

TITLE OF REPORT: CAMHS and Impact of Covid - Update

REPORT OF: [Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust \(CNTW\)](#)

SUMMARY

The committee has requested an update following the presentation of a report in September 2022 in relation to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the mental health of children and young people in Gateshead. This report is supported by the presentation that will be delivered to the committee on the 27th April 2023.

Purpose of Report

To update the committee with regards to the work being undertaken in CNTW to respond to the increased demand on Children and Young People's Mental Health services in Gateshead.

Background

The impact of Covid 19 on the mental health of children and young people was discussed with the committee on 8th September 2022. This report offers an update on referrals, waiting times and service development in Children and Young People's services.

Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) is delivered by CNTW as one service across Newcastle and Gateshead. The support provided is delivered through a lead provider model and is divided into two parts – Getting Help and Getting More Help.

The following table sets out the function and make up of the Getting Help Services:

Getting Help Service

The Getting Help Service is a partnership between NHS and VCS organisations working to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing across Newcastle and Gateshead.

The SPA team transfer referrals to the most appropriate organisation based on that child or young person's needs.

With the exception of Kooth which is an entirely online service, all providers in the partnership offer online and telephone appointments as well as face to face sessions.

Kooth can be accessed directly by young people without a referral from SPA by visiting [Kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com)

KALMER Counselling Services

9-25 years of age, providing Getting Help services for, mild to moderate learning disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, anxiety, self-confidence, low mood, low self-esteem, transition stress, relationship problems and managing independence.

Gateshead only Emotional Wellbeing Team

4-18 years of age, provides a service to help children with moderate behavioural difficulties, low mood, anxiety, depression, bereavement, bullying, eat distress and relationship difficulties.

North East Counselling

4-25 years of age, counselling intervention for anxiety, stress and low mood

Kooth

Kooth.com provides children and young people a safe, online platform available 24/7, 365 days per year, where they can explore and access professional and peer support around their emotional wellbeing and mental health. The service is available for young people aged 11-25 years old across Newcastle and Gateshead.

Barnardo's Orchard Mosaic

For children up to 18 years who have experienced bereavement and have additional vulnerabilities and/or are displaying difficulties in managing grief (6 sessions). For children up to 18 years who have experienced sexual abuse and/or are displaying harmful sexual behaviours (12 sessions).

Newcastle only Tier 2 (Getting Help Team)

Lower level anxiety, reactive low mood, emotional/behavioural regulation, low risk adverse childhood experiences, assessments of school based functioning. Initial assessment, 4-6 sessions to support emotional wellbeing. Signpost if appropriate for ongoing support.

Children North East Newcastle

Provide counselling for mental health support, anxiety, self-harming, low mood and bereavement for children aged 9-25 years of age.

Streetwise Young People's Project - Newcastle

11-25 years of age.
Early Help - Counsellors, PWP's and Mental Health Support Workers - anxiety, low mood, anger, stress, bereavement and low self-esteem or confidence.

Barnardos Independence Project

Independence Project - One to one support for 12-18 year old's living in Newcastle. Offering support with the transition out of therapeutic services, as well as aiming to prevent them returning back into Tier 3 Services; through a social prescribing model focusing on emotional wellbeing.

SPA is also able to signpost to other services which are not part of Getting Help such as:

- Early Help Services in Gateshead and Newcastle
- RISE Mental Health Support in Schools
- Incredible Years parenting support
- Breaking The Cycle for children in Newcastle affected by domestic abuse

Whilst some of the providers see young people up to the age of 25, access through SPA and the Getting Help pathway is for young people up to the age of 18.

Getting More Help

The Getting More Help services are divided into four parts: Mental Health, Learning Disability, Eating Disorder and Neurodevelopment.

1) Mental Health Pathway

This pathway supports children and young people who have had a significant deterioration in their emotional wellbeing/mental health. There may be concerns about:

Psychosis, such as auditory and/or visual hallucinations

An increase in the level of self-harming behaviours

Risk to self and/or others

Exploitation (online, in public) (victim or perpetrator)

An increase in level of offending behaviour that appears linked to Mental Health presentation and/or emotional dysregulation

The service offers assessment of moderate to severe mental health presentations. Young People are offered an appointment with community practitioners and following this, community practitioners present their formulation of need within an MDT to support shared decision making.

