

Become a volunteer for Riders Minds



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Introduction to Riders Minds



Currently, there are 19 million riders in the UK. Given 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health issue at some point in their lives, a large proportion of riders at some point will experience a mental health problem, whether directly or indirectly.

Riders Minds is a bespoke, comprehensive, freely available, online resource dedicated to supporting and improving the mental health of all equestrian people.

The primary objective is to provide and host a Riders Minds helpline that is accessible to all equestrian people. The equestrian community will benefit by having 24 hour confidential access to trained counsellors on the Riders Minds helpline and web chat service.

Furthermore, Riders Minds aims to remove the stigma of speaking out by raising mental health awareness, understanding, and confidence amongst all equestrians and encourage the community to speak up more freely about their own mental health. There will be more of a compassionate approach throughout the equestrian community. The general public and communities beyond the equestrian community should also benefit from the ripple effect of equestrians' improved mental health awareness and confidence.

Riders Minds was formed in 2019, the brainchild of 5* event rider Matt Wright and his wife Victoria, Director of Caunton Manor Stud. Matt openly shared his mental ill-health struggles, regularly blogging about his experiences to raise mental health awareness and understanding.

His courageous openness encouraged other riders to come forward and Victoria and Matt quickly recognised the need for a resource of some kind, that could offer mental health and well-being, support and guidance for all horse riders.

Matt, Victoria and Lucy Katan, CEO of the British Grooms Association and Equestrian Employers Association met. Their collective eureka moment inspired the creation and formation of Rider Minds.

In February 2022 Riders Minds was awarded charitable status by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Our Strategic Plan



THE MISSION

- To reach out to all equestrians.
- Strive to remove the stigma of speaking up, out, or about mental health matters amongst equestrians.
- Promote mental health for more successful, healthy, happier, and enjoyable equestrian experiences.
- Work tirelessly and relentlessly so that all equestrians experiencing a mental health problem are both heard and have appropriate support.
- Support any equestrian experiencing mental health problems.
- Improved mental health; reduced suicide rate of equestrians.
- For equestrians to become better informed, equipped, and enabled in mental health matters.
- Strive for mental health confident equestrians.

THE VISION

- To become and be recognised as equestrians' mental health matters 'go-to' resource.
- Grow its reputation and secure a prominent place in the equestrian sector.
- To save lives.
- Equestrians' suicide rates are too high. Some have fallen victim to pressures, bullying and problems within the equestrian industry, whilst others, who often use riding as escapism/pleasure, to struggles in their personal life.
- Conscious of the UK's overall suicide rates, Riders Minds is passionately committed to playing its part to save lives in the equestrian industry.

SIGNATORIES

Riders Minds is a signatory of the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation.

Created by the **Sport and Recreation Alliance**, the **Professional Players Federation** and **Mind** the vision for **The Mental Health Charter** is to embed mental health within sport and recreation to create a culture shift that removes the stigma around mental health.

Riders Minds is also a member of the **Zero Suicide Alliance**.



The role

Overview of the role of Helpline Volunteer

The primary aim of this role is that all contact made to Riders Minds is responded to in a timely, effective and compassionate manner and advice is given on the next steps in the process to provide adequate support to the caller/texter.

Appointed by: The Board of Trustees

Responsible to: The Board of Trustees

Main internal contact: Volunteer Coordinator

Other Internal contacts: The Board of Trustees

Key Tasks:

- To respond to incoming calls and texts
- To listen and assess the caller/texter's situation
- To advice on the next steps of support i.e. counselling, emergency support, others
- To liaise with the counselling team, emergency services
- To keep records of calls/texts answered according to GDPR guidelines
- To follow safeguarding policies
- To adhere to the Riders Minds call and text answering protocol
- To assess the state of mental well-being of the texter/caller before the end of the call and provide further support if caller/texter is still in a vulnerable situation
- To liaise with volunteer coordinator with any feedback from calls/texts

Time commitment:

- The call/text system will operate redirecting calls/texts until answered. Volunteers may specify the time frame they will be able to join the team of available volunteers.

Terms of appointment:

- Volunteers may specify the length of appointment and may opt out at any time.
- The is a voluntary appointment and is unremunerated.

Introduction and Training:

Volunteers will be provided with an information pack and are required to an initial virtual training session with Riders Minds. Further training will be provided if needed.

Person specification

Skills and abilities:

- Compassionate approach to the task and committed to find the best possible support for callers/texters
- Excellent written and communication skills
- Provide advice and guidance effectively to callers/texters
- Ability to negate through difficult and/or distressing conversations
- Provide a conscientious approach to answering calls/text
- Ability to assess a caller's/texter's situation and decide on appropriate support
- Use basic computer software and call logging systems

Knowledge and experience

Essential:

- Some equestrian knowledge
- Self- motivated with the desire to help others

Desirable:

- Knowledge of safeguarding policies
- Awareness of GDPR compliance
- Awareness of media guidelines and code of practices covering mental health and suicide awareness
- Basic understanding of counselling or counselling qualifications although the role does not include counselling and callers/texters will be referred to the counselling team
- Mental Health First Aid qualification

Essential prerequisites:

- Safeguarding certificate
- Basic DBS check

Detailed description of the role:

The role of Helpline volunteer consists of being part of a volunteer-manned 24hr helpline for Rider's Minds.

The helpline includes call and text services. The volunteer team will be responsible for ensuring all calls and texts are answered and directed to the appropriate support avenues.

The helpline will redirect calls and texts to each volunteer until the call/text is answered:

Once answered the role consists of:

- Listening to the caller/texter and their situation
- Assessing the gravity of the situation
- Offering advice and guidance according to the Rider's Minds Answering Protocol
- Liaising with emergency services if necessary
- Communicating with caller/texter about counselling sessions where appropriate
- Liaise with the counselling team to arrange counselling sessions
- Ensure callers/texters are in a safe space at the end of the conversation
- Keep detailed records about calls/text and actions taken in accordance with GDPR compliance.

Next steps and how to apply:

To apply for the role of Helpline volunteer please email your details to volunteer@ridersminds.org for more information or to receive an information pack..

More information about Riders Minds can be found on www.ridersminds.org

Application deadline: 31st March 2024