

Agenda Item 6.

TITLE	Updates on mental health support for vulnerable communities in Wokingham.
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 June 2021.
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR/ KEY OFFICER	Mustafa Kamara, Senior Public Health Programme Officer & Ingrid Slade, Head of Public Health & Andy Fitton, Assistant Director of Joint Commissioning for Berkshire West CCG

REASON FOR THIS REPORT

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is set up to scrutinise local health and social care services and the committee reports to the council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

At a previous (HOSC) meeting scheduled on 18th November 2020, Members asked for updates on the following:

1. Impact of local mental health services on children and young people (in Wokingham) experiencing mental health challenges: including self-harm, anxiety and depression and eating disorders.
2. Anxiety and depression in children and young people – do the figures suggest issues amongst particular groups?
3. Suicide prevention - current and planned activities in this area
4. Updates on Willow House: Members wanted to know whether the new offer from Willow House would be the same as previous offer and about the number of children sent out of area for mental health services.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the current updates, consolidated by Wokingham Council's Public Health team and support current initiatives to improve mental health and wellbeing among residents in Wokingham.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report highlights recent, current and planned activities across the Borough to tackle mental health issues including self-harm, eating disorders and suicide.

Introduction

At a national level, the COVID pandemic has had a detrimental impact on population mental health over the last 12 months. A Public Health England COVID19 mental health and wellbeing surveillance report shows that, overall, self-reported mental health and wellbeing has worsened since March 2020¹.

Adults experienced high anxiety levels and low happiness levels in the week immediately preceding the first national lockdown and the 2 following weeks. Prevalence for both indicators was more than double the average for 2019. Despite prevalence for both appearing to decline the current levels are still above 2019 indicators (up to the week 7 2021)².

Additional studies have analysed national level data from the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS). These studies suggest that, among adults: all demographic groups examined (age, sex, race/ethnicity, income) experienced increases in distress after the onset of the pandemic followed by decreases, but the change was larger for younger adults (aged 18 to 30), women, those identifying as 'non-white' and those with higher income (over £50,000)³.

These national trends are likely to be consistent within Wokingham's population. The Council's Public Health team are currently working with local mental health providers and other partners to understand how COVID19 has impacted Wokingham's resident and registered population over the last 12 months. This forms part of a comprehensive review into mental health needs – a document that the team aims to publish (Mental Health Needs Assessment) by the end of the year 2021.

To combat the above-mentioned challenges to public mental health, a number of local services have been providing support, and are currently governed by the local authority and/or local health partners (Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT) and Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust). With specific reference to the childhood mental health needs and services addressed within the HOSC questions, the commissioning arrangements are as follows: Specialist Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) (including the Berkshire Eating Disorder Service) are commissioned by Berkshire West CCG and delivered by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust. Support for children and young people with mild to moderate difficulties with anxiety and low mood includes: The Mental Health Support Team project commissioned by the CCG but is delivered by the local authority in partnership with BHFT; A new 'Tier 2' offer to support emotional health and wellbeing among children and young people is being jointly commissioned by the Local Authority Children's services and the CCG (and is being delivered by BHFT).

The Council's public health team has worked with these partners to produce this response.

Below is a summary of the key findings:

1. Impact of local mental health services on children and young people

Berkshire Eating Disorder Service (BEDS)

