HSE Clinician's Handbook

National Guided Digital CBT Service

2024/25

Letter to Referring Clinicians

To our trusted referring clinicians,

In partnership with the Health Service Executive (HSE), SilverCloud® by Amwell® is now available for you and your patients/clients as part of the national rollout of our Guided Digital Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) programmes.

The SilverCloud® platform is a leading evidence-based digital mental health tool and behavioural healthcare solution used by over 1 million people worldwide and over 17,000 adults in Ireland. It is clinically validated, research driven, proven to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, and help people to better manage their mental health and wellbeing:

- 59% of users with clinical levels of anxiety showed clinically meaningful improvement.

- 49% of users with clinical levels of depression showed clinically meaningful improvement.

- The platform continues to see a high user satisfaction rate at 94%.

- There is representation of service users from all 26 counties in the Republic of Ireland.

SilverCloud programmes provide immediate access to mental health support while your patient/client waits for an appointment with a mental health professional, or outside their appointment hours. The content and tools within these programmes educate your patients/clients on how to understand their thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and support them in making positive changes towards better mental health.
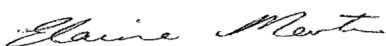
Patients/clients journey with SilverCloud® by Amwell®

Throughout the programme, your patients/clients will interact with a Supporter, who will guide them through their journey by sending them written reviews, offer empathy and support, unlock personalised content, and encourage them to engage with the programme on a regular basis.

Enclosed you will find more information about the SilverCloud programmes, how they can support your patients, how to refer, as well as some helpful resources.

If you have any questions, you can reach out to my colleague Paulina Chmara (Referrer Education Programme Lead: **Paulina.Chmara@amwell.com**).
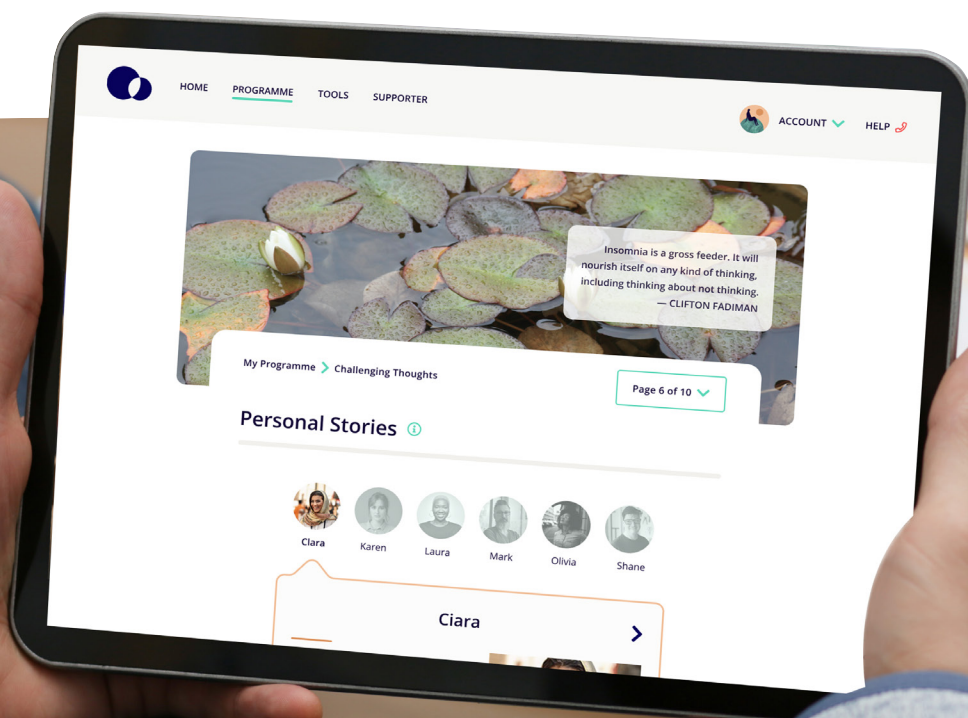

Warm regards,

Elaine Martin
Director, Clinical Operations
Amwell

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What is Digital CBT?

> Research, and recent experience, continues to show that people engage well with digital mental health support. Access to an evidence-based programme such as SilverCloud, to address anxiety and depression is a really important and helpful addition to the range of supports being provided by the HSE.

