



Report of: Corporate Director of Housing and Adult Social Services

Health and Wellbeing Board	Date: 19 October 2016	Ward(s): All
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SUBJECT: Healthwatch Islington Report – Mental Health Services for Young Adults: Commissioner Update

1. Synopsis

1.1 In October 2015, Healthwatch Islington published the report *'Mental Health Services for Young Adults.'* This report provides the Health and Wellbeing Board with an update as to how findings from the report have been addressed by commissioners, and an indication of further work to be completed.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Board note the progress made towards addressing the findings of the Healthwatch Islington report.

3. Background

3.1 In October 2015, Healthwatch Islington published the report *'Mental Health Services for Young Adults.'* The report explores the challenges faced by young adults aged 18-32, who are “unable to draw on strong family networks and/or find it difficult to develop and establish themselves economically and socially in a borough like Islington,” and seeks to understand the impact that these challenges have on individuals. Although a number of young adults in this position may have a number of support needs, they are currently under-represented across local mental health services. Specifically, the following groups were targeted:

- Members of the Asian community due to their under-representation in primary care mental health services.
- Black African and Black African Caribbean men who are over represented in in-patient psychiatric services.
- Members of the LBGT community.
- Young adults dealing with a range of multiple vulnerabilities such as homelessness, leaving care, social isolation.

3.2 The report helps to identify some of the barriers faced by this group, with a view to informing future commissioning activity.

Report Conclusions and Recommendations

3.3 Young adults interviewed reported that where they successfully accessed adult mental health services, the experience had been positive and they felt better able to manage their overall wellbeing (including mental health) as a result. However, those who had previously been supported by CAMHS services reported a less positive experience, particularly in relation to the transition from child to adult mental health services.

3.4 The following key themes were also noted:

- Stigma and a lack of trust of mental health services is having an impact on the number of young adults accessing support.
- Young adults facing multiple vulnerabilities are consistently not accessing mental health support services, despite receiving support from other agencies. This suggests a need for greater awareness and training for other agencies around mental health support, in order to encourage and support young adults to be referred on.
- The role of the wider family is key; in a number of cases families were supportive of young adults accessing support for their mental health, however, this was not always the case.
- Adequate accommodation, worklessness, and social isolation were challenges faced by a number of those interviewed for the report.

3.5 In light of the above, the report identified the following recommendations:

There is an urgent need to address issues of worklessness, a lack of accommodation and social isolation amongst many of the respondents. It is therefore recommended that a holistic approach to mental health services is considered, one which draws together a number of practical, clinical and well-being services. These services should include social activities, advice, guidance, advocacy and psychological services.

That the services referred to in the first recommendation above are delivered in a range of community based settings to create a more flexible approach to the delivery of mental health services. This will broaden the scope of services available and provide a range of familial and socially connected environments for vulnerable young adults.

That community based organisations working with young adults with mental health needs should be provided with financial support and professional expertise to:

- Actively engage in processes and fora associated with co-commissioning. This should relate directly to the design of local services, be equipped to refer effectively to mental health services, and measure organisational activities to assess their impact on young adults with mental health needs.
- It is suggested that an organisational toolkit is co-produced, with commissioners and clinical staff to equip organisations to begin to undertake these developments. Healthwatch recognises the problematic nature of the current funding climate and will therefore actively pursue funding sources to support this suggestion.

4. Commissioning activity in response to the report

4.1 The adult Joint Mental Health Commissioning Team has welcomed the report from Healthwatch Islington, and some actions have already been progressed in response to the conclusions and recommendations.

4.2 *Transition from CAMHS to Adult Mental Health Services:*

- Mental health (MH) commissioners have undertaken a self-assessment of MH transition services. This showed many areas for improvement (e.g. better information sharing, lack of understanding of the MH Transition Team and joint working protocols) but also lots of good practice that we need to build upon and promote.
- Commissioners will be using this evidence, plus the recently completed evaluation of personal health budgets for MH transition and forming a project group with children's commissioners and providers, to systematically address the gaps and ensure a more integrated approach to service delivery. Commissioners would welcome Healthwatch Islington's support with this and will be looking for input from service user representatives.

