

# Quakers and Mental Health

## Quaker Mental Health Group

- Brings together groups that have some involvement in mental health in The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain.
- Currently consists of representatives from 6 different organisations.
- It was formed in April 2015 after the Woodbrooke conference *Towards a Quaker View of Mental Health*.

## Quaker Life Mental Health Cluster

- Quaker Life offers general support to Meetings on all aspects of worship, outreach and meeting together and will support Meetings if there are difficult situations.
- The Quaker Life Mental Health Cluster was established to specifically support meetings that experience difficulties relating to mental health or well-being, and mental distress or illness: to help when it is hard to respond to that of God in everyone.
- Meets one to two times a year, consisting of about 30 people.
- Contact Oliver Waterhouse [oliverw@quaker.org.uk](mailto:oliverw@quaker.org.uk) to be added to the mailing list.

## Quaker Life Mental Health Cluster – Core Group

- This group implements the work agreed by the whole Cluster. They are also responsible for organising events throughout the year, including Special Interest Groups at Britain Yearly Meeting.
- *Opening the door to talking about mental health* workshop – a two-hour session run by volunteers, offered to Meetings on request. Contact Oliver Waterhouse: [oliverw@quaker.org.uk](mailto:oliverw@quaker.org.uk)

## Woodbrooke – [www.woodbrooke.org.uk](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk)

- Offers mental health training for Quakers with eldership and oversight responsibility.
- Runs an annual course – *Mental Health in Our Meetings*
- *Take Time* – a weekend for people who care for someone who has problems with their mental health, planned for 2019

## The Retreat York – [www.theretreatyork.org.uk](http://www.theretreatyork.org.uk)

- The Retreat is a mental health provider in York pioneering and specialising in therapeutic care since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is now an independent hospital, offering specialist mental health care to people who are funded by their NHS trust. The Retreat holds to Quaker values, has Quaker trustees, a Quaker chaplain, a weekly Meeting for Worship and a labyrinth in the grounds.

## The Retreat York Benevolent Fund – [www.retreatyorkbfund.com](http://www.retreatyorkbfund.com)

- Set up to assist members of The Religious Society of Friends, and those "closely connected with Friends", to meet the cost of treatment at The Retreat or elsewhere where they are unable to meet the full fees payable because they are in "straightened circumstances".
- Funds can also be used to support projects which relate directly to Quaker initiatives promoting good mental health practice.
- Currently funding the Mental Health Development Officer and the Quaker Mental Health Forum

## Quaker Mental Health Forum

- An annual day conference looking at different aspects of mental health
- The first one, in York, in December 2017, was on Dementia: our Shared Journey. The next one, 3/11/18 in Birmingham, will be on young people and mental health.
- Contact the Mental Health Development Officer to join the mailing list: [alisonmitchellmhdo@theretreatyork.org.uk](mailto:alisonmitchellmhdo@theretreatyork.org.uk)

## Mental Health Development Officer (MHDO)

- A part-time post, working to give Quakers the information and the inspiration to discern our response to issues around mental health.
- Contact Alison Mitchell: [alisonmitchellmhdo@theretreatyork.org.uk](mailto:alisonmitchellmhdo@theretreatyork.org.uk)

## Young Friends General Meeting (YFGM) Mental Wellbeing Concern Group – [www.yfgm.quaker.org.uk](http://www.yfgm.quaker.org.uk)

- In October 2014 YFGM adopted mental wellbeing as a corporate concern.

## Quaker Disability Equality Group (QDEG)

[www.quakerdisabilitygroup.org.uk](http://www.quakerdisabilitygroup.org.uk)

- This is a listed informal group of Britain Yearly Meeting which works towards full inclusion of people with disabilities and carers in all aspects of Quaker life. A part of the Quaker testimony to equality.

## Support for Quakers working in mental health services

- A day retreat is being explored – an on-going group may develop
- Contact MHDO for information

### Other Groups

## Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs (QAAD) – [www.qaad.org](http://www.qaad.org)

- Aims to meet the needs for support and information within the Religious Society of Friends in relation to alcohol, other drugs and gambling.

## Quakers in Criminal Justice (QICJ) – [www.qicj.org](http://www.qicj.org)

- An informal network of Quakers who are involved in the criminal justice system. It offers mutual support for Quakers working in various branches of the system and helps to inform them (and thereby their Meetings) about current penal issues.

## Quaker Life Conflict in Meetings Cluster

- To assist meetings that need support from outside their local and area meetings. Experienced Friends visit and spend time with meetings to help explore ways to resolve conflict. Members of the cluster meet periodically so that their work is upheld.

