

0-25 Family Health Service County Durham Annual Update

8 November 2024

Children and Young Peoples' Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

0-25 Family Health Service County Durham Key Headlines

- A review of the service was undertaken February to April 2024 to support a recommendation to enact the optional 2-year extension period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027, which has now been agreed.
- An outcome of the review of service is to internally align Health Visitors back to 0-5 years and School Nurses to 5-19/25 years, acting on feedback from staff and the wider system, including cross boundary partners.
- The 0-25 service has a “One Team” approach, therefore this will not be a noticeable change for partners , and at transition to school, no child will move from Health Visitor to School Nurse care while receiving targeted intervention.
- Through HDFTs “grow your own” recruitment strategy, newly qualified Health Visitors have filled the majority of vacant posts in September 2024.

0-25 Family Health Service County Durham Key Headlines

- The expansion of the Emotional Health and Resilience Team has facilitated more upstream prevention and earliest intervention work, with an increased offer to primary schools while maintaining a robust offer to secondary schools.
- The 5 Government mandated Healthy Child Programme contacts are consistently delivered across County Durham with high levels of coverage.
- The Enhanced Parenting Support Pathway (EPSP) referral criteria has been extended to include referrals up to 10 weeks postnatal, with ongoing system partnership work to refine the pathway and progress work to increase the number of families accessing this support.
- There has been significant progress with the 0-25 Family Health Service digital offer, with additions and improvements to the 0-25 Growing Healthy App, downloads increasing, good use of the health chat function, and accessibility and translation functions added.
- The 0-25 Family Health Service have achieved the Better Health at Work Continuing Excellence Award in October 2024

Workforce

- Workforce wellbeing is a key priority, improving the experience of working in the NHS for everyone to help improve patient/ service user care.
 - **County Durham 0-25 Service Staff Charter**
- **We strive to have an open, honest, and caring team culture which will ensure County Durham is a great place to work.**
 - **Recruitment and Retention**
 - Improved picture with most SCPHN Health Visitor and all School Nurse vacancies filled September 2024.
 - Grow Your Own Strategy
 - Skill Mix Teams
 - Training

Health Visiting

- Universal delivery of the National Healthy Child Programme
- Family Health Needs Assessment to include parental experiences which may influence parenting capacity or style, referral and support
- Safe discussion regarding domestic abuse
- Home environment assessment, to include assessment of safe sleep area for baby
- Breast feeding advice and support, proactive breast-feeding management
- Perinatal and infant mental health support
- Newborn Behavioural Observation (Brazelton NBO) to help parents understand and develop confidence regarding their relationship with their baby

Health Visiting

- Smoking status and CO monitoring at contacts under 1, brief intervention advice and support, referral to specialist smoking advisors
- Top to toe examination, using a tool developed by practitioners in County Durham 0-25 service, an assessment is made of newborn babies to identify any obvious anomalies
- ICON for prevention of Abusive Head Trauma, parents are advised about crying babies and the safest way to manage this
- Child development
- Enhanced Parenting Support
- Complex care and safeguarding

Enhanced Parenting Support

- In County Durham the Enhanced Parenting Support Pathway (EPSP) provides additional support to the Healthy Child Programme levels of service.
- In line with providing holistic, coordinated packages of support to families in greatest need, the EPSP involves the delivery of integrated support by Health Visitors and the One Point Service (OPS) and other partner organisations where appropriate.
- Parental mental health is consistently the top reason for referral onto the pathway, followed by previous child protection proceedings, then parental domestic abuse.
- The criteria for referral onto the pathway was extended to include the Antenatal and Postnatal period up to 10 weeks to ensure parents with perinatal mental health concerns are identified early and appropriately supported.

Perinatal Mental Health

- The Specialist Health Visitor and Staff Nurses for Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (PIMH) funded through Family Hubs, deliver direct work to families using various evidence-based interventions to provide low level support.
- These include Neonatal Behavioural Assessment Scale (NBAS) and Video Interactive Guidance (VIG), to increase parent-child attachment and attunement using a strength-based approach.
- A 6 week psycho-education approach is used to support families at home with unhelpful thoughts/value based living and regulating emotions.
- Women are being identified for support earlier in the antenatal period. A robust assessment process is in place for all referrals to ensure families receive the most effective and appropriate care
- An HDFT Case Study has been published on the Local Government Association website: Advancing perinatal and infant mental health care in County Durham, with the focus on low to moderate PIMH support. A small number of local authorities across the country have contacted the service for advice about developing PIMH support and to request information about the model developed by the service.

