

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children and Young People Select Committee
Date:	11 November 2020
Title:	Update on Autism Services Commissioning for Children and Young People in Hampshire
Report From:	Maternity and Children's Commissioning Collaborative HIOW Partnership of CCGs

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Purpose of this Report

1. As requested by the committee in September 2020, this report provides a regular update regarding progress made towards improving Autism services for children and young people in Hampshire. This report covers the following:
 - New services available related to ASC (Children's Wellbeing Service)
 - Future ASC assessment services – commissioning commitment

Recommendation

2. For the Children and Young People Select Committee to note the following update.

Background

3. In 2018 a decision was made by the then 5 Hampshire CCGs to transfer a cohort of 824 children waiting for an Autism assessment from Hampshire CAMHS to an interim service in order to clear the backlog. £989k was identified over a 10 month contract
4. The decision was taken as part of a wider CAMHS improvement plan, however it was acknowledged that the removal of these children would not generate additional capacity within Hampshire CAMHS. Instead it would guarantee that this cohort of children (who were not deemed as a priority in terms of risk) would at least be seen after waiting a number of years at the bottom of the CAMHS waiting list
5. In late 2019 a deep dive was performed by the then Deputy Director and the CAMHS Associate Director and presented for investment. This investment was not agreed due to competing demands at that time, then Purdah relating to the General Election and subsequently the impact of COVID-19 further disrupted commissioning plans. In consequence ASC diagnosis

commissioning has been maintained at similar levels to 2019-20 during this year. A plan to address longer term needs is under development.

6. Due to interim solutions to the commissioning of ASC assessments, plans for a longer term procurement of ASC assessments have been delayed.
7. A presentation was delivered by Associate Director Matthew Powell to update the committee on the progress of autism assessment services commissioned by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Partnership of CCG's and West Hampshire CCG.
8. This presentation highlighted these challenges mentioned above and also outlined the sizeable waiting list for autism assessments currently.
9. Following this presentation, councillors have asked for an update at each select committee meeting for the foreseeable future given the lack of progress seen in the previous 12 to 24 months.
10. At the time of the presentation, future finances were uncertain so commissioning arrangements could not be firmly outlined to the committee.

Progress to Date

11. In late September 2020 CCG Finance teams requested a paper from commissioners to confirm the level of funding required in order to clear the current backlog of waiting children as well as long term funding arrangements. This has been submitted and considered as part of the HIOW CCGs Mental Health Investment Standard and Restoration and Recovery Planning. Commissioners have been informed that decisions regarding the above are imminent.
12. Whilst finances for Autism assessment services are confirmed, commissioners have reviewed the entire pathway to ensure that children and young people presenting with traits of Autism have access to effective and timely intervention which includes early identification of need, access to assessments and post diagnostic support.
13. Although commissioners are reliant on new funds being confirmed, some improvement has been made by reviewing and redesigning existing services:

- Children's Wellbeing Support Service

As part of on-going work to improve neurodevelopmental services for children living in Hampshire, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight CCG Partnership has commissioned a new service to respond to children of primary school age, who have social, emotional and mental health needs that result in challenging/distressed behaviours.

The Hampshire County Council Children's Wellbeing Support Service provides much needed early intervention and support for parents of children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs which can present in a similar way to Autism, Attention Deficit Disorder, Attachment Disorder, anxiety and poor emotional wellbeing.

Families identified as having difficulties such as the above can be referred to the Wellbeing Support Service who will work with parents to identify needs and recommend onward support where appropriate. By providing early, targeted support through a child-centred approach, the service aims to:

Support parent(s) to enable children to self-manage and maintain good emotional wellbeing
Reduce inappropriate diagnosis

Support parent(s) to enable children to get the most from their education
Promote a healthy home environment and improve family dynamics
Promote inclusion in schools

As neurodevelopmental pathways continue to improve the service will become one of the first points of contact providing an early intervention service.

The service can be accessed across Hampshire in 6 locations

The aim of the service is to identify and respond to need at the earliest point possible, to stem the flow of referrals (predicted reduction of 200 referrals per year) and reduce risk of deterioration/onward referrals to CAMHS. This service is currently commissioned successfully on the Isle of Wight.

Future Commissioning Update

14. Although commissioners are reliant on new funds being confirmed, opportunities to improve provision is still being made. Commissioners are confident that once finance is agreed, waiting lists will begin to reduce at pace. Commissioners will continue to update the committee until members feel assured of the improvements made.
15. Whilst commissioners wait for funding to be confirmed, the incumbent providers delivering Autism Assessments have been instructed to increase activity levels on the strength that funding will not only be agreed but that significantly increased financial investment will be awarded to providers for the remainder of the financial year 20/21 to drive down waiting times at pace.
16. In addition, finances are in the process of being agreed for a substantial increase over the next 3 financial years (21/22, 22/23 & 23/24) to be followed by an established and recurrent budget within the CCGs baseline to future proof services.
17. Once agreed, commissioners can look at longer term arrangements for autism services as soon as possible. This will enable commissioners to demonstrate increased value for money both to CCG's and the public whilst keeping waiting times at an acceptable level.
18. Planned complimentary support services will include emotional regulation workshops and training, family support services & pre/post assessment peer support.
19. Experience from covid-19 has given providers the opportunity to deliver hybrid services consisting of both online and face-to-face assessments. As well as increased flexibility and accessibility, hybrid assessments may have the potential to be significantly cheaper without reducing quality of service.

Consultation and Equalities

20. No consultation or equalities impact assessments have been undertaken as this is an information update.

Conclusions

21. Commissioners will continue to provide regular updates at each select committee meeting to reassure members that significant progress and improvement is being made in this area.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:
Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Children and Families Act [Part 3 SEND] 2014 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted Statutory Guidance: SEND Code of Practice 0-25 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf	September 2014 January 2015
Local area SEND inspection framework (Ofsted and CQC) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-sendinspection-framework	April 2016

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This report is an information update for the Children and Young People Select Committee and therefore no impact has been identified.