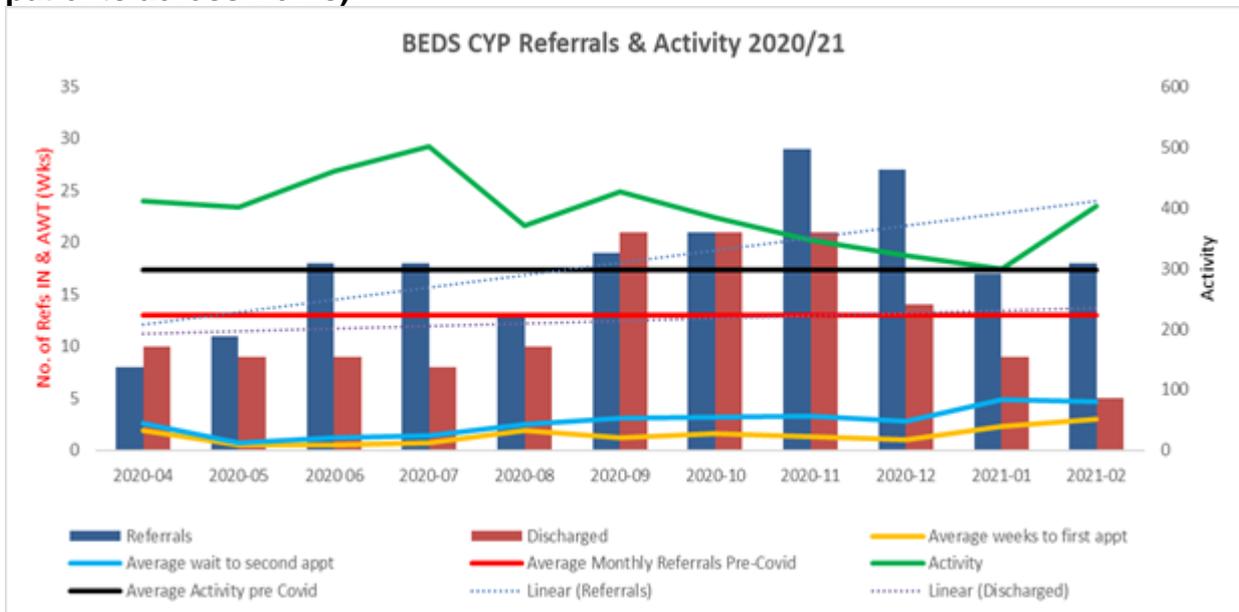
BEDS is run by a multi-disciplinary team of child and adolescent psychiatrists, dieticians, family therapists, nurses, psychologists and psychotherapists. This service has been supporting young people aged 8-18 with eating disorders as well as those with

preoccupying worries and difficulties with eating or concerns about their weight and shape. Since the start of the pandemic, BEDS replaced all non-urgent face to face appointments with telephone or online video consultations. A small number of face-to-face appointments were still undertaken (including home visits) over the last 12 months. These were based on assessments of risks: weighing up mental health needs against infection control.

In terms of eating disorder prevalence:

As of May 2021, the total number of Wokingham residents (under 18) registered with a GP practice with a diagnosed eating disorder is: 38 (which equates to 10 per 10,000 patients). Three quarters of these eating disorder cases are female (Data provided by CCG – IPA tool, historical data no available).

Over the last 12 months, BEDS have been reporting updates on service level demand (total referrals) and impact (number of successful discharges). Here are BEDS referral and discharge figures covering the period of the pandemic: April 2020 to Feb 2021 (**all patients across Berks**):



To note:

- The red line denotes average monthly referrals made 12 months prior to the start of the pandemic (Jan 2019 – December 2019)
- referrals into BEDS from June 2020 onwards, have been at or above the average monthly referrals pre covid.
- Discharges have been steadily declining as of November 2020.
- The peak of referrals was in Nov, Dec 2020.

Specialist CAMHS support for CYP mental health conditions

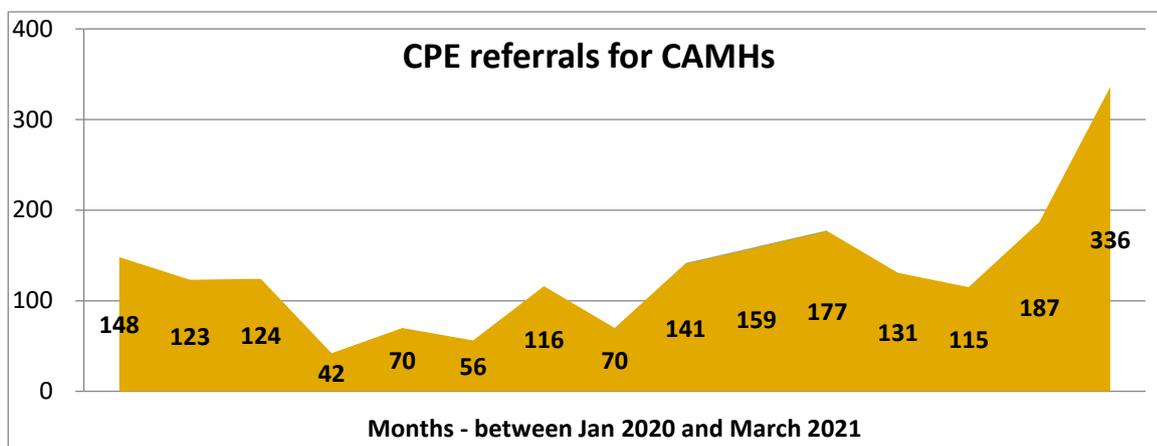
The local CAMHS provision for Wokingham, commissioned by the CCG, is currently supporting children and young people with issues around self-harm. The service has seen an overall increase in referrals since the start of the pandemic and CAMHS has been working alongside local partners to support these patients (Arc Counselling & Kooth).

