

## **HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 21 SEPTEMBER 2021**

### **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN WORCESTERSHIRE**

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#### **Summary**

1. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) has requested an overview of how Mental Health Services in Worcestershire are configured and operate and the current challenges being faced, particularly as services recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. It is envisaged that following the initial overview, the Committee will be able to determine the areas for further in-depth Scrutiny.
3. Senior representatives will be present from Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust and NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group and Worcestershire County Council.

#### **Background**

4. Mental Health Services in Worcestershire are the responsibility of both health and social care.
5. The Mental Health Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire sets out the ambitions to support and treat people with mental health issues over the next 5 years, in terms of delivering the national strategy in a way that works for the area, as well as identifying local priorities to meet the specific needs based on feedback from stakeholders.
6. The Strategy is informed by what people have said ~~told us~~ about their experiences either as a person who has experienced mental health illness, a carer of someone with a mental health illness, or a member of staff working with people experiencing mental health illness. The Strategy is being presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 28 September for approval.
7. COVID-19 has had, and will continue to have, a major impact on peoples' mental health and wellbeing, and on the way Mental Health Services are delivered. In the short term many Mental Health Services saw a dramatic reduction in referrals, meaning fewer people are receiving the care that they require, though these have largely now returned to normal levels. Conversely there was also increased demand for some services, as a result of the increased stresses brought about by the pandemic and subsequent lockdown.
8. The scale of the longer-term negative impacts of the pandemic on mental health and wellbeing, both direct and indirect, remains unclear. They are expected to be significant, however. Issues such as anxiety and depression are expected to become more prevalent, particularly as negative economic effects impact on employment; trauma caused directly by treatment for COVID in Intensive Care Units is also a risk,

and it is also being reported that people presenting to services are experiencing a greater acuity of symptoms, suggesting that people are not accessing services as early as previously.

9. While Mental Health Services in Worcestershire remained largely operational during the first wave of the pandemic, in contrast to many elective physical health services, many have begun to routinely utilise digital solutions such as appointments by phone or videoconference. An acute mental health ward that was closed to accommodate COVID-positive patients, with staff redeployed to deliver intensive community treatment instead, is proving a success. Estates strategies are being revisited off the back of a more flexible, mobile workforce than ever before, and public awareness of mental health and wellbeing continues to grow.

10. The local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector has provided wide-ranging and invaluable support, including closer integration with statutory services, and continues to buck the trend around workforce challenges.

11. While there remain challenging times to come as a result of COVID-19, it is important that we take advantage of and retain the major positive changes that have been made to how services are delivered wherever possible.

12. The presentation slides at Appendix 1 summarise the main points of the report and provide further detail on the national and local picture as well as the impact of COVID-19 on referrals, related activity, risks and challenges, future development and opportunities.

## **Provision in Worcestershire**

### Mental Health Social Work team

13. The Mental Health Social Work team works with people aged 18yrs+ who appear to have social care needs arising from a mental disorder. The team provides support and advice for people through an initial conversation and where we identify Care Act 2014 eligible social care needs and/or eligible aftercare needs under s117 of the MH Act 1983, then support planning is undertaken with the resident to ensure they are able to live a meaningful life as defined by them.

14. Referrals to Mental Health Social care can be made via professionals, family or the person themselves via the Adult Contact centre [Contact the adult social care team | Worcestershire County Council](#).

15. In Worcestershire, the Three Conversation approach is used. This is a strength-based model of social work to ensure that independence is promoted at the earliest opportunities and people are connected to resources in the local community to enable them to lead high quality, meaningful lives. A key principle of the model is to have an initial conversation straight away, avoiding any waiting lists.

### Worcestershire County Council AMHP service

16. Worcestershire County Council AMHP service (Approved Mental Health Professionals) are approved under the Mental Health Act to assess people who

require hospital admission for assessment or treatment in a psychiatric hospital and are resistive or lack the capacity to consent to this.

17. The AMHP service coordinate assessments under the legal framework of the Mental Health Act 1983 and have a statutory role and responsibility under the Act. This Service is 24/7 365 days a year and can be accessed via 01905 846877 by professionals (GP or MH professionals) or Nearest Relatives as defined by the Mental Health Act.

18. Mental Health Services are provided through a pathway approach. These are primary care services, secondary care services which provide more specialised care for people with moderate to severe mental health needs, and acute pathway for those who need an urgent response to their mental health needs and specialist services.

### Services for Children and Young People

19. Services for Children and Young People also provide support to schools for pupils experiencing or at risk of mental health difficulties.