Infant Feeding and Healthy Weight

- Breastfeeding initiation and rates at 10 days and 6-8 weeks have improved slightly 2023-2024, however prevalence rates remain below England and North East Region rates.
- The 0-25 Family Health Service has maintained UNICEF Baby Friendly Full Accreditation.
- Infant feeding support sessions are established in all 15 Family Hubs, and some additional outreach venues.
- Early latch clinics are established in North, South and East Durham
- HDFT Family Peer Supporters support the infant feeding groups across County Durham and work with local businesses to promote the Baby Friendly business accreditation scheme.
- Specialist breastfeeding support resource is being developed.
- To ensure a sustainable model there is now a core HENRY team within the 0-25 service providing a range of programmes both face to face and virtual delivery to increase accessibility for parents, including working parents

Speech and Language

- HDFT is providing workforce training to embed the post ELIM (Early Language Identification Measure) intervention 'Talking Together' which includes a suite of resources developed by Newcastle University when speech and language delay is identified at the 2-2.5 years development review.
- HDFT is working in partnership with the wider system to develop an integrated Speech, Language and Communication Strategy as part of the Family Hub requirements, using local data and intelligence to identify gaps and assets. As part of this work HDFT was actively involved in the recent Local Government Association Peer Challenge, feedback from this will help inform a system wide action plan and pathway.
- The Parenting Support Family Peer Supporters funded by Family Hubs, provide a focus on equity of access to SLC support, linking with community groups for babies and children in areas with high deprivation, and establishing outreach groups where there are gaps.

SEND

- The SEND Family Health Visitor role has continued to evolve, not only supporting Early Years settings and providers, but building valuable links with other colleagues in the Local Authority and wider health services, to strengthen partnership working.
- An Early Notification process has been developed between 0-25 service and the Local Authority to ensure timely notification of SEND and additional need into the Local Authority, and earlier referral to Portage
- The team has delivered a programme of sessions to run in the Family Hubs to address some common health issues faced by parents and carers of children with SEND and additional needs, including continence and fussy eating.
- Initially, this was aimed at children aged 2-6 years, but it became evident that older CYP with SEND would benefit and the age range was extended to 2-11 years. These commenced in November 2023 and have evaluated well from the parents and carers that have attended.

School Nursing

- NCMP and Vision Screening coverage remains high.
- Staff are now trained to assess and supply Emergency Hormonal Contraception to young people where appropriate.
- The service continues to trial a package of support for teenage parents including dads, from conception until 28 weeks pregnant, when care will transition over to the Health Visiting service.
- The team offer a school drop in to every secondary school on a fortnightly basis and see young people for a range of health issues including anxiety/emotional well-being, sexual health, weight/healthy eating, continence and hygiene/puberty.
- The team offer health promotion interventions to schools on a targeted basis where there is an identified need, including vaping, sexual health, oral health, and child exploitation.
- The service has launched toileting and bedwetting workshops in Family Hubs across the County to provide Tier 1 continence support to CYP&F.

Emotional Health and Resilience

- The Emotional Health and Resilience Team (EHRT) support CYP referred into the service who require low level, early intervention and prevention short term emotional health and resilience support.
- EHRT expansion increases focus on early years and pre-school children, progressing integrated working with the Local Authority, Education, and Early Years settings. This has facilitated an increase in focussed support for vulnerable groups in communities, and support offered earlier for CYP.
- 1:1 support offered to almost 1800 CYP in the past 12 months
- Primary referrer remains education, however increase in referrals from key partners, parents and CYP themselves.
- Primary presentation has been consistently anxiety and/ or difficulty with emotional regulation.
- Critical Incident Response - 26 in the last academic year
- Decider Training in Primary Schools- 44 schools
- YAM -1600 young people

Challenges and Opportunities

- Increasing breastfeeding rates and reducing smoking rates are a challenge not only for the 0-25 service, but the wider system, therefore progressing this work consistently as an integrated system, utilising insights work, is a key area of challenge and opportunity. The Transformation Manager post which is now embedded in the service and in the contract extension staffing structure, will continue this work through the workplan for this role.
- Potential challenge of externally funded/grant funded posts beyond April 2025, specifically the additional Youth Justice Nurse post, and the Family Hub funded posts including the Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Team. Further clarification from central government is anticipated autumn 2024.
- Building on existing integrated working practice at strategic and operational levels to further progress enhanced parenting support, best start in life priorities and the Family Hub model in County Durham.
- The high level of safeguarding concerns and complex needs of families continue to provide pressure on the 0-25 service

Future Plans

- The Transformation Manager role is a permanent post in the future 0-25 Family Health Service Workforce Model. The workplan for this role will drive the service activity to increase breastfeeding rates and reduce smoking rates.
- Plan for joint Unicef Accreditation to further align the systems work to increase breastfeeding rates.
- Evaluate the impact of SCPHN Apprenticeships, to further develop the “Grow Your Own” strategy and succession planning, and increase apprenticeship opportunities in the 0-25 Family Health Service.