As of end of March 2021 some key headlines for this service are:

CYP mental health (including for Autism and ADHD assessments) referrals into the

Common Point of Entry (CPE) have been affected by lockdown and CYP attending schools and access to primary care.

For example, Berkshire West figures give a peak of 336 referred in March 2021 (timed with pupils returning to school) against a low of 42 (in April 2020 and the start of the first lockdown). Please see graph below that outlines profile of Berkshire West CPE referrals Jan 2020 to March 2021:



As of the end of March 2021 there were 55 Wokingham CYP waiting for CPE screening, and the average wait time for this cohort was 7.6 weeks.

Following the CPE screening a CYP and family are offered for mental health presentations to access support from either the eating disorder service (as comments above), the Specialist CAMHs team, or the Anxiety and depression team. The table below provides a snapshot of the delivery of these 2 teams in Berkshire West as of March 31st 2021.

Team	Waiting for service		Caseload	
	Number	Average wait wks	In treatment	Specialist Assessment
Specialist CAMHS team	64 (29 are Wokingham)	15.2	477	64
Anxiety and Depression	23 (11 are Wokingham)	15.2	279	52

Tier 2 emotional health and wellbeing service

Wokingham Borough Council has reviewed how we support children with emotional wellbeing needs. The review has considered the major changes that children and young people have experienced since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Council and partners have proposed the development of a new Emotional Wellbeing Model for children and young people with mild to moderate mental health problems. A series of changes and improvements will ensure children and young people receive the right support at the earliest opportunity. These include:

- Access to Emotional Health assessment, triage, advice and referral via a
- single “front door” (Emotional Wellbeing Hub)
- A central point of contact for families, professionals, and young people to access Emotional Health and Wellbeing services or to discuss concerns about the emotional wellbeing of a child or young person (Emotional Health and Wellbeing Forum).
- Evidence based direct support. This includes identifying children and young people who are at higher risk of EWB difficulties, working to support them and their families to provide timely and appropriate support when it is needed most - with intervention and support early in the pathway. Timely assessment will enable identification of those who may require referral on to specialist CAMHS services.
- Evidence based training.
- Professional consultation
- Access to evidence based self- help information
- Access to the Wokingham Mental Health Support Team service offer

Wokingham Mental Health Support Team Project

Wokingham were successful in their bid to gain funding from NHS England, commissioned via Berkshire West CCG, to develop a Mental Health Support Team in partnership with Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust. The Wokingham Mental Health Support Team (MHST) has now launched and provides tailored support (via a multidisciplinary team) to primary and secondary school children with emerging mild/moderate mental health difficulties.

Depending on the age of the child, The MHST may work either directly with them or with their parents. The MHST also works with school staff with the aim of developing and supporting a whole school approach to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

The MHST for Wokingham consists of:

- Senior Educational Psychologist
- Primary Mental Health Worker (post advertised)
- A Specialist CAMHS practitioner
- An Outreach worker
- Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs)
- Administrator

The MHST is linked to 12 schools in Wokingham, covering around 8,000 children and young people.

Wokingham have made bids for future funding from NHS England to enable two further MHSTs which will provide full coverage across Wokingham.

The service is currently supporting 67 children and young people. The majority of these referrals were for adolescent anxiety and worry management.

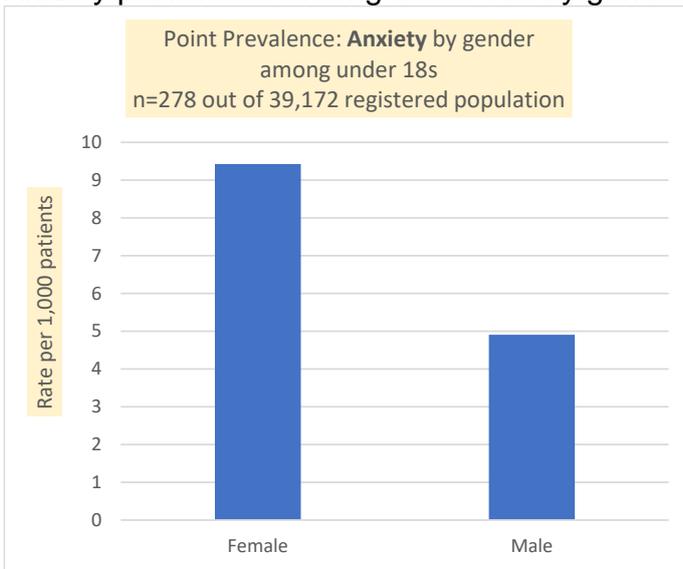
2. Anxiety and depression in children and young people – do the figures suggest issues amongst particular groups?