20. Primary care and educational support services include Reach4Wellbeing for children with anxiety, low mood and low-level depression. In addition, children can access online support through the Kooth platform. The Consultation, Advice, Support and Training (CAST) service supports educational professionals who are working with children experiencing mental health difficulties

21. Worcestershire is also implementing Mental Health Support Teams in Schools, with the first services becoming operational from November this year, when the new workforce of Education Mental Health Practitioners completes their training. Further training is being funded by NHS England to expand the service to approx. 50% of schools by March 2024.

22. Secondary care and specialist services are provided through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This provides a multi-disciplinary approach of therapeutic intervention and treatment for young people with complex and enduring emotional and mental health disorders. More specialist provision is the Children's Eating Disorder Service, the Integrated Service for Looked After Children and Early Intervention in Psychosis Service for young people experiencing their first episode of psychosis.

23. Children who have urgent MH needs are supported through the CAMHS Plus service which provides intensive support in the community for those who may at risk of admission or to support their discharge from a hospital bed into the community. CAMHS also support the adult crisis services including liaison for the Acute Hospitals should a child attend A&E or be admitted with MH needs.

### Services for Adults

24. Services for Adults can be described along similar pathways. Services for primary care include Healthy Minds providing psychological therapies for people with mild to moderate mental health issues and the new Neighbourhood MH Teams, an

integrated service working within GP practices to support people with more serious and long-term mental health problems.

25. Adults with urgent care needs are supported by the Crisis Resolution Team or the MH Liaison Team if they attend the A&E departments of are admitted to the Alexandra General or Worcestershire Acute Hospitals.

26. If adults need intensive assessment or treatment due to a period of mental ill health this can be provided by the Home Treatment Team or by admission to the Mental Health Wards in Worcester and Redditch, with the most unwell people being supported in the Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit in Worcester. Those who need a period of rehabilitation prior to returning to the community are supported by the two community recovery units, one in Bromsgrove and one in Worcester. These services enable Worcestershire to provide care within the county with very little need to access acute beds outside the county due to lack of local bed availability.

27. A number of specialist services are provided for people with Eating Disorders, Complex Emotional Needs, Employment and reablement services for those recovering from episodes of severe mental ill health and the Perinatal Service that supports women with complex mental health needs and their partners through the perinatal period.

28. Services are provided on the basis of the presenting needs of the patient, rather than age. Older Adult Services will support those older people with MH needs where there are often physical health needs or frailty. The provision is for all MH diagnoses including dementia.

#### Older Adult Community Mental Health Team

29. The Older Adult Community MH Team works across primary and secondary care providing interventions and support for older people with complex and enduring MH needs. The Healthy Minds Service described in point 23 will support people aged 16 and above.

30. The pathway for people living with dementia starts with the Memory Clinic who provide the clinical diagnosis, followed by support from the Dementia Assessment and Support Team and the Admiral Nursing Service.

31. Older People with more urgent need are supported through the Crisis Resolution and MH Liaison Teams described in point 24 above. Ward based assessment and treatment is provided through the Newhaven unit in Bromsgrove and the newly developed Hospital at Home Team provide an alternate to admission where appropriate, enabling the patient to remain at home.

32. The NHS Long Term Plan sets out the developments to be funded through ring-fenced MH Investment Standard money up to 2023-24. This requires investment to expand services to improve access and outcomes for the population to meet the nationally set ambition.

## Impact of COVID

33. As previously mentioned Mental Health Services in Worcestershire remained largely operational during the first wave of the pandemic, many have begun to routinely utilise digital solutions such as appointments by phone or videoconference

34. NHS England required all areas to provide a mental health help line available 24/7 and 365 days per year. Worcestershire was able to expand the existing provision utilising staff who were working from home or required to isolate. Whilst initial demand was high, very few people needed ongoing clinical support. The expanded Here2Help offer provided by Worcestershire County Council is able to support those non-clinical needs.

35. During the early stages of the pandemic demand for primary mental health care services reduced, possibly linked to reduced access to GP Practices.

36. The following table shows the demand in terms of number of referrals received by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust and Worcestershire County Council in the month immediately prior to the first lockdown compared to July this year. This shows a snapshot comparing two months data for the services described in this report.

	Pre COVID January 2020	Post COVID July 2021
Healthy Minds	1579	985
Crisis Resolution Teams	614	1387
Home Treatment Team	171	143
MH Liaison	320	287
Early Intervention in Psychosis	13	13
Eating Disorder Service	13	29
Peri-Natal Service	58	63
Neighbourhood MH Teams	88	278
Employment and reablement Service	90	53
Older Adult Services	305	641
CAMHS and CYP Eating Disorders	296	319
WCC MH Social Work Team	31	42
Mental Health Act Assessments	68	71

## Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – presentation slides

## **Purpose of the Meeting**

37. Members are invited to consider and comment on the information discussed and agree:

- whether any further information is required
- whether any further scrutiny work is required at this stage.

## **Contact Point**

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## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report: