

Hannah Jones

Access & Liaison Case Manager

My name is Hannah and I work in the hospital liaison team at Doncaster Royal Infirmary. The hospital liaison team encompasses mental health, older peoples mental health and substance misuse with the goal of bringing together services and working more cohesively to better support the people we see.

When I started in January the role was very different. We were mainly focused on the a+e department and addressing what was coming in the front door to try and reduce hospital admissions and point people in the right direction of services. As the Covid pandemic started to hit we had to adapt as a+e became a place we could no longer be based.

I began working from home and supporting the crisis team which in Doncaster is a 24 hour helpline available to anyone who is in mental health crisis. We were able to expand this service in that I would contact anyone who was identified to have drug and alcohol issues and offer support and try to engage them with services. I was able to do meaningful work with people over the phone and taking some pressure off the crisis team as the demand for services grew throughout Covid. I was also able to support the home treatment team doing joint visits seeing people in their homes for support with substance misuse and mental health.

We are still able to offer both of these services now as well as supporting people on the wards in DRI and responding to a+e. Adapting to work safer within covid has led to us being able to expand the services that we are able to offer. Identifying other

areas in which our team can work alongside the mental health teams to reduce hospital admissions and support people into services.

Since returning to DRI covid has brought a whole new set of challenges to the role.

Attempting to assess people on the wards in hospital with masks and visors in the height of summer brought with it many barriers not the least steamed up visors that you lose sight of the client through. However, we have been able to overcome this and this has become the norm not only in the hospital but also across the nation.

The resilience that has been shown throughout our team and throughout the hospital and mental health services to continue to offer amazing service despite growing fear and uncertainty has been amazing to see and I feel proud to be part of such a great team.

If we are able to expand and extend our service in the midst of a global pandemic who knows what will be achievable when our lives are not consumed with the virus....watch this space!