



Surrey CVYS

**TITLE: Issues Paper: Young People and Mental Health & Wellbeing**

**MEETING: Connexions/ VCFS Forum , December 2008**

**REPORT BY: Mike Abbott**

**AGENDA ITEM: 4**

### **Introduction**

1. This is an issues Paper aimed at generating discussion in the Forum about young people and mental health issues. Depending on the views of the Forum it may then be appropriate to write up a report to the Surrey C&YP Commissioning Partnership.

### **National Policy**

2. Policy is embedded in the five ECM outcomes. More particularly the National Service Framework<sup>1</sup> sets standards for the mental health needs of children and young people, namely that:

#### **Standard:**

*All children and young people, from birth to their eighteenth birthday, who have mental health problems and disorders have access to timely, integrated, high quality, multi-disciplinary mental health services to ensure effective assessment, treatment and support, for them and their families.*

3. The report suggests that 10% of young people aged 4-15 will have a mental health disorder, and that around 40% of those will not be in receipt of specialist advice. So, according to the report there was a substantial gap in provision.

4. The report then points out that the task of supporting children and young people is not just a responsibility of CAMHS, but of other community based organisations. CAMHS commissioning and planning follows a familiar model:

#### ***The Four Tier CAMHS Framework***

*Tier 1: A primary level of care.*

*Tier 2: A service provided by specialist individual professionals relating to workers in primary care.*

*Tier 3: A specialised multi-disciplinary service for more severe, complex or persistent disorders.*

*Tier 4: Essential tertiary level services such as day units, highly specialised out-patient teams and in-patient units.*

Regional Public health Group (SE)

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<sup>1</sup> NSF "Child and adolescent mental Health- NSF for Children , Young People and Maternity services" – DES and DH, Sept 2004,

5. The Regional Public Health Group for the SE, led by GOSE has published an excellent factsheet report <sup>2</sup> on mental health issues in the SE. It points to the well known UNICEF study that children's sense of well-being in the UK is the lowest amongst 21 countries. It states that on average some 10 % of young people will suffer from a disorder at some point in their childhood or youth. Specifically it points out that the definition of mental health problems embraces:

- Conduct Disorders: 6% of 5-16 year olds will have conduct (behavioural) disorders
- Emotional Disorders: applies to 4% of those aged 5-16
- Hyperkinetic Disorders: applies to 2% of those aged 5-16 and includes ADHD and ADD
- Less Common Disorders : affect a further 1% and in this category are included autistic spectrum disorders including Asperger's Syndrome and eating disorders (anorexia and bulimia)

### **Risk Factors**

6. The report describes the risk factors as being:

- **Socio- economic:** child poverty increases the risk of mental health (15% of young people in low income households, as opposed to 5% at higher income levels)
- **Educational achievement** (15% where households have no qualifications as opposed to 5 % if educated to degree level)
- **Single parenthood**( 15% for single parent as opposed to 8% living with two parents)
- **Violence and abuse in the home**
- **Alcohol and drug misuse in the home.** (one third of suicides are linked to alcohol misuse)

### **What Works**

7. The protection factors to mitigate the worst effects are also well known:

- Good parenting
- Emotional literacy
- Prevention of violence and abuse
- Youth suicide prevention programmes
- Integration of substance misuse programmes with sexual health and mental health promotion
- Developing respectful relationships
- Early intervention

8. Earlier this year the Cabinet Office published a paper<sup>3</sup> on "Think Family" pointing to the need for a whole family approach to addressing the problems of children and young

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<sup>2</sup> "Children and Young people Promoting Emotional Health and well being"- DH NHS South central and South East Coast, June 2008

<sup>3</sup> "Think Family : Improving the life chances of families at risk" – Cabinet Office (Social Exclusion Task Force) , Jan 2008.

people at risk. It points in particular to the need to join up the provision of children and adults services. In this regard there has been a heavy criticism of authorities for putting young people into adult psychiatric wards. See for example "Out of the shadows"<sup>4</sup> which is the follow on to an earlier report that criticised the way in which young people were treated in adult wards. An extract from the latest report is attached as an Appendix.