Treatment includes the allocation of care co-ordinator, medication (if required) and onward referral to specialist therapies via the psychological therapies meeting as appropriate.

This meeting has therapist's supporting decision making with care co-ordinators to ensure the correct therapy is offered. Therapies available are:
CBT, DBT (from Jan), psychotherapy, family therapy, art therapy.

2) Eating Disorders Team

The referral criteria for this service are that young people must present with eating disorder psychopathology or behaviours, (restriction, exercise, bingeing & purging) and to what extent each of the behaviours are being observed/impacting wellbeing. Any weight loss and/or stopping of Menstrual cycle. As per the waiting time standards for eating disorders, all appropriate referrals will be assessed within 28 days.

3) Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway.

Neurodevelopmental concerns in school age children (e.g. DHD/ASD) is an assessment only pathway – post diagnostic support sits within Getting Help services.

The assessment pathway is designed and functions from the principles of NICE guidance. All neurodevelopmental assessments are multidisciplinary and when appropriate multi agency. Assessments are completed by a range of experienced clinicians. If young people are identified as requiring emotional support alongside the assessment process we work collectively with some voluntary sector organisations, e.g. Kalmer and CNE to provide this service.

If a young person is diagnosed with ADHD, parents are invited to the ADHD session prior to a trial of medication. From Jan 23 this will be offered to all young people prior to an offer of medication. If medication is tried and effective the young person remains under the care of CYPS (with shared care in place) until they no longer require this or if they become an adult. At the age of 17yrs 6mths transition to adult ADHD team begins, with the aim that the young person is handed to the care of adults when they turn 18.

4) Learning Disability Pathway

The young person must have a diagnosed learning disability and must be experiencing some degree of psychological distress. This includes children presenting with behaviour that challenges.

LD/PBS team offer the following assessment/intervention pathways:

- Neurodevelopmental assessment pathway
- Complex sleep behaviour pathway
- Emotional difficulties
- Positive behaviour support pathway
- All of the pathways offer a stepped care approach and are supported by all members of the MDT
- Our Psychiatry colleagues support the work of the team with treatment review clinic

Referrals

Referrals into the Single Point of Access have increased exponentially in recent years. The table below shows the number of referrals into SPA from 2019/20 to 22/23 for Gateshead and Newcastle. Referrals increased by 75% from 20/21 to 22/23.

Referral Received Financial Year Name	Referrals Received
2019-20	3,896
2020-21	3,417
2021-22	5,084
2022-23	5,972
Grand Total	18,369

In 2022/23 the service received an average of 498 referrals per month. An average of 239 triages were completed each month for young people from Gateshead.

Getting More Help Referrals

The table below shows the number of referrals into each of the Getting More Help pathways from 2019/20 until 2022/23 (service as a whole i.e. Newcastle and Gateshead).

Referrals Received Reporting Pathway	Referral Received Financial Year				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Grand Total
Learning Disabilities pathway	156	129	164	147	596
Mental Health pathway	1,090	772	901	726	3,489
Neuro pathway	834	956	1,424	1,771	4,985
Other	413	48	21	0	482
Grand Total	2,493	1,905	2,510	2,644	9,552

The table shows that there was a slight decrease in referrals during covid in 20/21 but numbers have continued to rise and in 22/23 were higher than pre-covid levels. The number of referrals into the mental health pathway have decreased slightly, learning disabilities has remained relatively steady but referrals into the neurodevelopmental pathway have continued to rise year on year.

There has been a 112% increase in referrals into the neuro pathway from 2019/20 to 2022/23.

