



Department
of Health



Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce

Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-Being Taskforce Terms of Reference

Context:

This Government has committed to make children and young people's mental health and emotional well-being a priority, and it has been recognised that we all have a part to play in achieving progress. The consequences of untreated mental health problems early in life can be long lasting and far reaching, thus effective early intervention is essential. System structures have recently changed and some things have improved but, as demonstrated through the recent independent review of Tier 4 CAMHS commissioned by NHS England and evidence presented at the HSC's inquiry into children and young people's mental health, many children and young people with mental health and emotional difficulties do not receive timely, high quality, accessible or evidence-based support.

Purpose:

The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-Being Taskforce will bring together experts on children and young people's mental health and those with knowledge of wider system transformation from across the education, social care and health sectors. The Taskforce will make recommendations to the Ministers and agree actions aimed at achieving better outcomes for children and young people with mental health problems. It will consider what changes and improvements are needed in the current operational systems, the system levers which can be applied, and identify innovative, cost-effective and affordable solutions for achieving progress. In producing its recommendations, the Taskforce will involve the key national organisations accountable for policy, commissioning and delivery of services.

Core principles:

- Supporting the development of resilience and emotional wellbeing in children and young people as well as effective intervention when mental health problems occur will be at the centre of the service delivery models proposed
- Recommendations and actions will be informed by the views of children, young people and their families (parents and carers), which will be gathered through engagement and participation activities using a variety of media
- The Taskforce will consider how to reduce health inequalities and promote equality for all children and young people with mental health needs
- Recommendations and ways of working will demonstrate adherence to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Taskforce will identify opportunities for making the most of the resources that are available across the system and will identify a range of existing and potential levers for securing optimum investment in children and young people's mental health. It will promote evidence-based, innovative, and cost-effective approaches and emerging models of service delivery which will be affordable within the current fiscal environment.
- Lessons will be learned from evidence and research, and from emerging and established work both in the UK and Internationally
- The Taskforce will collate existing knowledge in the field, draw together and build on work which is in hand to avoid duplication of effort and align with other developments including the work underway by the Children's and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum, Crisis Care Concordat and work led by NHS England coming out of the recent CAMHS Tier 4 Review. Taskforce members will share views and ideas across others groups of which they are members to promote engagement as broadly as possible.

Membership:

The group will bring together a select group of experts on children and young people's mental health services and people who know about the wider system transformation in education, social care, local government and health. Members will be invited to take part by DH, and some further experts will be invited to take part in supporting the work of the Taskforce in other ways, such as through specific Task and Finish groups.

Governance:

The Taskforce will report to the Children's Health and Wellbeing Partnership and to an Inter-Ministerial Group, which will be chaired by Norman Lamb MP and include ministers from DWP, DfE, CO and DCLG.

Terms of Reference

The Taskforce will agree recommendations, solutions and actions which set out what is needed from the national and local leadership across health, social care and education, and how we can best work together to ensure better outcomes for children and young people's mental health and well-being.

- 1. The Taskforce will establish what children and young people need from services across the sectors to support their mental health needs and to promote their well-being and resilience, through consideration of:**
 - a. the systems that are in place which support or prevent the availability of high quality data to inform decision-making at local and national levels;
 - b. the role of schools and other settings (including early years and further education colleges) in preventing mental health problems through resilience building, earlier intervention and support for children and young people with mental health needs;
 - c. the impact of wider determinants on health including
 - i. employment and/or education, learning and skills,
 - ii. health inequalities and vulnerable groups, and
 - iii. the parent-child relationship on the mental health on the child/infant/young person, and what a whole family approach would look like;
 - d. the interface between services across the sectors, referral thresholds between services and the role of Health and Well-Being Boards in facilitating collaborative support for the child or young person with mental health needs;
 - e. the interface between services when the young person transitions, whether to adult mental health or other services; and whether there is a case for extending services beyond 18;
 - f. limitations in access to services which can provide preventative support including stigma, poor visibility of services or confusion on what is available; and
 - g. national and international examples of integrated service models for children and young people with mental health needs which deliver evidence-based, outcomes focused treatments and interventions, including local models across statutory and voluntary sectors such as Youth Information, Advisory and Counselling Services and Headspace.

2. The Taskforce will establish how improvements can be achieved. It will consider what barriers prevent change and how these can be overcome within existing budgets, and will identify the national and local levers and opportunities which will enable system leaders to drive through change, including consideration of:

- a. Opportunities for generating local ownership of data quality through a national framework, so that local areas can identify progress (both in terms of prevalence as well as effectiveness of services) that can inform commissioning priorities and service delivery models;
- b. barriers to integrated working across the sectors and between different parts of the care pathway, including gathering evidence of models of emerging practice in integrated care, and considering actions which can be taken to enable change at national, regional and local levels;
- c. the most effective way in which services should be commissioned for children and young people with mental health problems both in terms of the model of delivery and the model of commissioning;
- d. the levers and opportunities to embed these services and commissioning models across the system in innovative, cost-effective, affordable ways e.g. through collaborative commissioning, use of personal health budgets, choice;
- e. the optimum means of payment for services that will increase accountability and incentivise improved outcomes;
- f. ways in which referral processes and thresholds could be improved to ensure that children and young people are referred to the appropriate service to meet their needs;
- g. ways in which parents can be supported, and involved in their child's support, through a whole family approach;
- h. barriers and opportunities for empowerment of the children and young people's workforce and training provision to develop high-quality services; and
- i. barriers to access experienced by specific vulnerable groups of children and young people with specific mental health problems, and ways in which to improve equity in access to services.

3. The Taskforce will establish ways in which to improve the perception of services, address stigma as a barrier to access and promote alternative approaches to current models of care which may focus on medical interventions, through consideration of:

- i. re-branding;
- ii. the more effective use of digital services;
- iii. a one-stop-shop service which provides wide-ranging support for young people including mental health to which young people can self-refer.

- 4. The Taskforce will establish how progress will be measured and assured, through consideration of:**
- a. quality standards which are applied for services and commissioning process; how well these are recognised and understood and opportunities to promote or clarify quality measures;
 - b. the sharing of existing information, knowledge and data to facilitate the commissioning and provision of services for children and young people with mental health problems;
 - c. the development of new datasets, including providing advice on the new prevalence survey.