Derek Chambers, GM Policy Implementation, HSE Mental Health Operations

HSE Press Release, 30 November 2022

Evidence-based Guided Digital CBT Programmes

SilverCloud® by Amwell® is a result of nearly **20 years of clinical research** with leading academic institutions. The SilverCloud® platform can be used by patients/clients on their journey towards better mental well-being and to help them cope with whatever they may be going through.

Individuals can access the SilverCloud platform quickly, easily, and confidentially, on their mobile, tablet, or computer device.

SilverCloud programmes combine psychoeducation, behavioural activation, as well as cognitive restructuring and mindfulness-based techniques, delivering interactive, skill-building tools to manage mental health and wellness.

SilverCloud programmes can be used in various scenarios, including a standalone intervention, whilst the patient/client waits for their appointment, in conjunction with existing therapy sessions, or as a recovery toolkit post therapy.

While completing the 6–8-week SilverCloud programme, patients/clients are assigned a Supporter who communicates with them asynchronously via the SilverCloud platform, in the form of a written review. The Supporter's role is to provide personalised guidance and support based on the patient/client's progress through the SilverCloud programme.

A referral from a nominated approved clinician pathway* is required to access the SilverCloud platform.

We can accept referrals from General Practitioners, Primary Care Psychology, Community Mental Health Teams, the National Counselling Service/Counselling in Primary Care, and Jigsaw.

To learn more about the HSE partnership
visit: **www.silvercloudhealth.com/hse**

SilverCloud® programmes available through the HSE partnership

The 5 SilverCloud programmes currently available through the HSE partnership are:

Anxiety	Depression	Depression & Anxiety	Generalised Anxiety Disorder	Sleep*

New Programmes will become available

Please note that due to its Sleep Restriction component the Sleep programme is contraindicated for those with bipolar disorder, untreated sleep apnoea, parasomnias, and seizure disorder.

To learn more about each programme and download individual programme descriptors visit:
www.silvercloudhealth.com/hse

Referral criteria for SilverCloud programmes

All individuals referred must:

- Be Aged 18+
- Reside in the Republic of Ireland
- Have internet access
- Have good literacy and computer literacy skills

Suitable for:

- Mild to moderate levels of Anxiety and/or Depression
- Disturbed sleep
- Panic attacks
- High self-efficacy
- Openness to guided self-help

Not Suitable for:

- Acute distress
- Severe mental health difficulties / had inpatient stays
- Thoughts or plans to end their own life / had recent suicide attempts
- Have low expectations or feel hopeless about guided self-help

SilverCloud programmes are **NOT** a crisis support tool.

How to refer?

Referrals to SilverCloud® programmes can be made by:

- General Practitioners
- Primary Care Psychologists
- National Counselling Service/ Counselling in Primary Care
- Community Mental Health Teams
- Jigsaw

What information to include in a referral?

1   Patient/Client Information:

- Patient/Client's full name
- Patient/Client's e-mail address (mandatory to set up access to the SilverCloud platform)
- Patient/Client's phone number
- Patient/Client's DOB*

* Please note this service is only suitable for those aged 18 and over.

2   Referrer and GP Information* (if the referrer is not a GP):

- Referrer's and GP's full name
- Referrer's HSE or Jigsaw e-mail address and GP's Practice Healthmail address
- Referrer's and GP's phone number

* GP details are required in case of risk escalation.

3   Programme Details:

Name of the programme the patient/client is being referred to:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Depression and Anxiety
- GAD (Generalised Anxiety Disorder)
- Sleep

Please do not send any other patient information. In referring your patient, you are making the clinical judgement that the SilverCloud programme is an appropriate intervention currently and that your patient meets our inclusion criteria. We will only exclude your patient should it become apparent that our intervention is not suitable or that your patient no longer meets inclusion criteria.

Once a referral is received, our team will contact the patient/client by e-mail within 2 business days and invite them to create their account on the SilverCloud platform. We ask that referrers advise their patient/client to look out for an e-mail from SilverCloud in their inbox, Spam or Junk folder.

Once your patient/client creates their SilverCloud account, we will notify you.

Please note, GPs must include their Practice Healthmail e-mail address for patient/client-related communication from our Clinical Team.

