

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 04 March 2021

Report Title: Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for Adults in Cheshire East during COVID-19

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Laura Jeuda – Adult Social Care and Health

Senior Officer: Nichola Thompson – Director of Commissioning

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is affecting all our lives. Recent findings from the Office for National Statistics Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (February 2021) showed that personal wellbeing is currently at its lowest levels since the pandemic began.
- 1.2 Recent national health study papers contain emerging evidence from previous studies carried out into pandemics and social isolation quarantine that point to increased demand for adults mental health services. A survey by Rethink Mental Illness stated that 42% of adults felt their mental health had got worse during the pandemic because they are getting less support from services. Added to this is the fact that it has become more difficult to access healthcare services, which in turn affects both people's physical and mental health.
- 1.3 Mental health services have faced many potential pandemic-related challenges, including staff absences, which have limited face-to-face contact and encouraging people with high levels of distress or cognitive impairment to adhere to COVID-19 procedures. Also, the pandemic has exacerbated existing socio-economic disadvantages, healthcare inequalities and traumas experienced by people with mental health problems.
- 1.4 This report summarises the approach taken across the Council and its partners to support adults mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.5 It is just as important in a time of crisis that our actions to support adults are steered directly and indirectly by their feedback. Every attempt has been made to

maintain links with adults and their carers during the current pandemic in order to shape our emotional and mental health support appropriately.

- 1.6 A strong Council officer and health partner presence has been maintained at the Cheshire East Mental Health Partnership Board and mental health concerns have been raised, listened to and acted upon. Our teams across Adult Social Care and Health are constantly mindful throughout the pandemic of the priority to identify and support people's mental health.

2. Recommendations

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the content of this update report.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To keep all interested parties up to date on the steps being taken to support adults' mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other Options Considered

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5. Background

5.1 The following sections detail the main areas where Cheshire East Council and its health partners Cheshire CCG and Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) NHS Foundation Trust commission and deliver services that support mental health and wellbeing. It also details where the services have strengthened and adapted their support in response to COVID-19 putting an added strain on adults' mental health and wellbeing.

NHS Services

24/7 Mental Health Phone Line

A 24/7 All Age Mental Health Phone Line is now fully established and has taken 36,000 calls since its launch in April 2020. The phone line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is open to people of all ages, including children and young people. The phone line is now the first port of call for mental health help.

The majority (95%) of calls have been from adults and 60% of calls have been from females. In terms of the location 70% have been from Cheshire and 30% from Wirral.

The main reasons for calls have been related to low mood, individuals struggling with thoughts and anxiety and depression. 75% of the people are already known to CWP. 70% of callers have been given advice and signposting, 5% urgent calls, 5% referred to Home Treatment Team, 5% of calls referred to third sector. Arrangements in place

with some of the third sector with regards to referring on from crisis line to community connectors (e.g. Healthbox)

Integrated Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Services

IAPT services are located within Cheshire East in Crewe (Central Cheshire Wellbeing Hub) and Macclesfield (Talking Therapies). The IAPT service in Eastern Cheshire is provided by Big Life. These services support patients with common mental health problems in the community and acts as a resource for GPs and other community services.

The services provide assessment and treatment which can include guided self-help, group work, individual therapy and signposting. They also refer on to other appropriate services as required. This includes secondary care/specialist mental health services, community services and third sector services.

The service is meeting the IAPT referral to treatment time and recovery standards including a 50% IAPT recovery rate; 75% of people accessing treatment within 6 weeks IAPT waiting time and 95% of people accessing treatment within 18 weeks IAPT waiting time.

Although IAPT services have remained open, the impact of Covid-19 has meant that the majority of consultations are now carried out remotely, requiring increased use of digital software with face to face contact remaining for those most in need who requiring it, using a risk stratification process. Waiting times have significantly reduced through COVID as a result of greater efficiency offered by opening up digital sessions. IAPT remains a key part of the recovery phase for COVID 19, surge planning to support bereavement trauma and staff with PTSD. Additionally we anticipate an upsurge in depression and anxiety in the general population resulting from the prolonged lockdown and impact of social isolation/pressures.

