

Terms of Reference for Multi-Agency Case Audit on Understanding Children and Young People's Mental Health needs in Torbay

1. Background

The TSCP has identified children and young people's mental health as one of its priorities, seeking to ensure that:

Children in Torbay receive appropriate mental health support at the time of their need and that this support dovetails with any other care planning needs of the child.

Across the United Kingdom, the number of children and young people experiencing mental health problems is growing. Mental health services are expanding, but not fast enough to meet rising needs, leaving many children and young people with limited or no support. Too little is known about who receives care, and crucially, who doesn't.¹

National statistics tell us:

- 1 in 5 children and young people aged 8 to 25 years had a probable mental disorder.²
- The number of A&E attendances by young people aged 18 or under with a recorded diagnosis of a psychiatric condition more than tripled between 2010 and 2018 – 19.³
- 83% of young people with mental health needs agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse.⁴
- Just over one in three children and young people with a diagnosable mental health condition get access to NHS care and treatment.⁵

¹ Grimm F, Alcock B, Butler J, Fernandez Crespo R, Davies A, Peytrignet S, Piroddi R, Thorlby R, Tallack C. Improving children and young people's mental health services: Local data insights from England, Scotland, and Wales. The Health Foundation; 2022 (<https://doi.org/10.37829/HF-2022-NDL1>).

² [Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2023 - wave 4 follow up to the 2017 survey - NHS Digital](#)

³ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/children-mental-health-hospital-suicide-nhs-ae-a9255626.html>

⁴ <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/media/355gyqcd/coronavirus-report-summer-2020-final.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/nhs-mental-health-dashboard/>

- In a YoungMinds commissioned survey, three quarters (76%) of parents said that their child's mental health had deteriorated while waiting for support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).⁶

NHS Digital report that the Southwest has the 2nd highest regional rate of mental health need for children and young people nationally. In the Southwest region children and young people have higher levels of Special Educational Needs (SEN) including Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. (SEMH)

2. Key Lines of Enquiry

The TSCP Executive have set the following key lines of enquiry to be explored within this Multi-Agency Case Audit (MACA):

1. Pathways available and effectiveness of services aligned to children and young people's services whose emotional health and wellbeing needs fall within the 'Getting Help and Getting More Help' needs base quadrants. This will not include those who are in receipt of specialist mental health response/intervention.
2. Pathways available and effectiveness of services available for young people in school years 9 – 11 who are educated at home due to increased 'school anxiety' and/or mental health concerns.
3. Impact of waiting times for assessments of autism and ASD, how are children and young people waiting for assessments and experiencing EWMH issues supported?
4. Understanding timeliness of assessments and support pathways, and whether there are any locality differences across Torbay.

3. Methodology

This MACA will provide an audit tool for practitioners to use to undertake a deep dive into their individual case records on identified children and young people. Pulling together the learning from a range of practitioners working with those children and young people will provide the TSCP with an overview of the effectiveness of frontline practice and partnership working in identification and meeting the needs of children and young people who are experiencing poor emotional wellbeing and poor mental health.

To meet the requirements laid out in the key lines of enquiry, the TSCP Quality Assurance Group will seek support from the MHST (mental health support teams in schools), Vulnerable Pupils Team, SEND, the virtual school and Early Help to identify a group of children and young people in the following cohort:

⁶ <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/media/5dilibjw/a-new-era-for-young-peoples-mental-health.pdf>

- Those experiencing emotional wellbeing and mental health issues and do not meet threshold for core CAMHS intervention,

The TSCP Quality Assurance Group will further seek support from CFHD CAMHS/Torbay Hospital Paediatric Ward to identify a group of children and young people in the following cohort:

- Those who have been discharged from a CAMHS intervention in the last 6 months

When selecting these cases, Partners should be mindful of the additional areas of learning identified in Section 4 and use their professional judgement to consider families who will engage.

The timeframe for children and young people chosen would be those that fall within the above categories from 01st September 2023 to 30th April 2024.

Where possible every effort will be made to ensure that all protected characteristics are represented within this cohort of children and young people.

4. Additional areas of learning

Through adopting this methodology, it is anticipated that additional areas of learning will be captured for children and young people experiencing emotional wellbeing and mental health issues and:

- Are educated at home,
- Are living with the impact of parental disharmony attributed to domestic abuse, parental ill mental health, substance misuse and/or the cost of living crisis,
- Are awaiting an assessment for ASD and /or autism,
- Have special educational needs.

Furthermore, if there are any locality differences across the Bay in relation to pathways and interventions available, they may well be identified as a result of the work undertaken above, though given the small numbers may not be viewed as representative.

5. Professional engagement in the audit of cases

To ensure that the key lines of enquiry are effectively considered, and to support robust analysis of the cases, there should be contribution from the following partners where involved:

- Health (GPs, 0 – 19 service Public Health & Checkpoint, CAMHS (Core CAMHS/Primary Mental Health in schools/Crisis team), Emergency Department, Child Health, SWAST, CFHD Autism Service & Paediatric lead)
- Children's Social Care (Early Help, FGC, IRO)

- Police
- Education and School Services (Pastoral Leads, Vulnerable Pupils Team, Alternative Provisions, Medical Tuition Service, SEND)
- Youth Justice Service
- Voluntary Sector (Kooth, Standing Tall, Imagine This Partnership)

6. Consent:

MACA's are an established multi-agency aspect of learning from practice across the TSCP, with the associated process and ethos being agreed by the TSCP Executive on behalf of all local safeguarding partners. Informed consent, where appropriate, is gained during the MACA but as all reports and subsequent learning is fully anonymised, the identity of children and families is protected throughout the process. If you wish to discuss any elements of the MACA process further, please contact Neil Cotton, TSCP Business Manager, via email at neil.cotton@torbay.gov.uk