Any incomplete, inaccurate or inappropriate referral will be rejected.

To access and/or download our How to Refer Guide visit: www.silvercloudhealth.com/hse

Available referral pathways

Healthmail:

- Referrals to SilverCloud programmes can be made securely via **Healthmail**.

- E-mail your referral to **silvercloud@healthmail.ie** using your Healthmail, @hse.ie or @jigsaw.ie e-mail address.

- Please ensure to include all required information in your referral, as outlined in the section **"What information to include in a referral?"**

  Tip: A referral letter template can be set-up in most Patient Management Systems used by General Practitioners, e.g., Socrates, HealthOne, Helix.

Healthlink:

- General Practitioners can refer patients to the SilverCloud programmes via Healthlink, which is integrated into Patient Management Systems (PMS) used in Ireland, e.g., Socrates, HealthOne, Helix.

- To make a referral, select the SilverCloud service and the corresponding SilverCloud programme from the list of available Healthlink referral options in your PMS.

- **Patient/client e-mail address MUST be included in the referral.** Our team needs it to create the patient/client's account on the SilverCloud platform.

- **GP's Healthmail e-mail address MUST be included in the referral.** Our team needs it to issue clinical updates, discharge notifications and manage potential risk.

- **Please note that referrals with no e-mail address for either the patient/client AND/OR GP will be rejected.**

  Tip: If your PMS doesn't display an appropriate field to input your Healthmail e-mail address, please include it in the "Reason for Referral" section of the Healthlink referral form. If the patient email is already captured in the patient chart, it will automatically be displayed in the Healthlink referral.

e-Referral:

- All clinicians will soon be able to refer their patients/clients to the SilverCloud programmes via e-Referral.

- Once launched, you will see this referral pathway listed in the "How to Refer" section of our website, https://www.silvercloudhealth.com/hse

- To receive e-mail updates on our service, such as the launch of e-Referral, please ensure that you have subscribed to our e-mail subscription list (www.silvercloudhealth.com/ie/subscribe).

> If you have any questions, please contact
> Paulina.Chmara@amwell.com (Referrer Education Programme Lead).

Risk Management

The SilverCloud® service is overseen by a panel of Clinical Supervisors, who are responsible for handling risk occurrences. Risk occurrences are assessed by our Clinical Team on a case-by-case basis. This is a necessary step in our risk management process, as it allows our Clinical Team to determine whether the SilverCloud programme is best suited to meet the needs of the patient/client. The GP and referrer (where different) are updated in any situation of risk

Risk screening

As part of the sign-up process, the patient/client completes a series of screening questionnaires, including the PHQ-2 / PHQ-9 (assessing depression severity) and GAD-2 / GAD-7 (assessing anxiety severity)*. This step allows our Clinical Team to identify potential risk.

Our Supporters are also trained to screen for risk throughout the duration of the programme. This is done by monitoring the patient/client's engagement with the programme, responses on readministered screening questionnaires and monitoring for concerning content, e.g., disclosures of past/current abuse.

Our Clinical Team notifies the referrer and the client's GP, where different, via Healthmail whenever a risk occurrence is identified and reviewed.

Clients referred to the Sleep programme complete the PHQ-2 and GAD-2. If their scores are in the clinical range, they are presented with the PHQ-9 and/or GAD-7.

Managing flagged risk

1 Prior to programme commencement:

If a patient/client's responses on the PHQ-9 indicate a level of potential risk of harm, the P4 screener is automatically activated. The P4 screener looks at history of harm, current thoughts, current intent, as well as protective factors. A patient/client's responses are then reviewed by a Clinical Supervisor/ Clinical Lead with 3 potential outcomes:

i Patient/client is assessed as safe to start the SilverCloud programme, and no phone call from the Clinical Supervisor/Clinical Lead is required. Access to the programme is granted and a Supporter is assigned to the patient/client.

ii Patient/client is assessed as requiring a phone call from a Clinical Supervisor/Clinical Lead to complete the assessment of safety and suitability of the SilverCloud programme. This phone call must be completed before the patient/client can start the programme. A request to schedule a phone call is issued to the client via e-mail. If the patient/client does not respond to the e-mail request, they are discharged from the SilverCloud service.

iii Patient/client's risk screening assessment via screening questionnaire indicates that there may be significant difficulty staying safe and that the SilverCloud programme will not meet the patient/client's current needs. The patient/client is discharged without having to complete a phone call.

