the submission deadline, or make changes to the selection criteria or timeline at any stage, should circumstances require it. Applicants will be notified of any such changes in a timely manner.

# 1. Background

In January 2023 the Bradford District and Craven Health and Care Partnership (BDCHCP) commissioned Leeds Beckett University (LBU) to undertake an **independent review** of counselling and therapeutic services provided by non-statutory organisations for CYP across our district. This research aimed to evaluate the existing service offer and to further understand how to effectively meet evolving local needs and align our provision with best practices. The review covered services commissioned by Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust (BDCFT), Bradford District and Craven Integrated Care Board (ICB), and the Bradford Children and Families Trust (BCFT).

The research used qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews, focus groups, surveys, street surveys and monitoring data. Its findings have been instrumental in shaping the development of a new service model, alongside insights from our local evidence base, including CYP Mental Health System Wide Review 2020<sup>1</sup>, CYP Mental Health Needs Assessment 2024<sup>2</sup> and a Listen In<sup>3</sup> exercise conducted with CYP and their families in early 2024. Together, these evidence-based drivers underpin the transformation of local counselling and therapeutic support for CYP.

## Key findings and recommendations

The **independent review** had a number of clear recommendations which can be found in the executive summary<sup>4</sup>. The following recommendations have informed the approach to this expression of interest process:

- There is a difference in both need and approach required for adult services and those for CYP and families
- Need to develop a broader counselling and therapeutic support offer, which is complementary to community-based wellbeing support and is able to adopt whole family approaches which consider the home and family context
- Need to address fragmented commissioning arrangements, providing clarity on service delivery, target groups, expected outcomes and supporting streamlined referrals to the right support at the right time
- Increase collaboration and partnership working to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise across services, so that CYP are able to access the most appropriate service to meet their needs

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<sup>1</sup> Link to Executive Summary of system wide review [here](#)

<sup>2</sup> Link to CYP Mental Health Needs Assessment [here](#)

<sup>3</sup> Link to Listen In report [here](#)

<sup>4</sup> Link to Executive Summary of independent review [here](#)

- Provide transparency and consistency to workforce requirements, governance arrangements, cultural competency, data and outcomes recording.

The evidence base further reinforces the need for services to address key issues raised by CYP, including the impact of school pressures, community and social support, identity struggles, access to health services, and a desire for practical life skills. The counselling review advocates for a comprehensive, integrated and innovative service model that is needs led and takes account of issues impacting on our local CYP population.

The recommended model for counselling and therapeutic support will be aligned with the “getting help” quadrant of the iThrive framework<sup>5</sup>, for CYP requiring focused goals-based input. It is recognised that the presenting needs of CYP within this cohort will vary greatly, however the focus of this provision will be to address specific mental health issues with the use of experienced, trained and qualified practitioners. Those CYP that require extensive or longer-term interventions will be supported by ‘getting more help’ services.

The findings, shared with stakeholders in December 2023, have instigated the development of a new service model, this approach was approved by the Healthy Minds Partnership Board and Partnership Leadership Executive.

## Strategic alignment and commissioning

In line with our Act as One<sup>6</sup> commitment, the new service will be commissioned through YiM, a trusted and effective lead provider model rooted in the partnership and the principles of upholding youth voice and demonstrating impact. YiM’s collaborative approach maximises shared resources and processes, with the upcoming YiM Open Door single point of access set to centralise triage, referral, and waiting list management across the programme. This streamlined pathway will enhance efficiency and free up more resources for direct support, including through the new counselling and therapeutic service.

Aligning the counselling and therapeutic offer within YiM strengthens its adherence to the iThrive framework, supporting the needs-led, integrated approach to CYP mental health. Locally, we are committed to iThrive to ensure timely, accessible and responsive support for CYP and families, embedding collaboration, integration and simplicity. The new service will operate in the “getting help” quadrant of

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<sup>5</sup> More Information about iThrive [here](#)

<sup>6</sup> Act as One: guiding principle for how we work together across health, care, voluntary, and community organisations. Focuses on delivering core services and driving transformation to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, helping people stay happy and healthy at home.

iThrive, delivering targeted, short-to-medium-term, moderate-intensity interventions designed to address specific mental health needs and support recovery.

