

REVIEW BY THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE - REVIEW OF THE CAMHS REFERRAL PATHWAY

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Jane Palmer
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care
Officer Contact(s)	Nikki O'Halloran, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Health and Social Care Select Committee's review of the 'CAMHS Referral Pathway'

HEADLINES

Summary	To receive the Health and Social Care Select Committee review into the 'CAMHS Referral Pathway' (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). To give consideration to the recommendations of the review.
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Live active and healthy lives This report supports our commitments to residents of: Thriving, Healthy Households Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy
Financial Cost	The recommendations proposed as a result of this review do not in themselves have a direct financial impact on Council finances.
Relevant Select Committee	Health and Social Care Select Committee
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet welcomes the review by the Health and Social Care Select Committee and acknowledges, appreciates and recognises the work that is already being undertaken across the Borough to improve services in Hillingdon to support children's mental health. Furthermore, Cabinet agrees the recommendations made by the Select Committee set out below to be referred to the relevant body:

SELECT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Cabinet ask the North West London Integrated Care Board (NWL ICB) to:
 - a) provide a comprehensive action plan by 28 March 2024 detailing how and when the Thrive mapping strategy will be completed;
 - b) complete and implement the Thrive mapping strategy by the end of January 2025;
 - c) provide Hillingdon's Health and Social Care Select Committee with 6-monthly updates on the progress being made on implementing this action plan;
 - d) initiate a "No Wrong Door" policy for parents / children and young people who seek support;
 - e) ensure that all children and young people's services in Hillingdon are asked to adopt the Thrive philosophy/model to ensure there is "No Wrong Door" for children, young people and their families to access mental health and emotional wellbeing support, and that support is provided based on children and young people's needs and preferences; and
 - f) consider how parents can be offered early support on how to navigate the system including the provision of information about where to get this support to schools and GPs (as they are often the first place parents go to).

2. That Cabinet ask that the Health and Wellbeing Board ensure that all commissioners of CYP mental health services are asked to include requirements in their service provider contracts that:
 - a) parents be given a realistic description of the assessment / treatment process, including estimated timelines and information on where they can direct their feedback if the expectations set are not met; and
 - b) all communications sent to parents be reviewed to make sure that the information and tone is sensitive to their situation, not overly medicalised and contains accurate information on other places they can look for support.

3. That the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care asks CAMHS to develop a service-user involvement strategy that provides opportunities for scrutiny and coproduction of services and includes the formation of a parents/Young People Board so that they can hold the organisation to account for the communications and service they provide.

Reasons for recommendations

To consider the report of the Health and Social Care Select Committee's review into the 'CAMHS Referral Pathway'.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject some, or all, of the Select Committee's recommendations or pursue alternative routes by which to progress the objectives of the review.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Children's mental health services have been a matter of concern for scrutiny Members for some time and this has been exacerbated by the increasing number of children and young people experiencing mental ill health as a result of the pandemic. At its meeting on 12 October 2022, the Council's Health and Social Care Select Committee received an information report and heard from witnesses in relation to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). In light of the evidence received, it was agreed that the Committee would undertake a review of the CAMHS referral pathway in the Borough. The Select Committee has now concluded its review and a report, supported by three recommendations, was endorsed by the Committee at its meeting on 23 January 2024 for submission to Cabinet.

Members discovered that, between April and June 2021, 190,271 individuals aged 0-18 years were referred to children and young people's mental health services. This was an increase of 134% on the same period in the previous year (81,170) and a 96% increase on 2019 figures (97,342). The average waiting time for children and young people to access mental health services ranges from 8 to 82 days (almost 12 weeks). In 2019, specialist services were turning away one in four of the children referred to them for treatment. Around 75% of young people experiencing a mental health problem were unable to access any treatment at all or were forced to wait so long that their condition got worse.

The review heard from key witnesses and considered how partners could work together to help improve access to the mental health support that was needed by children and young people in the Borough.

The following Terms of Reference were agreed by the Select Committee from the outset of the review:

1. to gain a thorough understanding of how children and young people are referred to CAMHS and the associated timescales;
2. to scrutinise the referral pathway and review its effectiveness;
3. to review the current availability of alternative support and how these options are communicated to children, young people and their families;
4. to explore the effectiveness of the different agencies in communicating with each other as well as the effectiveness of their communication with the child, young person and their family on their journey to assessment and treatment; and
5. subject to the Committee's findings, to make any conclusions, propose actions and make service and policy recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet.

Through a range of informal information gathering sessions and formal witness sessions (as outlined in the report), the Select Committee sought to gain an understanding of the nature and extent of the action that was being taken in the Borough to enable children and young people to access services to support their mental health. Considering all factors, the Select Committee has made recommendations to build on the positive work already being undertaken by partners and to ensure that there is oversight of the progress made.

Financial Implications

The recommendations resulting from this review will not require any additional resources.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

The recommendations will help to improve awareness of oral health and ensure that interventions continue to be in place to support this.

Consultation carried out or required

The Select Committee sought a wide range of external witness testimony as set out in its report.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report, noting that there would be no direct financial implications of the Select Committee's recommendations in respect of processes and joint working with partner organisations.

Legal

Legal Services confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.