

Black and white image of a concrete and glass block wall in a derelict building

BIG WHITE WALL

2013 Nominet Trust 100 Winner

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ALLOWING SUFFERERS OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS TO COMMUNICATE ANONYMOUSLY USING SOCIAL MEDIA.

Project URL: bigwhitewall.com

Project Twitter: [@BigWhiteWall1](https://twitter.com/BigWhiteWall1)

- Community Engagement
- Health
- Data
- Social Software

Mental illnesses associated with depression and anxiety are a hidden epidemic, largely unrecognised and rarely openly talked about. Research shows that people shy away from sharing their troubles with friends and family and are loath to talk to their GP. Men in particular are afraid to reveal how they feel or what's troubling them.

Big White Wall is a community of people experiencing common mental health problems, brought together through social media and facilitated by mental health professionals to help them better self-manage their conditions. According to members, one of the most important elements of the digital platform is the ability to talk freely, whilst remaining completely anonymous. Three-quarters of people on Big White Wall talked about their condition for the first time on the site, and eight out of 10 people were self-managing their condition. The open and often creative conversations that Big White Wall enables, provide the starting point for earlier and more effective intervention.

The site offers a range of programmes for individuals and groups, and groups covering topics such as anxiety, depression, sleep disorders and alcohol use.

A group of Big White Wall approved therapists offers counselling by instant text, audio or video. Local health services can use the platform to provide telehealth services using their own clinicians. An online tool to assess common mental

health problems and the co-morbidity with physical conditions was launched in June 2013.

An independent review found that 95% of people using the service reported one or more improvements in wellbeing.

If Big White Wall succeeds it could open the way for collaborative treatment of more complex, mental and social conditions, using social media and web-based platforms.

Image 'You don't have to be sick to be dying' courtesy of Daniela Munoz-Santos

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