The Berkshire West CCG team have provided WBC Public Health with detailed mental health point prevalence data (prevalence as of 11th May 2021). The IPA (integrated population analytics) data tool provides useful insight into specific demographic groups that are impacted by anxiety and depression in Wokingham. The IPA tool is only able to

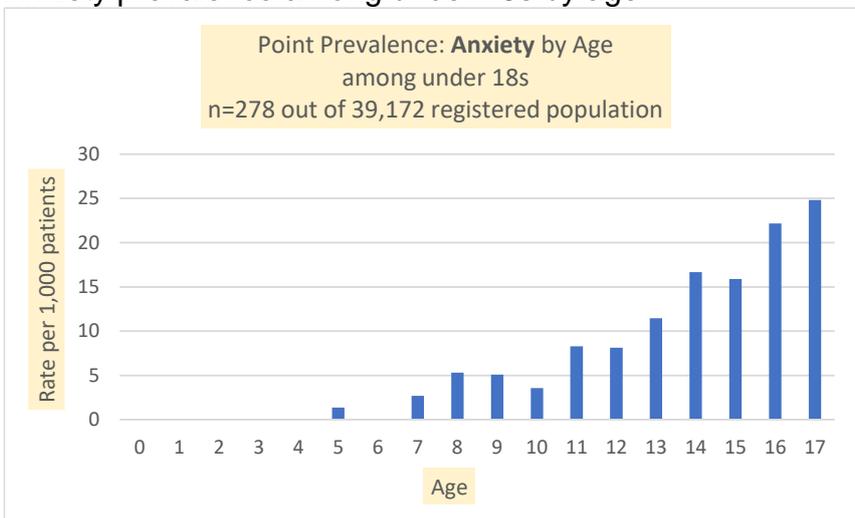
provide a snapshot of current prevalence (point prevalence) from the date of data extraction. It is not possible to use the IPA tool to extract historical prevalence data (which would allow us to review how trends have changed over time).

IPA data shows that current CYP anxiety and depression prevalence is higher among young girls than boys. In terms of age, prevalence of mild mental illnesses increases with age among both sexes. This trend in Wokingham is similar to the national trend as published by a recent publication from NHS Digital⁴.

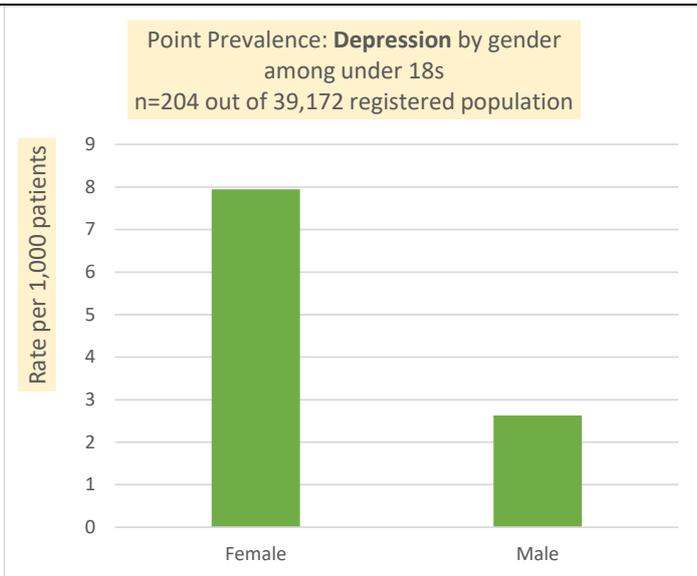
Anxiety prevalence among under 18s by gender



