

Public Health

4th Floor, 222 Upper Street, N1 1XR

Report of: Director of Young Islington

Meeting of: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: March 2023

Ward(s): all wards

Subject: Youth Counselling & Substance Misuse & Alcohol Service – Annual Report 2022/23

1. Synopsis

1.1 The Youth Counselling and Substance Misuse and Alcohol Service (YCSMAS) is a newly integrated health team that incorporates the Targeted Youth Support Youth Counselling Service and the Islington Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (IYPDAS).

1.2 This service has been created in response to the growing number of young people referred for counselling and/or substance misuse support with comorbidity related presentations. The aim is to allow for closer partnership work between the two services so that specialist and tailored interventions can be offered. It is a holistic health service for young people that integrates two key specialist teams.

1.3 Whilst the service has seen increases in the numbers of young people being referred, it is estimated that there are larger numbers of them in the borough who need, and would benefit from, the service but who are not currently accessing it. This is particularly likely to be the case due to events that have taken place in the past few years such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. These events have led to escalation and exacerbation in the needs of children, young people and their families. It is therefore significant for all relevant health providers to be aware of YCSMAS so that it becomes more accessible to those young people who need it.

2. Recommendations

2.1 For members of the board to help to promote YCMAS to staff members and potential service users.

2.2 For members of the board to be aware of the interconnectivity between YCMAS and the services that exist for adults (e.g. Better Lives).

2.3 For YCMAS and its partners to keep abreast of potential single agency or joint funding opportunities.

3. Background

3.1 YCMAS sits within the Islington Targeted Youth Support (TYS) and Youth Justice Service (YJS) and comprises of the YYS Counselling Service and the Islington Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (IYPDAS)

3.2 YYS Counselling Service offers up to 12 weekly counselling sessions to any young person aged 12yrs to 21yrs, who lives or studies in Islington and has moderate to complex mental health needs. This service also offers therapeutic crisis response sessions for young people affected by youth violence and group work/detached sessions. The latter is delivered in partnership with YYS's detached team and other relevant organisations within the community.

3.3 Islington Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (IYPDAS) provides advice and information to young people aged 12yrs to 21yrs using substances and/or alcohol in the borough, or who are at risk of this. Children who are Looked After (CLA) by Islington but placed in other boroughs, may also be supported by the team if their needs require this. The team also supports partners working with young people with such needs. IYPDAS also provides structured treatment support for young people whose drug and/or alcohol use requires longer term intervention.

3.4 A total of 249 young people were referred to YCSMAS in this financial year, an increase of 26 referrals from the previous year. This is most likely due to the team becoming fully staffed in 2023 and therefore having more capacity. This enabled the service to promote the offer throughout Islington and deliver workshops, drop ins and training to colleagues and professionals and to schools, youth centres, GP's and in community events.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications – The YCSMAS provides a joined-up service across Islington for children and young people who need both targeted counselling and alcohol and substance misuse support. The service incorporates the Targeted Youth Support Youth Counselling Service and the Islington Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Service. The number of children and young people referred into the service has increased over the last year.

Additional funding was requested from both Public Health and the local Integrated Care Board (ICB) during 2023/24 to strengthen and expand the offer for local children and young people. The annual expenditure budget for 2024/25 totals £611,400. This is an increase of £60,000 from 2023/24, which is being funded through additional income from the Public Health Grant. The following table provides details of the current funding sources for 2024/25:

Table 1 - YCSMAS 2024/25 Budget:

YCSMAS 2024/25 Budget and Funding	£
Total Expenditure Budget	611,400
Income Budgets:	
Public Health Grant Income	-357,400
Integrated Care Board Funding	-88,000
Total Budgeted Income	-445,400
Net Expenditure Budget	166,000
Net Expenditure Budget Breakdown:	
YCSMAS Core Budget	121,000
Community Safety Budget Contribution	45,000
Total	166,000

4.2 Legal Implications

4.2.1 The council has a duty to improve public health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, section 12. The council must take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area including providing services or facilities designed to promote healthy living (whether by helping individuals to address behaviour that is detrimental to health or in any other way) as well as providing services or facilities for the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness (National Health Service Act 2006, section 2B, as amended by Health and Social Care Act 2012, section 12 and Regulation 2013/351 made under the National Health Service Act 2006, section 6C). The council may provide (integrated) drug and alcohol recovery services as proposed in this report.

4.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030 – Not applicable to this paper.

4.4 Equalities Impact Assessment

4.4.1 YCSMAS is part of a service which promotes anti-racist and anti-discriminatory principles. The need to eliminate discrimination is a significant priority for YCMAS, as is ensuring that young people from a variety of different backgrounds access the service when they need it.

4.4.2 YCMAS's TYS Counselling continues to have a high proportion of young people from Black and minoritised communities accessing the service compared to other mental health services in the borough, although this figure is less than last year. This could possibly be due to the launch of a new mental health and wellbeing support service and alternative referral pathway, 'Elevate' which specialises in supporting young Black and Mixed-Race young men. There are also increased numbers of non-binary young people accessing the service. However, the service will continue to explore how best to promote the service within these communities and beyond.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 More and more children and young people nationally are requiring support with their emotional wellbeing and/or are in need of support in relation to alcohol and substance issues. This is also the case locally. Children and young people who are experiencing such difficulties are amongst the most vulnerable in our community. The promotion of YCMAS is therefore crucial in order to ensure that such cohorts are supported and protected in this regard.

Appendices: YCMAS – Power Point presentation

YCMAS annual report – 2022/23

Background papers: As listed above

Final report clearance:

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