

Wiltshire Council

Children Select Committee

6 June 2024

Mental Health Strategy Rapid Scrutiny – Interim Report

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the initial findings and recommendations of the rapid scrutiny undertaken on the draft Mental Health Strategy.

Background

2. In September 2023, Children Select Committee (CSC) and Health Select Committee (HSC) each received a progress report from BANES, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care Board (ICB) on the development of an all-age Mental Health Strategy.
3. Both committees endorsed carrying out a joint rapid scrutiny exercise with the intention of bringing together the specialist focus of each committee to support a cohesive response to the proposed strategy.

Terms of Reference

4. The aim of the rapid scrutiny was:
 - a) To review the development of the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy.
 - b) To review how the strategy addresses issues raised at the Health Select Committee Inquiry into demands on urgent care, July 2023
 - Access to CAHMS service (examples given of year long waiting lists)
 - Support for people falling between the thresholds of mild and severe mental health conditions, leading to people presenting with complex mental health problems.
 - Availability of appropriate rehabilitation and housing for people with complex mental health problems.
 - Reduction in community services able to provide the level of support needed.
 - c) To review the role of preventative measures in the strategy – considering the recommendations of the task group into Children and Young People’s Mental Health Service in 2018 which placed a strong emphasis on the need for partnership working to provide access to preventative work.

Membership

5. Cllr Jon Hubbard (Lead Member), Cllr Johnny Kidney, Cllr David Bowler, Cllr David Vigar, Cllr Anthony Pickernell (apologies sent)

Meeting

6. There has been one meeting where Georgina Ruddle, Associate Director Mental Health, BSW ICB, presented an overview of the strategy.

Summary of findings to date

Current status

7. The strategy provides data on population need, the scale of the challenge that the strategy needs to address and current delivery status.
8. The total population across the area covered by the BSW ICB is 980,000 people, approximately 100,000 have been diagnosed with dementia, depression or serious mental illness. Approximately 3,500 have more than one of these conditions and they estimate there will be many more people who haven't had an official diagnosis or may need mental health support but don't fit diagnostic categories.
9. There are a range of partners delivering contracted mental health services in Wiltshire, predominantly Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP), but also Oxford Health, Alabare, FearFree, Alzheimer's Support and Rethink.
10. In the BSW area 40% of schools and colleges are covered by specialist mental health support teams. In December 2023 the number of young people accessing support services was 9,847 compared to the BSW target of 13,160 and the NHS Long Term Plan (LTP) target of 14,115. The current focus is to target areas with the greatest health inequalities and to support children and young people staying in education and increase investment in CAMHS.
11. There have been problems with data collection and the strategy notes that work has started with partners to improve the quality of data in their reporting.
12. The diagnosis rate for dementia is 60.8%, below the national target of 66.7% and local target of 66.1%. (the rate is calculated by comparing the estimated prevalence of dementia with the actual number of people who have been diagnosed).
13. Another strand of the LDP is to ensure physical health checks for people with severe mental illness. Wiltshire is performing below the LTP target of 60%, with 47% of the eligible people receiving a health check.

Priorities of the new strategy

14. The strategy puts strong emphasis on prevention which includes developing community assets and infrastructure and investing further in third sector services.
15. Having early access to help to avoid crisis was a priority for stakeholders and is reflected in the strategy.
16. Further integrating services is a key objective. The strategy aims to improve support around points of transition, for example from children to adult services, between services and by having clear pathways across organisational boundaries.

17. The strategy makes a commitment to personalised care, improving involvement of service users and carers in discharge planning and continuity of care, ensuring people see the same professionals where possible.
18. There is a shift in the funding model for services from high cost placements, inpatient and crisis services to community based provision.
19. To support community-based provision, there will be a change too in commissioning to enable the funding of a greater number of small, third sector service providers.

Interim Conclusions

20. In its ambition the strategy seems to address issues highlighted in previous scrutiny that is early access to help, the need for more resources into preventative work and support beyond treatment.
21. Members had been concerned that the removal of 'Emotional Health' from the title of the strategy would translate as a reduced focus on preventative work and would be keen to see how the new model would be delivered in practice.
22. The group questioned whether in practice the resources would be in place to be able to deliver the strategy and requested sight of the delivery plan.
23. In particular, the group wanted further information on how the transition for young people into adult services would be managed, how dementia diagnosis would be increased and how access to mental health support would be increased in Wiltshire.
24. The focus on shifting expenditure to community-based provision was welcomed.
25. The changes in approach to preventative work and more flexible funding with third sector partners seemed significant and key to the success of the strategy yet perhaps did not have sufficient prominence in the draft strategy. It was suggested that the final strategy made this more prominent and possibly included an executive summary to highlight the new approach.
26. Members identified a need to understand in more detail how the strategy will inform future commissioning.

Recommendations

The Children Select Committee (CSC) is asked to approve:

- I. That the rapid scrutiny group need to review the delivery plan to be able to draw meaningful conclusions and recommendations.**
- II. That the rapid scrutiny group meet again when the Delivery Plan has been drafted (possibly September) to review how the strategy will be implemented in Wiltshire.**
- III. That CSC will review how the overarching mental health strategy is aligned with existing strategies (e.g. carers support) and how the strategy informs commissioning of related services.**

Cllr Jon Hubbard, lead member for the rapid scrutiny exercise – Mental Health Strategy

Report author: Julie Bielby, Senior Scrutiny Officer, 01225 718702,
Julie.bielby@Wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendices None

Background documents None