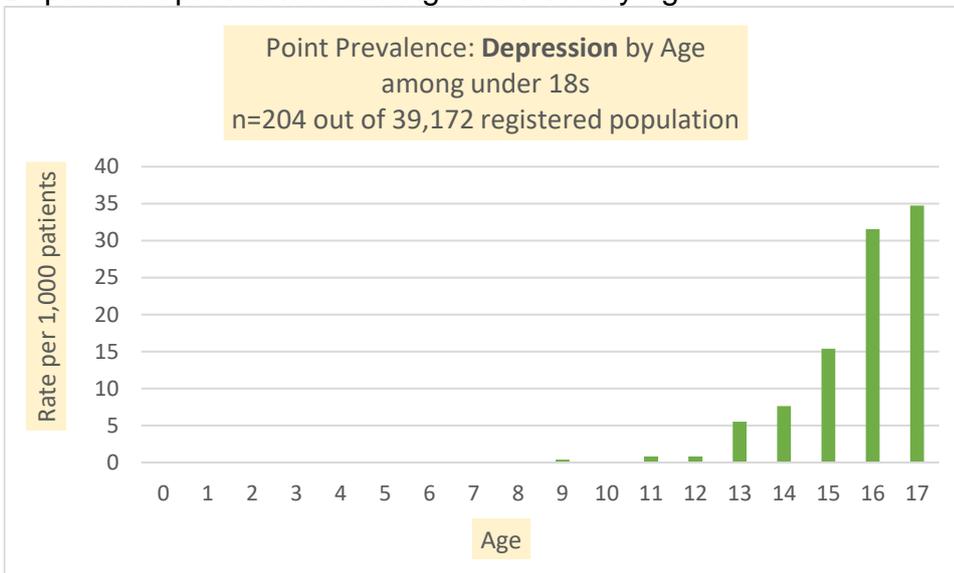
Anxiety prevalence among under 18s by age



Depression prevalence among under 18s by gender



Depression prevalence among under 18s by age



3. Suicide prevention - current and planned activities in this area

Suicide prevention is an important part of the WBC Public Health Team’s efforts to promote good mental health and wellbeing.

The Department of Health and Social Care sets the agenda for how NHS health services should work alongside Local Authorities to reduce suicide rates, and give better support to people bereaved or affected by suicide⁵.

To this end, a working group known as the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Group was setup to collaborate on suicide surveillance and initiatives to combat suicidal ideation across local communities. The group meets on a quarterly basis and is currently chaired by Public Health consultant lead for Reading Borough Council – David Munday.

The working group is multiagency and is mostly attended by public sector organisations across healthcare, education and community safety. The agendas for each meeting start with a review of real time suicide surveillance – presented by Thames Valley

Police, followed by discussions to address groups that are disproportionately represented in the data.

Impact of COVID on local suicides

Overall, suicide rates across Wokingham as well as neighbouring boroughs have not changed since the start of the pandemic. Across Berkshire, 61 suicides were reported in 2020, 66 were reported in 2019, and 62 were reported in 2018.

Among the 61 Berkshire suicides reported in 2020, 9 of these were Wokingham residents.

Out of the 9 Wokingham suicides in 2020, less than 5 of these were young people under the age of 20. The exact number has been redacted to protect the identity of the deceased and their family members.

Recent work resulting from suicide surveillance

A sub-group of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Group (led by BHFT) was formed in July 2020 after a small spike in female suicides was noted. The aim was to explore why this theme was emerging. The overall number of Berkshire suicides dropped slightly in 2020, so the increase in female suicides was masked by a suppression in the male rate. The sub-group uncovered the following: The age range of suicides among women in this period were from 18 to 71. There were slightly more deaths amongst women in their 40s and 50s than in younger age groups. In terms of occupation, there appeared to be an over-representation of health & social care workers, and women working in other frontline support roles (i.e. police and childcare) and in several of these cases, the women were known to be experiencing high levels of stress related to their work shortly before their deaths. In the light of this, BHFT is amending safety planning to look at how they can improve management and support for staff in times of high service-level demand. This includes focusing on interactive training approaches - videos, online sessions with staff, discussion, voting, live role plays - tailored to specific teams and incidents. This work is ongoing and progress on this is being reported to the group at each quarterly meeting.

4. Updates on Willow House

Willow House, was a 9-bed inpatient support unit for youngsters aged 12-18 years old with severe mental health problems and serious eating disorders - formally based in Wokingham Hospital.

Following a service review in 2020, a joint decision was made by Berkshire West CCG and BHFT to close the inpatient facility on the 30th April 2021. This decision was made as a result of the inpatient building being no longer deemed fit for purpose. The service review concluded that intensive community support (including home visits) would be a better alternative to inpatient provision.

In replacement of the old inpatient service, BHFT launched a new 'Willow House' service in March 2021. This new service adopts a cost-effective family-based model (supported by the evidence base) that incorporates provision of services closer to home.

The new service is now operational 7 days a week, 365 days a year through an extended day care programme which runs from 8am-8pm Monday to Friday and 9am-5pm weekends and Bank Holidays. All patients remain at home with their families overnight and are able to access telephone support if needed.

This new service continues to provide coordinated, intensive, complex, multi-modal interventions designed to facilitate the prevention, diagnosis, management, and evidence-based treatment of severe and enduring mental illness in young people whose needs can no longer be met by community CAMHS and crisis services. The new Willow House service team is multidisciplinary and comprises consultant psychiatrists, therapists, administrators, and nursing, teaching and support staff.

References

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