

**Reference:** FOI.ICB-2324/079

**Subject:** Vita Support and Connect Number

*I can confirm that the ICB **does hold the information requested**; please see responses below:*

QUESTION	RESPONSE
<p>I understand that you ceased commissioning the Vita Support and Connect number at the end of December 2022, and that this number was commissioned by the ICB alongside the AWP Response Line.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can you please provide details of how Mental Health services in the BNSSG area are commissioned by the ICB, such as what services are commissioned.</li> <li>2. Can you please confirm the date of the start of the contract where the Vita Support and Connect number services were commissioned and what other services were commissioned under the same contract.</li> <li>3. Can you please confirm the length of the contract at date of start of contract.</li> <li>4. Can you please confirm why the ICB ceased commissioning the Vita Support and Connect number.</li> <li>5. Can you please confirm if any elements/services of the initial contract remain in place, and if so which ones.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The ICB commissions services in line with population needs and statutory duties.</li> <li>2. The start date for the Vita Support and Connect service was July 2020. It was a stand alone service which was varied into the Vita contract and no other services were commissioned under the same contract variation.</li> <li>3. The service was initially contracted for six months. The service was commissioned as a direct response to the Covid-19 pandemic to provide support to people who may experience mental health crisis, it responded to an NHS England request that all areas ensure 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Lines were made available, to support reducing any avoidable demand on hospitals. The contract was extended for a year after this six-month period and reviewed regularly in line with the pandemic continuing and the ongoing need to support people away from hospitals.</li> <li>4. The ICB ceased the service in agreement with Vita on account of dropping usage of the service and the</li> </ol>

	<p>lessening impact of Covid-19 on our population's health. It was recognised that there was a 24/7 Mental Health Support line provided by AWP which could support the activity met by the 24/7 Support and Connect service. As such, it was deemed there were no need to commission two separate lines.</p> <p>5. Whilst no elements of the service with Vita remain, a 24/7 Mental Health Support line remains in place provided by AWP. Additionally, BNSSG ICB (<a href="https://bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/health-services/find-health-service/awp-mental-health-24-7-support-line/">https://bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/health-services/find-health-service/awp-mental-health-24-7-support-line/</a>) continues to work with partners, including Vita, to continue to develop mental health support available by phone, and learnings from the Vita Support and Connect service continues to inform this.</p>
--	--

***The information provided in this response is accurate as of 25 May 2023 and has been approved for release by Sarah Truelove, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer for NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICB.***