## The iThrive Framework



## Next steps

With development funding of £180,000 from the ICB intended to address the findings from the independent review and existing evidence base, this counselling and therapeutic support expression of interest has been developed. This integrated approach proposed will underpin future commissioning and service delivery, ensuring that the mental health and wellbeing needs of CYP and their families are met efficiently and effectively.

## 2. Youth in Mind

Established in 2016, YiM is a collaborative partnership for CYP mental health, led by Bradford District and Craven (BDC) Mind and funded by West Yorkshire ICB for Bradford District and Craven. YiM brings together third sector and local authority providers to deliver a shared vision:

**To promote, protect and improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people living in Bradford District and Craven.**



YiM offers a diverse range of mental health support in schools, communities, and acute trust settings, designed by local CYP to ensure timely, accessible, and needs-led care. Support includes face-to-face and digital one-to-one interventions, group sessions, and workshops, addressing a wide spectrum of issues such as stress, anxiety, low mood, loneliness, bullying, identity, self-esteem, and gender-related concerns.

As lead provider since April 2021, BDC Mind oversees the sub-contracted elements of the programme, ensuring effective coordination and accountability. The subcontracted providers are Barnardo's, Bradford Youth Service, Brathay Trust, Inspired Neighbourhoods CIC and SELFA. The lead provider model has strengthened strategic and operational delivery, fostering a collaborative approach to resource-sharing, workforce development, and service innovation.

In 2023-24, YiM supported 2,782 CYP, including 2,387 new referrals, many with complex needs. The partnership delivered 13,977 support sessions, with 89% of cases having a paired Goals Based Outcome (GBO) measure at treatment completion. Over 89% of paired GBOs showed reliable change, with an average score of +5.8.<sup>7</sup>

Being part of the YiM partnership offers applicants a wealth of opportunities and support. This includes collaboration with the lead provider and partner organisations, fostering a shared approach to resources, information, and expertise. Members benefit from regular YiM provider meetings, offering a platform for mutual support, problem-solving, and innovation. Workforce development is a key focus, with access to training and professional development opportunities to strengthen skills and knowledge. The partnership also provides support with contract compliance, monitoring, and recording, ensuring high standards of quality, safety, impact and accountability. Centralised functions, such as referral triage and waiting list management, streamline processes, enabling providers to focus resource on delivering high-quality support to CYP and families.

### 3. Service specification

This 12-month pilot aims to address the increasing acuity, diversity, and complexity of needs identified in the independent review, Listen In report and evidence base. The service will empower CYP to take an active role in support, ensuring it is accessible, person-centred, culturally sensitive, and trauma-informed. Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to quality, collaboration, and measurable impact while supporting the development of a long-term, sustainable model.

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<sup>7</sup> The reliable change index for GBO is a change of +3 or more, and measures whether the change in a CYP's self-rated progress towards their goals is statistically significant.

## Service delivery and accessibility

The service will:

- Support 300-400 CYP via a mix of evidence-based interventions that must include:
  - Whole family systemic therapy
  - One-to-one counselling
  - Psychoeducation and group work
  - Play therapy for younger children
- Offer short-term interventions (6–12 sessions) with pathways to lower-level, longer-term facilitated or peer-led support groups.
- Deliver a community-based service aligned with the “getting help” quadrant of the iThrive framework which offers choice and control to CYP and families.
- Operate 52 weeks a year, including weekdays, evenings, and weekends, to align with CYP and family availability.
- Support CYP aged 5–18, with flexibility to work with those up to 25 who have additional needs.
- Embed person-centred, anti-racist, and trauma-informed approaches that engage and empower CYP and their families.
- Make services accessible for all CYP and proactively reduce health inequalities in access, focusing on:
  - Ethnically and culturally diverse communities
  - Younger children
  - Boys and young men
  - LGBTQIA+ individuals
  - CYP with special needs, disabilities, or neurodiversity
- Support CYP with low to moderate mental health needs suitable for short-term interventions (up to 12 weeks), and not requiring extensive or intensive support.
- Accept self-referrals and referrals from professionals and third parties through the YiM Open Door pathway, which could include education, primary care, social care
- Accept referrals for CYP who live, attend school or are registered with a GP in Bradford District and Craven, ensuring equitable access for CYP in Craven.
- Strengthen links with schools, colleges, primary care, and mental health services to build essential referral pathways and reduce pressures on specialist services.
- Make contact within 5 working days of referral and undertake initial assessment within 21 days of referral for at least 95% of individuals referred

