

1. INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT

Invitation to apply to evaluate Relate NI's Golden Threads Project; a relational approach to improving mental well being

Relate NI are delighted to invite suitably qualified professionals to submit applications to externally evaluate the Golden Threads project, funded by the Department of Health's Mental Health Support Fund.

This project was funded to contribute towards one or more of the DoH's high level outcomes listed below:

1. Talking therapies, psychological therapies and similar interventions
2. Interventions which reduce pressures on mental health acute in-patient facilities for adults and children including in-reach to in-patient mental health services where there is support from the HSC Trusts
3. Interventions which are expected to have an overall impact on the need for people to access statutory services
4. Support for individuals, families and carers to improve emotional wellbeing and mental health through self-help
5. Support individuals, families, and carers to access mental health and wellbeing services they need at the right time and right place
6. Support to individuals with mental health problems to engage more fully in society
7. Support to individuals, families, and carers to access technology to assist in improving their mental health, managing their mental health, treating their mental health, or in their recovery from mental ill health
8. Reduction in stigma associated with mental health
9. Advocacy and peer support work
10. Capacity building and sustainability in the delivery of mental health interventions and projects

The terms of reference for the project are outlined in this document.

2. DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

Relate NI has been providing support to people and their relationships in Northern Ireland since 1947. Last year, the organisation supported approximately 18,000 people directly through access to our range of relationship support services. We also know that directly supporting those people has a wider impact on an additional approximately 5,000 people, mostly direct family members.

Relate NI provide a range of services, primarily therapeutic services, in order to achieve our mission of 'making expert information and support for healthy relationships available to everyone'. Our services are accessed by children, young people, individuals, couples and families across Northern Ireland.

Healthy relationships are a fundamental cornerstone of our health and wellbeing. Whether it's navigating the effects of parental conflict on children, feeling the effects of mental ill-health on our couple relationships or of distressed relationships on our mental health, experiencing post-natal depression or working to recover from depression or anxiety, an increasing body of evidence recognises healthy relationships as both a protective factor when they're present and a risk factor when they are not. The evidence also indicates both a cause and effect two

way link between relationship distress and mental health disorders which remains relatively unacknowledged in terms of government policy and services here in Northern Ireland.

Relate NI developed this programme as a response to both this evidence and the experience of our counsellors over many years working directly with people and families experiencing relationship distress. This programme is aimed at promoting healthy relationships, preventing relationship distress and protecting people at times of crisis which has an impact on the mental health of programme participants in Northern Ireland. It is aligned with the Department of Health's Mental Health Strategy 2021-2031 through a clear focus on prevention and early intervention and through facilitating increased access to talking therapies.

The 2 strands of the programme and their outcomes are as follows:

Strand 1 Area: Promote
Outcomes: Improved Knowledge and understanding of the links between mental health and healthy relationships

Strand 2 Area: Prevent
Outcomes: Improved help seeking behaviour(s)

The Programme activities to be evaluated are educational workshops/events (Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon Council Area only), and Single Session Therapy, self-help tools and resources which have a NI Wide reach.

3. INVITATION TO TENDER

Relate NI is seeking tender submissions from experienced and professional evaluators to design and deliver a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the programme, starting in June 2022 and completing by June 2024. The approach outlined in your tender response will be agreed with Relate NI's Senior Management Team prior to commencement.

The project will deliver the following Project Indicators and Outcomes and the appointed Evaluator will measure its success:

Golden Threads Programme			
<i>Activities</i>	<i>Annual Outputs</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
Education Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Events 150 participants 	Improved knowledge of the links between mental health and healthy relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in knowledge of links between healthy relationships and mental wellbeing Increase in knowledge of positive
Information Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 themed resources (Videos; publications; information events) 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience of 5000+ 		<p>relationship behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in knowledge of relationship stressors • Increase in understanding of differences in mental wellbeing, mental ill health and mental illness
NI Wide public campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign Landing Page • 4 PR pieces • 5 Partnership Blogs • 3 Social media 'Live' events 		
Single Session Therapy sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 SST 	Improved help seeking behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of relationship transitions • Increased knowledge of where to access relationship support • Improved attitudes to the effectiveness of relationship support

4. TENDERSUBMISSION

Candidates are required to provide:

- A proposal for the evaluation framework and detailed methodology
- An overview of experience and expertise of contractor in terms of mental well-being in Northern Ireland
- An indication of fees per day and a total costing of number of hours provided and breakdown of the work provided
- The Evaluation will be conducted in a manner that supports the ethos and values of Relate NI
- Selection of the evaluator will consider criteria such as proven expertise as well as the relevance/credibility of the proposed evaluation framework and the total cost

The contractor will be required to have and demonstrate experience and knowledge in the following areas:

- An understanding of relationships as a wider determinant of and essential foundation to mental wellbeing
- An understanding of the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland
- A strong understanding of how social background and disadvantage can impact on mental well being
- An understanding of those involved with mental health work are starting to 'unpack' the idea of mental health using non-specialist, positive and inclusive terms and to focus on people's positive capacities rather than their perceived deficits
- Experience of undertaking research and developing accessible evidence resources
- A commitment to the ethos and values of Relate NI

4.1 METHODOLOGY

In your submission, please provide examples of two similar pieces of work within the last three years. **(Maximum – 500 words)**

Please outline the systems and processes that you propose, which will provide for full and complete evaluation of the programme to professional standards. All templates will be uniform and disseminated throughout the delivery agents to ensure information is collated and consolidated. **(Maximum – 1000 words)**

Further to this please outline in **no more than 500 words** how you will evaluate each of the project deliverables below, using qualitative and quantitative methods. An interim report will be required in January 2024 to provide interim, up to date information and recommendations for any amendments based on evaluation, and a final report that can be used to identify impacts and develop follow up initiatives will be due July 2024.

We ask the Evaluator to evaluate and report on the following deliverables – please outline your approach to each:

- If the initial project design is appropriate, and any proposals for amendment
- If targets are met in timely fashion
- If the outcomes are met
- If the project delivers value for money
- If delivery is of a high quality
- If management of the project is of an excellent standard
- On lessons learned at each stage of the project are shared, with recommendations clearly highlighted
- How this project links to local, regional & national government strategies and the Department of Health's strategic objectives

5. REFEREES

Please provide the names, addresses and contact details of one previous client where a similar project was delivered, plus one who can comment on your professional approach to projects.

6. Indicative timeframe for the selection and implementation of evaluation process:

Closing Date for Submission of Applications Friday 22
September 2023
Assessment and confirmation of selection Thursday 5th
October 2023
Begin the evaluation process Monday 16th October 2023
Submission of First Interim Report Monday 29th January 2024
Final draft report for consideration Friday 5th July 2024
Final Report Friday 26th July 2024

7. Outputs

- Project Initiation Document
- Interim Report (detailed above)
- Final draft report for consideration and sign off
- Final report
- Up to 2 presentations
- Easy read version to include accessible presentation of information.

Regular evaluation meetings will take place to support the work and provide an opportunity to guide further development. The contractor can invoice quarterly, or as agreed, for payment during the project.

Applications should be sent via e-mail to Kellie O'Dowd Development Manager at Relate NI KellieODowd@relateni.org.