9. The Government's response was:

### **"Revision of mental health guidance**

Children & Young People Now  
21 May 2008

**Children with severe mental health problems should "wherever possible" be treated by child specialists and no longer stay in adult wards, according to government guidance.**

The Mental Health Act's revised code of practice offers hospital managers advice on their forthcoming duty to provide children and young people with appropriate accommodation, which comes into force in April 2010. The advice also emphasises the importance of continued access to education for children.

Sarah Brennan, the new chief executive of YoungMinds, said: "What is essential now is to ensure the guidance is implemented so young people's experience of specialist units and treatment is a positive one.

"Further work is also needed to explore how to practically implement guidance such as ensuring children and young people have access to the same educational provision as their peers."

The revised code of practice will come into force on 3 November."

### **The Experience in Surrey**

10. In view of the consistency of national and regional statistics, it is surprising that there is relatively little information in the strategic assessment of children's needs<sup>5</sup> in Surrey about mental health, and indeed the report states:

*" A detailed assessment of the mental health needs of children in Surrey , including eating disorders is beyond the scope of this document"*

11. The apparent reliability of the national data would suggest that 10% of the around 127,000 young people aged 5-15 in Surrey will have some form of mental illness.

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<sup>4</sup> "Out of the Shadows?"- by 11 Million and Young Minds, October 2008

<sup>5</sup> "An assessment of Children's needs in Surrey" – Surrey NHS PCT , Dec. 2007 (p 48 – 50)

## **The Possible Issues**

**Issue 1:** To what extent do colleagues in the Forum have data about young people and mental health issues?

**Issue 2:** How easy is it to access supportive services for young people from CAHMS or other specialists within the Standard mentioned above? (Are supply and demand matched?)

**Issue 3:** Are any young people referred to adult wards ?

**Issue 3:** Given the clarity about risk and protection factors, how can the VCFS be involved in targeting young people at risk? How does this relate to a whole family approach?

**Issue 4:** Does the VCFS have a contribution to make in the provision of specialist services to young people/ How can these be funded?

**Issue 5:** Are there particular (and additional ) issues for young people in minority communities in relation to mental health issues?

## Executive summary

**“If you broke your leg or had pneumonia you would willingly go to hospital to get treated. If I suffered from a mental illness that needed treating I would not go back to hospital for the sheer fear of what would happen to me – let’s make this different for other young people.”** (Rachel, admitted to an adult ward when aged 16)

### Introduction

*Out of the Shadows?* has been written by 11 MILLION in collaboration with YoungMinds and representatives of VIK (Very Important Kids)<sup>1</sup>. Some members of VIK have direct experience of being admitted to adult psychiatric facilities and want to prevent this from happening to other children and young people in the future.

*Out of the Shadows?* provides an overview of the responses to the recommendations set out in *Pushed into the Shadows - young people’s experience of adult mental health facilities* (referred to in this report as *Pushed into the Shadows*), published by the Children’s Commissioner for England in January 2007. *Pushed into the Shadows*<sup>2</sup> described the experiences of children and young people<sup>2</sup> admitted on to adult psychiatric wards. It showed that, despite the national policy objectives that seek to end such practices, children and young people were still being admitted on to adult psychiatric wards, and that the level of care given to many of these young people was extremely poor.

Since the publication of *Pushed into the Shadows* in January 2007, the Government has made a commitment to end the inappropriate admission of **all** children and young people to adult wards by April 2010. This commitment is underpinned by section 31 of the Mental Health Act 2007 (the MHA 2007), which requires hospital managers to ensure that the environment of the hospital to which a young person to be admitted is suitable for that young person. While *Pushed into the Shadows’* recommendations predate section 31 of the MHA 2007, they underpin the work required to ensure compliance with this provision. It comes into force in April 2010 and will become section 131A of the Mental Health Act 1983 (the MHA 1983).

*Out of the Shadows?* seeks to identify the further action required to prevent future admissions of young people to adult psychiatric wards. It also aims to ensure that, where such admissions do occur, young people receive the care that they need in an environment in which they feel safe and supported.