

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services  
Local Governors' Association Spring Term Meeting 2015

John Barnard, Team Manager of Redcar and Cleveland Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services gave us a valuable overview of provision for young people in the Borough at our Spring Term meeting. He has a mental health nursing background and is based with the team at The Ridings on Station Road in Redcar. He explained that anyone with a concern can make a referral to the service; there is no need to go through a GP nowadays. The contact number is 03000 132 000 - Option 3.

The service has four main elements: Prevention, First Level Intervention, Assessment and Treatment/Therapy. The multi-disciplinary team consists of the Manager, Consultant Psychiatrist, Community Psychiatrist and Learning Disability Nurses, Clinical Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Nursery Nurse, Support Workers and Associate Practitioners. Consultations can take place face to face or on the phone and there is a Drop In facility.

Much of the work consists of short term interventions or group work for less complex difficulties. Out-patient work is always tried first and it's very rare for troubled under-12s to need in-patient resources. (The team has access to under-12s' national in-patient provision if it's needed.) For those with more severe mental health and emotional/behavioural problems, there is further local intervention from the multi-disciplinary team and adult services are introduced in the young person's eighteenth year to achieve a seamless transition to ongoing support.

There are CAMHS teams in Middlesbrough, Stockton, Hartlepool and Redcar and three centres at West Lane in Middlesbrough.

The Newberry Centre (an in-patient facility with 14 beds) caters for young people from 12-18 years. It helps young people with acute and complex mental health problems that cannot be managed within a community setting. Referrals are consultant to consultant, via the community teams.

The Evergreen Centre offers both an in-patient and out-patient service and is able to offer intensive input for those requiring higher levels of physical care. It caters for young people up to the age of 18 who require specialist treatment for anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and other eating disorders.

The Westwood Centre (a 14 bed in-patient low secure forensic unit) caters for young people between the age of 12-18 who have a forensic background and extremely challenging behaviours. There is also an adolescent forensic out-patient department there.

A Looked After Children's Service is available in all the Tees teams. As well as helping the young people with mental health issues, the service offers direct therapeutic work and support and training to foster carers and professionals directly involved with children in care. It can be accessed via Social Workers or designated Looked After Doctors and Nurses.

"Not so many young people with psychosis are seen by out-patient CAMHS now and the cases that are may be drug-related," said John. "However, we have an Early Intervention in Psychosis Team." This works specifically with those who are at risk of developing a psychosis, targeting 14-35 year olds. Referrals are second line only.

A Tees-wide seven day service assesses youngsters who have been admitted to James Cook and North Tees Hospitals with an act of deliberate self-harm. This includes overdosing and cutting. Assessments are offered within 24 hours of an episode. CAMHS telephones A and E on a daily basis to pick up any referrals. There were 500 referrals from the two hospitals last year. Sometimes talking to the youngsters in A and E prevents admission to a ward and a Tees-wide CAMHS Crisis and Liaison service will be in place by summer 2015.

Current referrers to CAMHS include GPs, other Health Professionals, School Counsellors, Social Workers, Educational Psychologists, the Voluntary Sector and there are self-referrals. The target is to keep the waiting list to a four week maximum, but 40% of clients are seen within three days. The peak age group for referrals is around 14-15 years.

Some work is done in schools, but resources can't stretch to ongoing provision in all of them. "Just now, we are targeting cluster groups of schools and asking what training they need," explained John. "Generally, educational staff appear to be developing greater awareness of mental health issues."

These problems can include psychosis; emotional or mood disorders; depression, anxiety and behavioural; post traumatic stress disorder; abnormal grief or loss; eating disorders; attachment disorder and emerging personality disorder. "Many of the issues most probably develop in the early years and are a result of attachment/relationship difficulties," said John. "We're seeing a big increase in young people who self-harm, who have emerging personality difficulties and also in the diagnosis/request for assessment of autism."

Lastly, he reminded us of the challenging statistics of Redcar and Cleveland. 27% of children are living in poverty, compared to 21% nationally. Self-harm admissions of 10-24 year olds are 690 per 100,000, compared to 370 nationally. Suicide rates remain high. "There is a great need for specialist and wider Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to work together to prevent today's young people becoming tomorrow's adult service users," said John.

Rosemary Nicholls

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