

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children and Young People Select Committee Briefing
Date:	7 July 2021
Title:	Update on Autism Services Commissioning for Children and Young People in Hampshire
Report From:	Maternity and Children's Commissioning Team Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight CCG

Contact name: Matt Powell, Associate Director for SEND/Designated Clinical Officer

Tel: 02380 627599

Email: matthew.powell7@nhs.net

Purpose of this Report

- 1 As requested by the committee in September 2020, this report provides a regular information update regarding progress made towards improving Autism services for children and young people in Hampshire, in order to provide assurance to the committee and the communities it represents that ASC assessments and supporting services are improving.

Background

- 2 In 2018 a decision was made by the then 5 Hampshire CCGs to transfer a large cohort of children and young people waiting for an ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition) assessment from Hampshire CAMHS to an interim service, in order to clear the backlog.
- 3 Over the last three years commissioning arrangements for ASC assessments have been characterised by short term blocks of activity, defined, and limited by available funding. This approach has not been able to successfully respond to growing demand and has resulted in increased waiting lists.
- 4 In November 2020, the following recurrent funding was identified for Hampshire CCG's areas to implement a new pathway, including the procurement of an assessment service and supporting pre and post diagnostic services. This funding was added to existing funding in place for children and young people living on the Isle of Wight to enable the procurement of a joint and equitable service.

Part Year Spend 2020/2021	£1.36m
Full Year Spend 2021/2022	£2.1m
Full Year Spend 2022/2023	£2.1m
Full Year Spend 2023/2024	£2.1m
Ongoing (from 2024/2025 onwards)	£1.5m

Progress to Date

- 5 Interim providers are still working at pace to deliver autism assessments, with commissioners monitoring progress on a monthly basis. The current Hampshire waiting list is projected to be below 1000 by the contract end date of 30th September 2021 compared to its peak at 1750 in September 2020
- 6 If a child or young person is referred into the current service today, the approximate waiting time will be 10 months from referral to assessment. This is a significant improvement compared with a 35 month waiting time in September 2020.
- 7 In early 2021, a revised and improved service specification for the new service was agreed. The service specification was built jointly with families, clinical experts and relevant professionals across multiple agencies and disciplines.

Procurement

- 8 A robust competitive procurement for a new ASC assessment service has now concluded. A preferred bidder has been selected and the formal outcome will shortly be published (end of June 2021) following final ratification from the Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight CCG and the Frimley CCG (of which children leaving in North East Hampshire come under).
- 9 The new, long term service will start on October 1st 2021 for 2.5 years until 31st March 2024. The service is predicted to meet national waiting time standards by the end of the new contract. Commissioners acknowledge that this pace of assessment delivery is slower than ideal. However, investing into the improvement of pre-diagnostic support services, we anticipate that referrals will reduce and subsequently further reduce the number of assessments required which will ensure that waiting times do not increase.
- 10 Key improvements and changes agreed for new service:
 - Expanded age range of 3yrs (originally 5 yrs) to 18yrs (19yrs with a learning disability)
 - Ability to offer follow-up session post assessment.
 - Provide an accessible and flexible NICE Complaint service which supports patient choice, family life and offers a range of assessment formats including face to face, online and hybrid models

- Offer a follow up session with the family post assessment, to go through the report and signpost onto helpful local services, both internal and external to the NHS. If a diagnosis is not reached, findings should still be shared with the family via a follow up session offer.
- Provide a local service, with established local links which ensures joint working with other agencies and services, including clear specific and meaningful signposting to the child and family.
- Ensure that children and their parent/carers are involved in each step of the pathway.
- Continue to work with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Commissioners to develop services for autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions.

Other areas of Progress

- 11 The Hampshire County Council Primary Behaviour Service has been commissioned since late 2020 to deliver the Children's Wellbeing Support Service. Referrals remain high.
- 12 The service is designed to offer early intervention and support service for parents of children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs as well as Autism, Attention Deficit Disorder, Attachment Disorder, anxiety and poor emotional wellbeing.
- 13 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.
- 14 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

A dedicated team of experienced practitioners provide the following services and support for children living in Hampshire:

- Support parents to evaluate their child's needs, behaviour and emotional wellbeing
- Support for parents/carers, including help with developing a positive home/school relationship, as well as direct work with parents/carers
- Support families regarding crisis management and conflict resolution
- Support parents to learn strategies that work for them, so that they can enable their child to self-regulate their behaviour
- Support families to develop their strengths, emotional resilience and independence

- Support families to become better engaged with their child’s learning and enable them to access more of the curriculum
- As neurodevelopmental pathways continue to improve the service will become one of the first points of contact providing an early intervention service.

Initial and ongoing feedback received from families has been extremely positive, examples below:

- *“Thank you so much for your quick response, you could not have been any better. It has really made such a positive difference for this family. Thank you.”*
- *“Thank you so much. I feel like we are finally getting somewhere now, I have tried to get help for her since she was about 5 and didn’t really get anywhere”.*
- *“thank you for listening and understanding – you are the first person to listen to my needs”.*
- *“We will see if these changes make a big enough impact, as well as using strategies that you have suggested, before making a CAMHS referral.”*

- 15 Autism Hampshire has been commissioned up until 31st March 2022 as a pilot to deliver parent support workshops, and school staff training focusing on supporting children and young people with traits of autism. If deemed effective commissioners will consider long term commissioning arrangements for this service.
- 16 A Re-Procurement of Hampshire Therapy (Speech and Language, Occupational Health etc) service is currently underway. Feedback from Hampshire families with children presenting with traits of Autism, has indicated a gap in the current therapies service regarding sensory support. The Therapies Project team has included this feedback into the service specification and quality workstream to ensure sensory support is included and funded appropriately within the new service.
- 17 Multi-Disciplinary/Agency ‘Filtering’ Panels will be established to review all referrals requesting autism Assessments and agree on the most appropriate intervention to ensure support is offered at the earliest point possible.
- 18 Commissioners will continue to explore opportunities to embed further multi-disciplinary, pre and post assessment support for children and young people presenting with traits of Autism. The Hampshire and Isle of Wight ASC Transformation Group, attended by system wide partners and families will monitor the effectiveness of the current services as well as assessment waiting times and report progress to the Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight CCG Complex Care and Autism Board.

Consultation and Equalities

- 19 An Equality/Quality Impact Assessment has been developed and is under review by the CCG Quality team.

Conclusions

- 20 Although significant progress has been made to date, commissioners will continue to provide regular updates at each select committee meeting until committee members are fully reassured.

**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> 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	<u>Date</u> 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.