

**Report to Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Board, November 2020****Lancashire and South Cumbria Children's and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Transformation Plan****1. Background**

There has been a significant focus on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health. The evidence is still emerging, and it will be some time before we know the full extent of the impact on children and young people in Lancashire and South Cumbria. However, several national and local studies provide some indication of the mental health challenges for children and young people and the impact on specific vulnerable groups.

This report aims to provide:

- An overview of the emerging national evidence of impact
- Details of some of the significant elements of Lancashire and South Cumbria's local system response
- Plans for moving forward
- Recommendations to ensure a continued and improved system-wide response.

2. Emerging Evidence of Impact

Among the sources of evidence is research undertaken by the Anna Freud Foundation between 25 May and 14 June 2020. The review highlighted a number of key mental health challenges for children and young people during the pandemic:

- Mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression have markedly increased.
- Feelings of panic, stress, fear and fatigue amid uncertainty and a lack of control among young people are also widespread.
- Disruption to young people's 'sense of control' and 'sense of meaning' has contributed to growing stress and anxiety.
- Concerns about returning to schools and colleges are also common.
- Family dynamics, learning and education, financial stressors, social isolation and loneliness are all stressors contributing to poor mental health during the pandemic
- However, for some, the pandemic has had positive mental health impacts due to a sense of support and potentially reduced stressors, such as social pressures at school.

Key mental health challenges for disproportionately affected groups:

- Children and young people with pre-existing health and education needs, such as anxiety, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and special educational needs are experiencing an increase in symptoms and compromised access to support due to limited capacity of a range of services.

- Children and young people with pre-existing social care needs, such as young people experiencing homelessness, children in care, young carers, and young people experiencing poverty are, on the whole, struggling more due to reduced support systems and further financial impacts of the pandemic.
- Children and young people of colour are disproportionately affected by the coronavirus as they and their parents and carers are both more likely to be key workers, and more likely to work in shut-down sectors. They therefore have greater likelihood of exposure to the virus whilst also being more likely to experience loss of household income. As a result, the mental health impact for these young people is exacerbated.

Within Lancashire and South Cumbria, data from providers of emotional wellbeing and mental health services (NHS and VCFS) indicates that that referrals generally fell during the first month of lockdown but have subsequently risen to around or above normal levels. At the same time, the Kooth digital platform, aimed at providing online support for 10-18 year olds, saw a 34% increase in demand nationally and access has increased by 50% in Lancashire and South Cumbria, alongside expansion of the platform to include 10 year olds to support transition to secondary school.

It is clear, that more young people have sought support during the lockdown period and will continue do so as the impact of COVID-19 continues to affect the way that young people live their lives. Equally, for those young people who have found it easier spending more time away from their school environment, the prospect of returning may present its own challenges going forward.

3. Our Response

During lockdown, many services providing support to children and young people continued to operate:

- Primary Mental Health Workers have continued to support professionals to identify and meet needs, working across agencies.
- The Cumbria wide 5 to 19 Public Health Nurse Practitioner team established an E School Nurse Clinic where both professionals and/or parents/carers book video consultations to discuss health and wellbeing concerns. The team developed an offer of individual tailored support to all those children starting school reception year in September 2020
- Cumbria County Council's Psychological Service produced a guide to support the return to school in September. <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/backtoschool.asp>
- Cumbria PH Children and Families commissioned free online 'Solihull' training for all parents, carers and professionals in Cumbria, covering attachment, brain development (infant to adolescent), bereavement, loss and trauma
- Drop in services commissioned by Morecambe Bay CCG to provide emotional and mental health support for young people were extended to cover the period of the pandemic
- The Lancashire Emotional Health in Schools Support Service, which offers training and support for the school and college workforce, has reshaped the service offer to deliver more online and telephony-based services.
- The voluntary sector Emotional Health and Wellbeing Partnership in Lancashire has continued to support children and families, with increased use of telephone and video.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) have remained open, with face to face contacts where needed, but also making increased use of technology to work with children and young people.

As well as increased use of video and telephony to replace or supplement face to face contact where appropriate, there have been some significant changes to help mitigate the current and potential impacts on children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health:

