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| “Following the counselling I feel more supported, I feel like I can open up to my close friends and family about the problems I am facing.” "I would have felt too scared to have a face-to-face session, I found the messaging service enabled me to move on with my life. “Increase in the number of students who were high risk | Provided more flexible support | Utilised different systems, including video conferencing and text messaging | Use of individual sessions resulted in fewer wasted appointments| Changes led to the service operating without a waiting system in Semester 1 | Staff were still able to respond to students in crisis, despite not being on campusAdapting the Inverness College UHI Counselling Service for the Covid PandemicInverness College UHIW | **Goal:** Adapt the existing counselling service during the pandemic restrictions to provide the same level of support using just online resources.**Submitted by:** Susan Dale **Project:** To replace face to face counselling and drop-in sessions with an online services to be delivered by staff working from home during lockdown.**Benefit to:** All students

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| ****Key message: Provide the same level of support whilst campuses are closed****  |
| To provide a stepped approach to mental health care that ensures students are able to access appropriate support swiftly |
| To address concerns around poor mental health and suicidal thoughts and behaviours, exacerbated by the pandemic |
| To make the service user friendly |
| To adapt to having fewer counsellors available |
| To ensure the same level of support is provided using online resources, with staff working from home |
| **Project delivery**  |  |
| Creation of an adaptable services that offers, post-triage, individual counselling sessions by video or phone call, bookable on an ‘as and when needed’ basis |
| Daily online drop-in slots, to respond to students in crisis |
| Direct links to Wellbeing workshops and resources |
| A series of counselling sessions are available when appropriate, for more complex mental health concerns |
| E-therapy available, either as synchronous texting conversations via Webex Teams or as asynchronous conversation by email |
| The stepped approach has enabled the team to deal more effectively with the steep increase in referrals for students presenting at the highest level of distress |

**Impact:**  Students have indicated via feedback and evaluation that they have felt supported and appreciated the flexibility of the service. The team were also able to deal with the significant increase in students presenting at the highest level of distress, including those at high risk of suicide or self-harm. |