Heads Up CIO marks its tenth anniversary with the launch of the Jewish Emergency Psychological Response Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New national initiative to provide emergency psychological support, an antisemitism support hotline, public training, and culturally informed assistance for Jewish communities

London August 2026: Heads Up CIO is marking its tenth anniversary with the launch of the Jewish Emergency Psychological Response Unit, known as JEPRU, a dedicated service created to respond to the psychological needs of Jewish communities before, during, and after major incidents.

The launch comes as the first anniversary approaches of the terrorist attack in Manchester at Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation Synagogue on 2 October 2025, during Yom Kippur. The attacker used a car and a knife in an assault that resulted in the deaths of worshippers Adrian Daulby and Melvin Cravitz and left others seriously injured.

JEPRU has been established to help bridge the critical gap between physical rescue and psychological recovery. Its purpose is to ensure that people affected by terrorism, antisemitism, and other traumatic incidents receive prompt, properly governed, and culturally informed psychological support.

The unit will provide three main lines of psychological response.

The first will focus on stabilising acute panic and distress through rapid Cognitive Psychological First Aid, delivered at incident scenes and within Humanitarian Assistance Centres.

The second will support Family Reception Centres during missing persons, identification, and family liaison processes, working alongside the appropriate police, emergency, and coronial services, and drawing on experience and learning from the Grenfell Tower fire in London in 2017.

The third will support those who protect the community. This will include peer support, Trauma Risk Management, and psychological decompression for community security personnel, emergency responders, ambulance drivers, paramedics, EMTs, ex-servicemen and women, police officers, and volunteers who may themselves be affected by what they witness.

Subject to agreements with the appropriate agencies, JEPRU intends to deploy trained responders, welfare facilities, and mobile support capabilities alongside emergency service partners, in line with JESIP principles and established clinical governance.

JEPRU will also open a confidential antisemitism telephone support hotline in cooperation with TIKVA by KeepOlim. The service will support people affected by antisemitic incidents, intimidation, or abuse and will be staffed by trained responders.

Alongside its emergency response work, the unit will develop national training programmes for professionals and members of the public. Training will cover what to do following an attack, Psychological First Aid, responder welfare, and culturally informed training for non-Jewish professionals, including awareness of Jewish religious practices, customs, and community needs.

A spokesperson for Heads Up CIO said:

“As we approach the first anniversary of the attack at Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation, we remember Adrian Daulby and Melvin Cravitz and stand with everyone whose life was changed that morning.

“Physical injuries may be immediately visible, but the psychological effects of terrorism and antisemitism can continue long after an incident has left the headlines. JEPRU is being created so that culturally informed psychological support is available when it is most needed, both for those directly affected and for the people who respond.

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“This unit belongs to the whole Jewish community. We warmly invite people from every Jewish denomination and background to take part. There is no single type of volunteer we are looking for. We need clinicians and trained responders, but we also need calm, committed people who can help with welfare, logistics, administration, communications, and coordination.”

JEPRU is now recruiting volunteers for a wide range of roles, including:

• Psychological First Aid responders, ambulance drivers, paramedics, EMTs, ex-servicemen and women, and police officers

• Family Reception Centre and Humanitarian Assistance Centre welfare officers

• Trauma Risk Management practitioners and peer supporters

• Clinical supervisors

• Logistics and welfare personnel

• Hotline responders

• Callout coordinators

• Training and administrative volunteers

• Communications and record-keeping personnel

Some positions require professional registration or previous experience. Training will be provided for appropriate non-clinical roles.

Founded in 2016, Heads Up CIO is a registered charity dedicated to building psychological resilience and responding to trauma. Its operational experience includes responses connected with the Manchester Arena bombing, the London Bridge and Borough Market attacks, Grenfell Tower, the war in Ukraine, the aftermath of 7 October, and the 2025 Heaton Park synagogue attack.

JEPRU welcomes participation from across the full range of Jewish religious traditions and community backgrounds. Professionals and members of the general public who share its commitment to compassionate, responsible, and culturally aware support are also encouraged to apply.

To volunteer, make media enquiries, support the development of JEPRU, or request further information, please contact:

Name: admin

Email: hello@headsupcio.org.uk

Telephone: 07397 293885

Website: https://jepru.lovable.app/

Notes to editors

Heads Up CIO is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales under charity number 1170821.

The Jewish Emergency Psychological Response Unit is an initiative of Heads Up CIO.

JEPRU’s proposed operational work will be subject to appropriate training, safeguarding, clinical governance, information governance, and cooperation with the relevant statutory and emergency services.

Company Contact:

Heads Up CIO

T. 07397293885
E. hello@headsupcio/org.uk
W. https://jepru.lovable.app

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