

**11 October 2013**

**Support for Children and  
Young People with Mental  
Health Issues**

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**Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To present a joint report of Children and Young People's and Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny committees which looked at support for children and young people with mental health issues.

**Background**

- 2 The topic was identified from Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme. The topic is cross cutting with Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and therefore membership of the working group was taken from both committees.
- 3 The review focused on:
  - How early intervention and prevention methods can reduce the need for specialist services
  - How services are commissioned
  - How looked after children are served by mental health services
  - Current levels of support to children and young people with mental health issues and how quickly they can access services.
  - Transition to adult mental health services from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- 4 Improving the emotional health and wellbeing of the children and young people of County Durham is a priority which is detailed in the Altogether Better for Children and Young People section of the Council Plan 2012-2016 and the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012-2016 which is under pinned by the Sustainable Community Strategy.

**Detail**

- 5 The findings from the review indicate that early intervention and prevention measures are working as there has been an increase in the numbers of referrals being made to the service. There is evidence of good partnership working between commissioners and providers. A holistic approach to commissioning services has been taken but post

April 2013 commissioning of services will be undertaken by Clinical Commissioning Groups.

- 6 The review found that Looked After Children are served well by CAMHS and that Durham County Council offers an excellent therapeutic service for looked after children and children in need and adopted children post trauma through neglect and abuse, Full Circle and is grounded in evidence based practice.
- 7 Referral waiting times to CAMHS continue to be reduced, with targets for first appointments being within 4 weeks of initial referral, however most are seen within 2 weeks and emergencies are seen within 24 hours.
- 8 CAMHS focus on all transitions in a child/young person's life which impacts upon their mental health including transitions to post 18 services. However the review found that for a small group of young people at 18 years there is no corresponding service in Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS) and therefore a potential gap in service.
- 9 The review report makes five recommendations including systematic review:
  - Cabinet note the importance of mainstream services (in this instance Youth Worker provision) in being aware of mental health issues in children and young people; that every opportunity is afforded to youth workers (ideally in the necessary appraisal process) to better understand the issues.
  - Cabinet request the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board to encourage Clinical Commissioning Groups in County Durham to:
    - a) Continue to work in partnership with providers, children, young people and their families to ensure the best possible outcomes for service users.
    - b) Continue the current commissioning intentions that have enabled children and young people to access mental health services via early interventions of universal services. By accessing services at this early stage, actions are taken that will prevent services being required at a later stage when more specialist interventions may be required.
    - c) Continue to evaluate and monitor services that are commissioned by them to measure their impact.
  - Cabinet request the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board encourage Clinical Commissioning Groups to continue to work in partnership with providers and service users as indicated in best practice and to take a Think Family approach to commissioning services.
  - Cabinet request that Durham County Council as corporate parents continue to recognise the importance of their role and in doing so ensure that all members of the Council attend all

necessary training courses including induction training for all members of the Council following the County Council elections in May 2013.

- Cabinet request the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and Tees, Esk and Wear Valley CAMHS and AMHS continue to follow best practice to ensure that the young people of County Durham receive effective transitions into AMHS through essential planning and delivery of services and stakeholder engagement.

- 10 The review report has been presented to Cabinet, March 2013, Children and Families Trust June 2013 and Health and Wellbeing Board Development Group, September 2013 and has been welcomed by each.

### **Recommendation**

- 11 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are asked to note the content of the report and presentation.

**Background Papers:** Support for Children and Young People with Mental Health Issues

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** - None

**Staffing** – None

**Risk** - None

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** –The review relates to the protected characteristics of age and disability in particular.

**Accommodation** - None

**Crime and Disorder** - None

**Human Rights** - None

**Consultation** – During the course of the review evidence was provided from colleagues in Children and Adolescent Mental Health, Children and Adult Services and Investing in Children who consulted with young people to obtain their views of transitional arrangements when moving from child and adolescent mental health services to adult mental health services. Area Action Partnerships were also asked to provide information on their involvement of any projects that have helped/supported children and young people with mental health issues.

**Procurement** - None

**Disability Issues** – None

**Legal Implications** - None