Where the need for a phone call is identified, the client is contacted via e-mail by:
clinical-admin-ireland@silvercloudhealth.com

Please note that the above listed e-mail address CANNOT accept referrals.

All e-mail referrals MUST be sent to our Healthmail inbox: **silvercloud@healthmail.ie**

All e-mail requests provide a 2-week window for the patient/client to reply and schedule a call with a Clinical Supervisor/Clinical Lead. The phone assessment is then completed, and the patient/client is either considered safe to progress with the SilverCloud programme, or it is determined that the SilverCloud programme is not an appropriate support for the patient/client's current needs, in which case the patient/client is discharged and our Clinical Team notifies the referrer and client's GP (if different) of this outcome.

2 Throughout the programme:

Our Clinical Team may also need to contact the patient/client if potential risk is flagged (automatically) by a review questionnaire, or by the patient/client's Supporter (who monitors any content shared by the patient/client on a weekly basis).

When it is determined that a phone call would be helpful to complete any review/assessment/check-in, the Administration Team contacts the patient/client via e-mail, to schedule a phone call with a Clinical Supervisor/Clinical Lead. Usually reviews are allowed to continue, and the patient/client is informed that their participation in the phone call is voluntary.

Where there are significant concerns regarding safety, the Clinical Supervisor/Clinical Lead may attempt to "cold call" the client or determine that reviews are stopped until a phone call can be made. The patient/client is made aware of this in the e-mail correspondence.

When a phone call is required, the Clinical Supervisor/Clinical Lead will determine the outcome such as: continued engagement with the programme, discharge with recommendations for other therapeutic supports, continuation but change of programme etc.

At all times when receiving Supporter reviews, the Supporter will monitor content for any concerns/risk related issues.

Where there are concerns that the risk is too high for the programme, that other therapeutic input is needed to meet the patient/client's needs, or that the programme is no longer appropriate to support the patient/client's current needs, the patient/client is discharged, and the referrer and client's GP (if different) is notified of this outcome.

SilverCloud® Resources & Referrer Education

We are committed to supporting referrers and helping them leverage the SilverCloud platform for the benefit of their patients/clients. This is why there are plenty of educational and informational resources accessible on demand.

Digital and clinic resources

If you're interested in digital tools and resources for clinicians, we have some great options for you.

Our website houses several useful resources, including programme descriptors, instruction on how to refer, links to our research papers, Supporter testimonials and more.

You may also be interested in our:

| Clinician Leaflet | Clinic Poster | HSE Service Report |

Digital resources are available to be viewed and/or downloaded at **www.silvercloudhealth.com/hse**

Educational sessions & workshops

As part of our referrer support initiatives, we began offering virtual and in-person workshops and educational sessions for clinicians.

These sessions provide an overview of the SilverCloud platform and cover topics such as patient/client suitability and the referral process in more detail. They are also a perfect opportunity for a live Q&A and feedback exchange.

Interested in organising a workshop for your team? Let us know!

Contact Paulina Chmara (Referrer Education Programme Lead)

at **Paulina.Chmara@amwell.com** or **book a meeting online**.

Scan to book

Clinician Resources

Clinician resources available to be viewed/downloaded at **www.silvercloudhealth.com/hse**
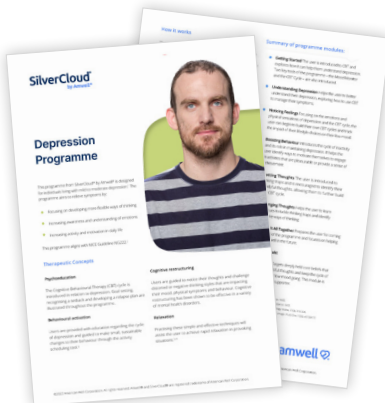

Clinician Leaflet

Clinic Poster

Generalised Anxiety Disorder Programme Descriptor

Depression Programme Descriptor

Depression and Anxiety Programme Descriptor

Anxiety Programme Descriptor

Sleep Programme Descriptor

SilverCloud®
by Amwell®

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