Open Minded – Early Intervention Psychosis (EIP) Team

Individuals with psychosis are some of the most vulnerable members of society requiring care to support recovery, prevent relapse and lead fulfilling lives.

The service works to develop a care plan, mapping the actions that we agree need to be taken to support the individual. This can include a broad range of interventions or treatments that have been proven to work and are aimed at reducing the distress caused by psychotic symptoms and speeding up the process of recovery.

Due to social distancing guidance, care and support to some people on EIP caseloads cannot be provided face to face for the immediate future. The service is using a RAG prioritisation system with those most depots, vulnerable, complex presentations, being seen in person, where possible at a resource centre, to support appropriate social distancing and use of PPE. Amber and green rated clients are managed via video or telephone conference.

CORE 24

The CCG were successful in a proposal to provide a CORE 24 liaison services at Leighton Hospital, Cheshire CCG have successfully secured funding to expand liaison services in Macclesfield and Chester from April 2021. The bed base at Macclesfield is smaller than Mid Cheshire and accordingly does will not have a CORE 24 approach, but will benefit from an expansion of the workforce and will mean that 24/7 liaison services will be available on site.

Liaison psychiatry input has continued through this period, with telephone assessments being undertaken on the wards. Recruitment has begun in order to commence with CORE 24, a consultant started with the team recently with interviews for psychology support underway as well as for appointment of the clinical lead.

The service will now be looking to work with providers and partners to identify plans for reset and reduction in admission and length of stay.

Involvement, Recovery and Wellness Centre (IRWC)

The IRWC provides individual assistance with involvement and volunteering opportunities within the centres and wider public, as well as the facilitation of one to one and group educational sessions to aid feelings of wellbeing, recovery, independence and control.

All the workshops facilitated within the centres (Macclesfield) follow an adult education model and aim to deliver a curriculum which contains responsive recovery focused workshops. The workshops, and workbooks, where possible have been co-produced and co-delivered by people who have lived experience of mental and physical health conditions together with partnerships within CWP and the local community.

Community Mental Health Crisis Beds

There are currently 4 short stay community beds within Cheshire East for people who require acute mental health care which are supported by the CWP Home Treatment Team (HTT).

The beds provide an alternative to a psychiatric inpatient admission for people who would meet the criteria for hospital admission or have deterioration in their mental health that this could prevent admission. By utilising a less restrictive option of staying in a community short stay bed, alongside beneficial interventions from the home treatment team; individuals are supported to a positive resolution of their current mental ill health..

The impact of COVID 19 has resulted in reduced admissions into the beds and occupancy levels over the last twelve months. A review is currently taking place regarding the future development of the beds, with the potential to incorporate a safe

community drop in space as part of the service model for people struggling with emotional and psychological distress, similar to Number 71 in Chester.

Cheshire East Council

Mental Health Service

Social workers form an integral part of the community mental health teams which comprise of Psychiatrists, Community Psychiatric Nurses (CPN's) Occupational Therapists (OT's), and Psychologists. All these professional groups, apart from social workers, are employed by CWP.

Social workers undertake a number of functions within the service, the most important being assessments under the Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA) which are undertaken by Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs). Other functions include safeguarding investigations, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), Adult Needs Assessments under the Care Act (2014) and the provision of emotional and practical support of vulnerable adults in the community as part of the wider community mental health offer.

The service has continued through the pandemic to provide a face to face assessment when assessing people under the Mental Health Act (MHA) by Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs). Assessments under the MHA can take place either in a hospital environment or in the community, such as a person's own home.

Since September 2020, the social workers have been physically present in the community mental health teams to undertake office duty. Prior to this, duty was conducted remotely with the exception of urgent face-to-face visits or assessments conducted jointly with health colleagues.

Independent Sector Mental Health Provision

All our commissioned services are purchased through the Complex Care Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) Framework, The Complex Care DPS went live in December 2018 and contains 51 providers who support people with mental health support needs. The aim of the DPS is to support Service Users with complex mental health needs to maintain a safe place to live, whilst enabling them to recover, sustain recovery, be socially included and to gain, regain or maintain independent living skills.

