



PIPS  
Charity

APRIL 2020

## Update on PIPS Charity

Due to Covid-19 PIPS has suspended all face to face counselling. During this time the safety of our clients, volunteers and staff is of paramount importance and we cannot risk anyone falling ill with this virus. We made the decision to close PIPS temporarily on 25.03.2020. Although our offices are closed it does not mean that we have suspended all our services.

We are now delivering telephone counselling and befriending to our clients and anyone who may phone in distress. Our main line is still operational and calls are being picked up by our receptionist, Sharon. We have a team of wonderful counselling volunteers who provide counselling over the phone, working to the BACP and GDPR guidelines. Our services are still operating from 9am to 9pm Monday to Friday and 2pm to 6pm Saturday and Sunday.

All staff members are working from home and can be reached through their emails. A list of email addresses will be provided in this update. Although there are certain tasks that cannot be performed at home, this is a great time to do work we unfortunately never had the time for, such as updating forms and files, producing a volunteer pack and creating new forms that we will need.

If you need any information or wish to contact us, please do not hesitate in doing so.

## Update on move back to our old building

Our building was finished in March after a year of us being in temporary premises. We had to make the decision to move back during these difficult times to save us from paying for two buildings, as we don't know how long certain situations will last.

What should have been an exciting time for us had a ting of sadness as we knew we could not use the building and our main aim was to get everything moved back as quickly as possible.

We suspended face to face counselling on 23/03/2020 and used the next 2 days to arrange the premises so it is fully functionally on our return.

We know our organisation and others like it will be needed more than ever when the pandemic subsides so we need to be ready to get straight back into work when the time comes.

If any of you would like to be shown around the building now that work has been completed, please in touch and we will arrange it when we return.

The building boosts 6 counselling rooms spanned over 2 floors, disabled access and a fully function training room on the third floor. We now have the full use of all 4 floors.

### Rooms that we now have:

Reception with a separate waiting room

Careteam Manager office

Counselling rooms

Family room

Disabled rest room

File storage room

Crisis telephone call room

Large admin office

Managers office

HR, Finance office

Staff room and kitchen

Training room

Large back garden



## Staff members

### Martina

#### *Careteam manager and acting manager*

Martina has been working hard in ensuring we were all able to work from home. She overseen the move to our old premises and ensured everything was in place before we closed the building.

She contacts all staff and volunteer's numerous times daily to ensure everyone is doing ok.

She has kept in touch with board members to keep them included in the work we are doing and has participated in numerous conference calls.

Martina continued to work from the office on a few occasions during our time at home to both sort out incoming mail and to let the contractors finish a few minor things in the office.

Works with Sharon and careteam admin to ensure all clients are being looked after and continues to run all aspects of PIPS from home.

Martina can be contacted through her email at:

[martina@pipscharity.com](mailto:martina@pipscharity.com)

### Sharon

#### *Receptionist*

Sharon is currently taking all phones that comes in. This includes evenings and weekends.

She keeps in constant contact with all counsellors and makes sure if someone phones in distress that they are passed to a suitable counsellor who can help.

She works with the diary making sure every clients gets a phone call and new people phoning in get to speak to someone. She has spent a lot of time rearranging appointments as some members of our careteam cannot counsel a client over the phone, such as student counsellors, who were pulled from their placements the week before we closed our doors.

Sharon is a key person in our team and we would not have been able to keep our services running so smoothly without her expertise with the counsellors.

Sharon can be contacted through her email at:

[sharon@pipscharity.com](mailto:sharon@pipscharity.com) or 028 90805850

### Ciara

#### *HR/Finance Admin*

Ciara has been working from home and updating any paper work that needs done. She has produced a fundraising pack and undated policies and procedures.

She is currently studying level 5 CIPD HR management at Belfast Met so is continuing to complete assignments at home.

She has updated all staff annual leave and sick in line with the new financial year and worked out a way for staff to take annual leave during this time with the hope that all staff will still be with PIPS when we get back to the building. Salaries are revised each month and we have been looking at the option of furloughing as currently we have no funds coming into the charity.

She has also decided to compose this newsletter for a way for us to keep in touch with our corporate sponsors.

Ciara can be contacted through her email at:

[ciara@pipscharity.com](mailto:ciara@pipscharity.com)

### Catherine

*Careteam Admin*

Catherine works with Sharon to ensure the rota is covered at all times.

She keeps in constant contact with our counsellors, she keeps them up to date with any changes and provides them with relevant paper work.

She has updated careteam paper work to make sure they are up to date and ready when we return to the office.

During this time, she is collating the volunteer's hours of work and sending them to Martina to be signed off so they can receive their volunteer expenses.

If you wish to get in touch with Catherine, you can reach her through email at:

[catherine@pipscharity.com](mailto:catherine@pipscharity.com)

### Chris

*Careteam admin/PRO*

Chris works on all of PIPS social media platforms. He has used this time to make up a calendar of events that occur during the year which we can portray on social media, such as international men's and women's day, autism awareness month, etc.

Chris deals with all student counsellors who are looking a placement within PIPS, so he is currently putting provisions in place to ensure this can still be done when we return to our building, as he has a waiting lists of those wishing to join PIPS.

During this time, he has written an editorial for a newspaper and worked with corporates and people who were due to hold events during this time.

If you wish to get in touch with Chris, you can reach him through email at:

[chris@pipscharity.com](mailto:chris@pipscharity.com)

Keith, Louise and Sean

*Staff counsellors*

At the end of 2019 we were in the position to hire 3 counsellors. During a rigorous application and interview stage the 3 counsellors we employed were volunteers at PIPS.

Each counsellor is contracted 25 hours per week and work between our Antrim Road office and our satellite office in South Belfast.

Keith, Louise and Sean has been invaluable during this time, leading the way with our telephone counsellor. They are a great example to our volunteer counsellors on how to conduct themselves in a time of crisis.

If you wish to get in touch with our counsellors, please contact reception at 028 90805850.

All staff are continuing to work each day and keeping in constant contact through weekly reports and video calls.

We have also applied for a few Covid 19 relief grants and we are hoping they are successful.



If you or someone you know are struggling during this time they can call:

PIPS

028 90805850

Lifeline

0808 808 8000

Samaritans

116 123