

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2011**

**GMP SUPPORT NORTH WEST MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY TO IMPROVE STAFF SAFETY**

Greater Manchester Police have supported user-led mental health charity Self Help Services to improve the personal safety of staff by donating panic alarms to the team.

Greater Manchester Police have donated 60 personal attack alarms to Self Help Services staff who work across the North West.

Self Help Services have recently expanded from 14 to over 50 members of staff, many of whom are lone workers, leading them to think more seriously about the personal safety of their staff.

Jo Walby, Operations Manager for the charity said, "Self Help Services provide many of their services from public venues such as libraries, community centres, jobcentres and housing associations and as a result staff, who are often lone workers, regularly come into contact with members of the public when conducting initial assessments for example. The GMP and staff at Self Help Services are keen to ensure the personal safety of these lone workers who serve as the initial point of contact with members of the public"

Nicola Oldham, Crime reduction advisor of the Greater Manchester Police said, "GMP are pleased to supply Self Help Services with personal attack alarms. There are a number of precautions lone workers can take to reduce the chances of being a victim of a crime one is to carry a personal attack alarm in your pocket where it can be easily reached.

If the lone workers are concerned for their safety they can activate the alarm by pulling out the pin when it is safe to do so. The alarm is intended to draw attention to yourself and to startle and disorientate a would-be assailant."

ENDS

**Notes to Editors:**

Self Help Services is a user-led mental health charity that delivers a range of primary mental health care services and initiatives (cCBT, one to one low psychological wellbeing therapies and groups) across the North West for people experiencing common mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression and low mood.

Self Help Services is part of The Big Life group of social businesses and charities which provide support and opportunities to help people change their lives. For further information on Self Help Services go to:  
[www.selfhelpservices.org.uk](http://www.selfhelpservices.org.uk) or call 0161 226 3871 or email:  
info@selfhelpservices.org.uk