The council commissions a range of mental health provision which is personalised and provides intensive support based around individual need to address complex issues and behaviours. Services include supported living, outreach, care at home and day opportunities.

These services are focused on helping individuals with mental health support needs achieve specific personal outcomes in aiding individuals to be able to manage their affairs such as personal finances, being a good tenant and ability to access and

maintain relationships with support services. Individuals are supported to be able to support themselves to return to live within their community and to be able to maintain their independence.

Mental Health Reablement

The service provides up to six weeks support for adults with mental health support needs and follows a Reablement Model. This may include advice to appropriate support services, debt management, housing issues, education, employment and leisure activities.

The support focuses on coping techniques and a self-help approach, promoting social inclusion, building self-esteem and goal setting. The service is available during weekdays and is flexible so support can also be provided during the early evening. Referrals come directly to the service from mostly health services such as GP, A&E, Hospital Wards and Mental Health Teams.

In terms of the impact of COVID 19, the service has been providing interventions in people's houses with staff wearing PPE, also encouraging people to go out for short walks, as some people aren't leaving their home for weeks. The Impact of onward referrals due to some groups closing due to lockdown still means that some service users are staying with service longer.

During the current lockdown referrals into the service have been around 150 a month across East Cheshire but are expected to increase once restrictions are lifted.

Mental Health Floating Support

This service provides short term interventions (up to 6 months) for adults with mental health support needs. This service focuses on early intervention and prevention, supporting the development of innovative solutions to best meet the needs of people with mental health support needs and aims to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and their families.

Direct referrals into the service are mainly from the Mental Health Reablement Teams but can also be accepted from Community Mental Health Teams and other Social Work Teams (where mental health is identified as the primary need).

The service has been effective in ensuring that 81% of people who access floating support, no longer require an ongoing support package from social services once they are discharged from the floating support service.

The service has been able to maintain support during the current pandemic with most calls taking place via video calls or telephone calls instead of face to face visits. Existing clients are continuing with services for longer due to current restrictions around COVID-19.

The impact of COVID-19 has seen referrals lower than usual and there are currently 0 people are on the waiting list. Post lockdown there could potentially be a surge in

referrals as people go back into the community and anxiety levels increase, factoring in the economic situation.

All Age Mental Health Partnership Board

This board was established in December 2019 to encourage greater partnership working across the borough to deliver against the strategic priorities identified within the All Age Mental Health Strategy and NHS Long Term Plan. The board is made up of members including those from health, social care, voluntary, community and faith sector and those with lived experience.

The board has been holding virtual meetings throughout the current pandemic and has now established 3 sub groups to focus on the priority areas around crisis, early intervention and prevention.

Further information including minutes of the meetings can be found at on the [Cheshire East Council website](#). A dedicated online [COVID-19 Mental Health Information Point](#) has also been set up, which contains a range of resources including self help techniques and information and advice.

A joint Cheshire wide partnership board meeting is also being held on 5 March 2021, with a focus on refreshing the Cheshire Mental Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

Cheshire Advocacy Hub

Cheshire Advocacy Hub provides free, independent and confidential advocacy services for a range of individuals including those with mental health support needs.

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) is available to people aged 18 and over who are subject to the Mental Health Act. For example when someone is detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act, independent advocates can offer help and support.

If someone is considered not to have capacity to make important decisions concerning serious medical treatment, changes to accommodation, adult protection issues and some care reviews. It is still important for their views and wishes to be heard, especially if they have no family or friends who are appropriate to support them. Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMCA) is available to people aged 16 and over who have been assessed as lacking capacity and have no appropriate family or friends to support them.

People Helping People

The People Helping People service commenced on the 20th March 2020 and has provided a lifeline for over 4,000 people who are Non-Shielding Vulnerable People (NSVP). In addition to this around 10% of the 20,000 Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people across the borough have also been supported.