Waiting Times

SPA

The purpose of SPA is to triage referrals and direct them to the most appropriate service within Getting Help or Getting More Help. SPA is not intended to hold a waiting list. However, due to the exponential increase in referrals and the limitations of capacity within the Getting Help Service, there is a growing number of young

people being held within SPA for a period prior to their referral to a Getting Help Provider. During this time families and young people are directed towards Kooth and various other resources to access support and are provided with the Duty team number for additional support or to escalate any changes in risk.

Gateshead Place commissioners have allocated some additional non-recurrent resource for 2023/24 which has been utilised to increase capacity in Kalmer Counselling, North East Counselling Service and Children North East with the aim of reducing the number of people being held in SPA.

The Getting Help Partnership will explore any other funding opportunities such as charitable funds to increase capacity this year. In addition, the partnership will explore opportunities to use existing resource differently such as exploring the use of group work to support a greater number of young people where appropriate.

Getting Help Waiting Times

	Average wait for assessment (weeks)	Average wait for treatment
STSFT	11	28
CNE	7	19
NECS	4	8
Kalmer	2	12
Barnardos Independence	0.8	0.8
Barnardos Orchard Mosaic	5	9
TTHT	4-6 to completion	NA
Getting More Help		
CYPS MH	10	17
CYPS Neuro	36	38
CYPS LD	4	25

Getting More Help waiting times

The table below shows the total number of children & young people within each pathway (**GATESHEAD ONLY**)

	Waiting for assessment	Waiting for treatment	In treatment	Total in service
Gateshead				
CYPS MH	74	89	198	361
CYPS Neuro	938	83	596	1617
CYPS LD	8	31	85	124

As context the following table shows waiting times across the service as a whole
(Newcastle and Gateshead)

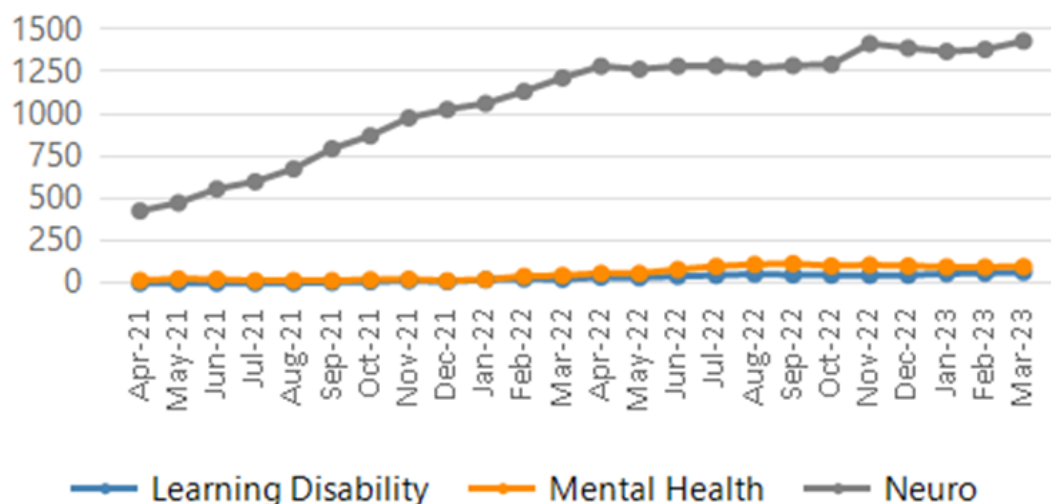
	Waiting for assessment		Waiting for treatment	In treatment	Total in service
CYPS MH	150		151	414	715
CYPS Neuro	2060		176	1387	3623
CYPS LD	27		78	207	312

The next table shows the waiting time information for **Gateshead only**

	Average wait to assessment (weeks)	Average wait to treatment (weeks)	No. of people waiting over 18 weeks for treatment	Longest wait (weeks)
Mental health	10	17	61	80
Neuro	36	38	646	127
Learning Disability	4	25	29	45

The following chart shows the increase in the number of people waiting over 18 weeks for the 3 CYPS pathways from April 2021. It is clear that the main pressure is within the neuro pathway.