## Engagement and adaptability

The service will:

- Embed CYP and family voice in designing and shaping the service through active participation and feedback loops.
- Engage families in decision-making processes and support strategies.

- Provide guidance and consultation to health, care and education professionals on therapeutic approaches to a range of presenting issues for CYP mental health
- Operate a test-and-learn model, sharing insights to refine delivery and respond to emerging needs during the pilot phase.

## Governance, monitoring and evaluation

The service will:

- Use child-friendly, validated paired outcome measures tailored to intervention types.
- Track improvement rates and ensure robust data capture via MYMUP (client management system) meeting KPIs for recorded outcomes and measurable progress.
- Report activity, reach, and impact quarterly, including success indicators such as reliable change.
- Develop process to follow up and measure longer term impact of interventions
- Be cost-effective, delivering value for money through a sustainable model while demonstrating added value through innovative approaches and measurable outcomes.
- Integrate the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Scope of Practice and Education (SCoPEd) framework, ensuring counselling is safe, ethical, and aligned with professional standards.
- Clearly define service modalities and how they complement statutory and specialist provision within the “getting more help” quadrant of iThrive.

## 4. Service aims & objectives

The model for community-based counselling and therapeutic support aims to align with the partnership’s vision of helping CYP and families live happy, healthy lives at home. It seeks to enhance access to a broader range of services tailored to meet identified needs through a collaborative, integrated, and culturally sensitive approach.

### Aims

- To deliver enhanced wellbeing, counselling and therapeutic support with a focus on a whole-family approach.
- To ensure services are culturally adapted to meet the diverse needs and demographics of CYP and families.
- To address the increasing acuity and complexity of CYP’s mental health needs across the current landscape.
- To promote equitable access and reduce barriers for marginalised and underrepresented groups in the local population.



## Objectives

- Provide tailored support plans lasting 6–12 weeks, based on the needs of CYP.
- Support CYP aged 5–18, with flexibility to extend to 25 for those with additional needs.
- To maximise the funding to provide direct support to CYP and families, with the intention of supporting between 300-400 CYP within the pilot period, subject to the service model proposed.
- Embed the transition to the SCoPEd framework and adhere to BACP standards of practice, or other reputable registered bodies, to ensure safe, ethical, and high-quality service delivery.
- Offer a consistent and transparent costing structure, which is fair, affordable and sustainable.
- Use the MYMUP platform to capture robust data on outcomes, impact, and service quality.
- Deliver targeted support to CYP at higher risk of mental health challenges, including:
  - CYP from Central Eastern European, Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds.
  - Refugee and asylum-seeking children.
  - CYP in or on the edge of the care system.
  - CYP with physical and/or learning disabilities or neurodiverse
  - LGBTQ+ youth
  - Young carers
  - Those in contact with the justice system.
- Maximise the use of collective resources to deliver an integrated and holistic service model that aligns with local priorities.

## Wider aims & objectives

As part of the YiM partnership, the service will contribute to the following YiM and Act as One aims and objectives:

- To deliver a person-centred service to the Bradford District and Craven population, ensuring equity of access and quality of service provision.
- To ensure health outcomes and improvements in wellbeing are measured at regular intervals and recorded for submission to national and local datasets.
- To support the delivery of the vision and goals of the Healthy Children and Families Partnership Board, the Healthy Minds Board and the CYP Mental Health Leadership Programme Group.
- To deliver the outcomes of the Healthy Minds Strategy for mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, and substance use, and the Bradford District Children & Young People's Strategy 2023-2025.
- To improve access to non-medicalised support, treatment and activities.
- To improve the experience of CYP and families seeking access to mental health and emotional wellbeing services.
- To ensure all staff have a conscious competence in relation to working with ethnically diverse communities and vulnerable communities and preventing racial inequality and differentials across the service.