Around 90% of the presenting issue was food or task related but during many of those welfare contacts a deterioration of mental health became apparent mainly linked to bereavement, digital exclusion and social isolation often presenting in people living alone. The service offered support through volunteers and by funding through the COVID Response and Recovery Fund to ensure those that require support have a route for help and the available resource to link in with. There is a correlation of identified low level mental health identified issues and introduction of national lockdowns.

Cheshire East Substance Misuse Service – Change Grow Live (CGL)

This service provides confidential information, advice and counselling and works with individuals who want to change their lives for the better and achieve positive and life affirming goals.

The service is delivered collaboratively with a range of providers including Change Grow Live (CGL), Emerging Futures and Recovery Works to provide a wider offer for service users and their families. The recovery teams are based across the Cheshire East and include doctors, recovery coordinators, nurses, recovery champions, peer mentors and volunteers. The service is available for the residents Cheshire East and is an all age service is available for both young people and adults.

During the current pandemic the service is increasing the alcohol team capacity to meet the increased demand for alcohol referrals (183 to 239 this last quarter) and the number of referrals from hospital has doubled over the last 12 months. Drug referrals have also increase especially those from GP's and from the hospital.

CGL have adapted there offer to a blended approach of virtual and face to face support. They offer a 24 hour advice and information phone line, safe storage and also family support for family members caring for the with substance misuse. CGL have also provided storage boxes for medication and on them were details of how to access mental health support during the pandemic. They have also worked close with housing to support people to access safe housing in hotels.

Priorities for the service moving forward will remain community recovery focused, early help, prevention and education within our communities. Areas to focus on are Alcohol, partnership approach with Mental Health, developing pathways with hospitals, housing, criminal justice, and prevention and education for children and young people.

HealthBox

The floating support and reablement services has started working closely in partnership around onward referrals with Healthbox (Community Connectors Service). This service offers support and guidance on a number of issues: Social Isolation, Debt Advice, Benefits advice, Housing support, Signposting, Advocacy, Mental Health and Well Being, offering a holistic and one stop approach.

Other grant opportunities and funding

Transformation Funding

There are two pots of mental health crisis care and liaison transformation funding in 2021/22, with programmes of work being led at Cheshire and Mersey level:

- Cheshire and Mersey have successfully bid to receive transformation funding to further enhance local crisis care alternatives service provision;
- All Strategic Transformation Partnerships/Integrated Care Systems are due to receive the first of three years' transformation funding to develop new and integrated models of primary and community mental health care (Community Mental Health Transformation) in 2021/22. A National planning process is underway which will set out expectations of local systems developing their transformation

COVID 19 Community Response and Recovery Fund

The Council's COVID-19 Community Response and Recovery Fund has ensured that a wide range of partners and in particular organisations from the voluntary and community sector have received small amounts of financial support to help adults manage the strains on emotional and mental health. Appendix 1 attached provides a summary of the projects that have been funded to date during the pandemic.

The Council and its partners will continue to be agile in support of adults mental health and wellbeing as the course of the pandemic continues to unfold.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1 Legal Implications

6.1.1. No legal implications

6.2 Finance Implications

6.2.1 No finance implications

6.3 Policy Implications

6.3.1 There are no policy implications to this report.

6.4 Equality Implications

6.4.1. There are no policy implications to this report.

6.5 Human Resources Implications

6.5.1 There are no human resource implications to this report

6.6 Risk Management Implications

6.6.1 There are no risk management implications

6.7 Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1 No rural communities' impacts are expected.

6.8 Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

6.8.1 It is clear that during a pandemic, such as COVID-19, the emotional and mental health of children and young people can start to deteriorate. The response of the Council and its key partners in adjusting and enhancing support to children and young people and their families during this unprecedented time is vital.

6.9 Public Health Implications

6.9.1 Supporting mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic is key to maintaining good public health outcomes.

6.10 Climate Change Implications

6.10.1 There are no direct implications for climate change.

7 Ward Members Affected

7.1 All wards

8 Consultation & Engagement

8.1 This is an update report for information.

9. Access to Information

9.1 Nothing at this point in the development.

10. Contact Information

10.1 Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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