4.3 *Addressing stigma and encouraging access to services:*

- MH commissioners used the report to help shape the service specification for the Wellbeing Service (delivered by Manor Gardens Trust), which was tendered in January 2016 and began in July 2016. The service is a combination of the previously separate Community Development Worker and Mental Health Champions services. The new Wellbeing service has been jointly funded by Public Health and Adult Social Care, and aims to raise awareness of good mental wellbeing, reduce stigma and encourage access to mental health services amongst hard-to-reach groups. As a result of the report, young adults have been identified in the service specification as a target group for the service, and the service will look to recruit local Mental Health Champions from this age group – local volunteers who will be supported and trained to engage with their peers to raise awareness of mental health and support individuals to access services where a need is identified. One of the young people who took part in producing the Healthwatch Islington report, also worked with commissioners during the tender process and was part of the panel that evaluated bids for the new service.
- The Direct Action Project is specifically aimed at young people up to age 18 and is commissioned by Public Health. This service has similar aims to the work of the adult Mental Health Champions.

4.4 *Co-location and partnership working with other services:*

- Commissioners continue to encourage and support partnership working across various agencies in the borough. For mental health services, there are existing examples where this has worked well e.g.:
 - The iCope (psychological therapies) service has worked closely with colleagues at Job Centre Plus, delivering training to staff which equips them with a better understanding of mental health problems, enabling referrals to be made to iCope.
 - The iCope service is co-located at a number of GP practices and community settings, e.g. Manor Gardens Trust, which provides a range of services supporting various needs including health, wellbeing and social isolation.
 - The Mental Health First Aid training is commissioned by Public Health, and is available to all residents and employers within Islington. The two-day course provides attendees with information to help them recognise the signs and symptoms of common mental health problems. All MH Champions receive this training as part of their initial development.

- Commissioned mental health services are expected to have a clear understanding of the referral pathways into other support services e.g. housing, and to make appropriate referrals to address an individual's additional needs as they are identified. However, it is recognised that further work is needed to improve referrals into mental health services from other agencies.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 Commissioners have identified additional work to further address the recommendations from the report. These include:
- Continuing to work with other support agencies to raise awareness of mental health services and encourage referrals and joint working or co-location, where practical.
 - To plan and deliver a consultation exercise with local mental health providers, in order to further explore the recommendations in the report, and identify ways forward. It has been identified that these discussions should be carried out via the Mental Health Provider Forum and commissioners will discuss with Healthwatch Islington how they (and possibly young adults who were part of the report) can be involved.
- 5.2 Commissioners will ensure that where appropriate, identified actions will be progressed within future commissioning cycles for the relevant services. Further progress will be discussed with Healthwatch Islington, so will not need to be reported back to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications in relation to this report. As part of the commissioning of future services, financial implications will be identified as part of the procurement process.

6.2 Legal Implications:

There are no direct legal implications in relation to this report. As part of the commissioning of future services, legal implications will be identified as part of the procurement process.

6.3 Environmental Implications:

There are no direct environmental implications in relation to this report. As part of the commissioning of future services, environmental implications will be identified as part of the procurement process.

6.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

A resident impact assessment has not been carried out in relation to this report. As part of the commissioning of future services, a resident impact assessment will be prepared and considered as part of the procurement process.

7. Reasons for the recommendation

- 7.1 Commissioners have taken on board the findings of the 'Mental Health Services for Young Adults' report produced by Healthwatch Islington. Specific action has been taken by commissioners to address the recommendations, and further work is planned in the future, in line with wider commissioning activity.

Signed by:



Corporate Director of Housing and Adult Social Services

Date: 11 October 2016

Appendices: None

Background papers: None

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