- The Lancashire and South Cumbria Healthy Young Minds Website has been expanded to include COVID-19 specific resources alongside the planned launch of information, advice and resources to support children, young people, parents/carers and professionals, identify and manage emotional wellbeing and mental health issues. The website saw a 578% rise in the website page views between February 2020 and March 2020, this rose a further 50% from March 2020 to April 2020. This coincided with increased social media messages promoting the website.
- Council School Improvement and Public Health teams, working with schools' partners, have developed guidance to promote positive emotional wellbeing and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic and in planning for schools to re-open.
- A Team Around the School approach continues to help identify those children and young people who may be particularly vulnerable, and in need of additional help.
- The Kooth online digital platform is providing all young people aged 10-18 in Lancashire and South Cumbria with free access to online support and counselling.
- Self-referrals by children and young people to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) across Lancashire and South Cumbria have been implemented, with access via the Healthy Young Minds website.
- The All-Age Mental Health Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and staffed by trained mental health professionals who can provide assessment and referrals to appropriate services.
- A 'Safe Space' pathway was implemented to ensure that children and young people presenting out of hours at Accident and Emergency Departments are not placed in a paediatric bed inappropriately.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) 0-19 service provision, to address the issue of older adolescents who have previously had to access adult services, has been fully implemented across Lancashire (South Cumbria CAMHS already covered the 0-19 age range).
- Real time surveillance data has been used as part of the approach to suicide prevention, with an intelligence led approach to communications using social media, and through partner agencies, targeted on high risk locations. Data has also helped identify clusters/groups to target more specific interventions and ensure wider networks get the support they need.
- The Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnerships have included a focus on children and young people's mental health and has key role in providing assurance moving forward.
- Significant planning for anticipated COVID generated and COVID suppressed demand has been modelled and factored into Phase 3 plans for Children's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services
- An additional recurrent investment of £916K has been identified by Joint Committee of Clinical Commissioning Groups (JCCCG) to ensure the delivery of the Long-Term Plan

4. Plans Moving Forward

The Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (CYPEWMH) Transformation Plan for Lancashire (2015-2020) was first published in January 2016. That document set out the initial iteration of a five-year plan for Lancashire (only, at that time), to support local implementation of the national ambition and principles as set out in 'Future in Mind – promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing' (2015).

Today the plan includes South Cumbria and continues to aim to improve the resilience, emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people, especially those who are at increased risk due to their vulnerability, such as those within and on the 'edge of care', making it easier for them and their families to access help and support when they need it whilst improving the standard of mental health services across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

April 2020 through to March 2021 is the final year of this Transformation Plan. Whilst some elements of the THRIVE redesign have been brought forward as a consequence of and as part of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation of the final Clinical Model, Transition & Implementation plan and Financial Modelling Template planned for July 2020 were however delayed. These have since been evaluated by the evaluation panel on 16 September 2020. The final report was presented at the Collaborative Commissioning Board (CCB) on 13 October 2020 and will be presented for approval at the JCCCG on 5 November 2020.

It is recognised that the landscape has changed significantly and, reflecting on the new reality, there will be no national expectation to refresh CYPMH Local Transformation Plans in October 2020. Going forward, it is anticipated that an aligned CYPMH plan will continue to be developed and will feed into local and system level strategic plans, as referenced in the Long Term Plan, to ensure that our CYP MH population is recognised and supported moving forward.

National CYP MH Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) (based on previous KLOEs for CYPMH Local Transformation Plans) have been revised into a guidance document to support systems when considering recovery and restoration, strategic CYPMH plans and delivery of the future ambitions as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan.

The indicators tabled below are not mandatory but serve as a checklist. A review of the Transformation Plan objectives against the KLOEs will be undertaken working in a system partnership to inform local children, young people, families, referrers and other key stakeholders.

1	Transparency and Governance	2	Understanding Local Need and Addressing Health Inequality
3	CYPMH Local Transformation plan or CYPMH & WB Strategic Plan - Ambitions	4	Workforce
5	Health and Justice	6	CYP Eating Disorders
7	Data - Access and Outcomes	8	Urgent & Emergency (Crisis) Mental Health Care for CYP
9	Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP)	10	CYP Mental Health Services working with education settings (including Mental Health Support Teams)
11	CYPMH Digitally enabled Care Pathways		

6. Governance

There is an ongoing review of governance arrangements in light of the current Command and Control system introduced within the Lancashire & South Cumbria ICS in response to the pandemic. Since April 2020, system leadership is through the Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Sub Cell and the CYPEWMH Partnership Board is, at this moment, stood down. The Care Partnership continues to progress the THRIVE Redesign model implementation.

7. Recommendations to the Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Board

The Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:

1. Note the emerging national evidence of impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health.
2. Note that work to predict anticipated demand pressures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic on Lancashire and South Cumbria children and young people's mental health
3. Note the system wide response to help mitigate the short-term impact.
4. Note the increased investment to meet the requirements of the Long Term Plan
5. Note that the outcome of the THRIVE Redesign will be reported to Health and Wellbeing Boards at a future date.
6. Agree the continued need for a whole system approach across all partners.

List of background papers

Anna Freud Foundation: Emerging Evidence Children and Young People's Mental Health

<https://www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support/our-research/>

Co-Space Study: Changes in children and young people's emotional and behavioural difficulties through lockdown <https://emergingminds.org.uk/co-space-study-4th-update/>

Advancing Mental Health Equalities Strategy <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/advancing-mental-health-equalities-strategy/>