CYPS Central Locality - pathway number of over 18 week waiters



Risks

- Children who are waiting to be seen for assessment may deteriorate in terms of their presentation and not get the help they need at the time that they need it
- If a young person goes into mental health crisis they can be supported by the crisis team. Whilst they are having input from the crisis team their referral to CYPS will remain open. The crisis team will inform the team that they are supporting the young person and the CYPS will respond by reviewing the young person and if required, prioritising them for care and treatment
- The NHS as a whole is facing recruitment and retention pressures for all staff disciplines. There is a particular difficulty in recruitment of nurses due to more leaving the profession and less people taking up the nursing training
- The clinical base in Newcastle has been undergoing renovation works therefore the Newcastle and Gateshead CYPS teams have only been working from one base since March 2022. This has reduced our clinical space
- Global pandemic interrupted education and made it more difficult for children to continue with their social and emotional development. This has resulted in presentations which appear to be born of neurodevelopmental disorder and an exponential increase in referrals particularly for ADHD
- Increase in complexity and acuity of presentations
- Impact and legacy of previous business continuity arrangements
- Adhering to CPA policy in the context of increased waiting time and reduced staffing
- Staffing pressures in the education system impacting on young person health and wellbeing

Mitigations

- Toby Henderson Trust has been commissioned to deliver 187 ASD assessments in 23/24
- Psychiatry UK has been commissioned to deliver 90 dual (ASD/ADHD) assessments
- Place commissioners have allocated non-recurrent funding for additional capacity in the Getting Help pathways for Gateshead young people

- Following review of the neurodevelopmental assessment process and sharing good practice from other services, Newcastle and Gateshead CYPS are now trialling a one-day assessment clinic for less complex cases
- CNTW are developing a competency framework to upskill other clinicians to aid in the diagnosis of neurodevelopmental disorders. The hope is to address the shortage in number of staff who can currently diagnose
- Considering pathways out of the service for those Children and Young People (CYP) diagnosed with ADHD and how these CYP may return to the care of their GP to be monitored following diagnosis and titration on to medication
- Capacity modelling has been undertaken based on the ambition to have 5 neuro pods and this would enable 100 assessments per month
- Due to pressures within the LD pathway CNTW have recruited a Band 7, PBS Specialist Nurse to support with open cases and clinical supervision
- CNTW are recruiting extra staff and a clinical lead to support pressures in the Mental Health pathway
- CNTW are increasing our operational and strategic leadership across the Neuro pathway
- A review of CPA policy is pending and is hoped to release more clinical capacity

Expected impact of mitigations

- Longest waits for neurodevelopmental assessments will reduce with the timely access to diagnosticians and additional capacity from Toby Henderson and PUK
- Referrals into Getting Help will flow through to VCS partners in a more timely manner
- The neurodevelopmental pathway are receiving 120 referrals per month and have calculated that it would take 15 months just to work through the current over 18 week waits
- Reduction in waiting times to allocation and support goal-based treatment pathways for LD
- Increase in caseload management supervision to support safe transitions back to primary care
Employment of the PBS specialist nurse will support robust clinical supervision and appropriate discharges from the LD service

Contact on waiting list

- Patients waiting over 18 weeks receive a letter from CNTW every 12 weeks
- Treatment waiting list phone calls (MH pathway)
- At point of referral into the service signposting and resources sent out for support whilst waiting
- Duty team available Monday to Friday, which is staffed by 2, Band 6 clinicians.
- We intend to reinstate wellbeing and engagement events. Due to delays with clinical base these will start virtually initially. Parents, carers and young people will be required to fill out a form to identify any risks which will then be reviewed and actioned if required. They will have an opportunity to speak to clinicians
- In November 2022 all cases waiting over 8 weeks in the mental health pathway were reviewed and actions have been identified including: discharge

where appropriate, reviewing appointment actions/outcomes or reviewing those who still need to be seen

- All open referrals to CYPS pathways for service users that have not been seen in 3,6,12 months have been reviewed by the clinical manager of the service to ensure that a plan is in place

Recommendations

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the contents of this report

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