- To ensure that service provision is responsive to the needs that are being identified and that we develop a portfolio of engagement and intervention that is co-produced with CYP.
- To improve the experience of children, young people, parents and carers seeking access to mental health and emotional wellbeing services, information and advice.

## 5. Essential criteria

To be considered for this funding, your organisation must:

- Have experience delivering mental health services to CYP and families in Bradford District and Craven.
- Have cultural competency expertise and experience, including an understanding of how socio-economic and cultural factors affect mental health, how these can be overcome and how services can be accessible to diverse clients.
- Adhere to Scope of Practice and Education (SCoPEd) review by the BACP, noting the transition period, to ensure that all trainee student counsellor and qualified counsellors, have the required experience and qualifications with registration to the BACP (or equivalent reputable registered bodies) to ensure consistently safe, effective and ethical services are provided across a range of counselling modalities. Ensure accessibility to regular clinical supervision.
- Provide a mix of skills, expertise and experience of practitioners, which does not solely rely on the use of student counsellors.
- Have experience of using strength-based and solution-focussed methodologies.
- Have experience producing service development plans.
- Have experience interpreting and using data and electronic databases to drive service improvement and recommendations for change.
- Have experience of successfully delivering projects within agreed timescales and budgets.
- Be committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Have experience working in partnership with organisations across the local system.

## 6. Application process

**Partnership applications are encouraged, however, there must be one lead provider.**

Applicants must complete and submit the following:

- Application form (using the template provided)
- Risk register (using the template provided)
- Budget (using the template provided)
- Mobilisation plan (using the applicant's preferred format)

Additional documents or attachments will **not** be considered as part of the evaluation process.

All applications will be assessed through a scoring system to ensure a fair and thorough evaluation. Applications will be scored against the following criteria:

- Your experience: 30%
- Your project plan (including risk register and mobilisation plan): 50%
- Budget: 20%

Each section will be scored on a scale of 1 to 5:

- **5 - Excellent:** Exceeds expectations with comprehensive, detailed responses and strong supporting evidence.
- **4 - Good:** Meets expectations with well-supported responses.
- **3 - Satisfactory:** Provides sufficient information but lacks depth or clarity.
- **2 - Limited:** Responses are incomplete or unclear, with significant gaps in coverage.
- **1 - Weak:** Minimal or no relevant information provided.

Applications with the highest scores will be shortlisted and invited to an interview with a panel of stakeholders from across the mental health system. The interview will provide an opportunity for applicants to elaborate on their proposals and address any queries from the panel. The panel will assess how well each applicant meets the requirements and objectives of the project, ensuring that the chosen provider aligns with the vision for the service.

## Important information

- Stick to the specified word limits for each section. The end of responses exceeding these limits will be disregarded.
- Cover all requested content in the relevant sections to ensure your application is complete and can be fully assessed.

## Documents available on request

In addition to a completed application form, the following documents must be available to BDC upon request:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Adult and Child Safeguarding Policies
- Data Protection and Information Governance Policies
- Employers liability insurance certificate
- Public liability insurance certificate.

## Submitting your application

All elements of your application must be sent via e-mail to [yimtender@mindinbradford.org.uk](mailto:yimtender@mindinbradford.org.uk) no later than **10am Monday 17 February 2025**.

Applications received after this time, even for circumstances beyond the applicant's control, will not be accepted.

Applications must include:

- Application form
- Risk register
- Budget
- Mobilisation plan

Applications will be shortlisted, and interviews will take place on Monday 3 March 2025, with a final decision communicated on Friday 7 March 2025.

### **Bradford District and Craven Mind**

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