



SOCIAL SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	27 th May 2021
Report Subject	Mental Health Services in Flintshire
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For several years, professionals across Wales working in health and social care have seen an increase in the demand for mental health services and support; this is for a number of reasons and is in part due to a growing understanding of mental health matters. As well as an increase in the number of people with mental health needs, including children and young people. There has also been an increase in the number of people with complex mental health.

The global Covid-19 pandemic has brought about significant changes to communities worldwide, and as a result it has had a significant impact on people's mental health. There is growing evidence demonstrating there is a decline in the population's mental health in comparison to a pre Covid-19 period. Evidence is also showing that the inequalities in mental health is widening; with women, young people, racial and minority ethnic groups, people living in poverty and parents of young children being impacted more greatly. The longer the pandemic lasts, the greater the impact on the population's mental health.

Locally, across the multidisciplinary mental health teams in Flintshire, the professionals in health, social care and the voluntary sector work really well together. Combining this with the Welsh Government investment in the Together in Mental health Transformational Programme, there are opportunities to develop services locally that are preventative, focus on early intervention and community resilience which should lead to improved outcomes for the local population and aim to reduce the need for statutory services.

This report details some of the local avenues for support that are available for citizens in Flintshire, as well as the staff who have continued to maintain essential council services on behalf of Flintshire County Council over the last 12 months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	This report seeks to highlight the challenges faced within mental health services and the impact that Covid-19 is having on the mental health of the local population.
2	Members note the current provision in place to support their local constituents' needs.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE SITUATION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN FLINTSHIRE
1.01	<p>Background to Mental Health Services</p> <p>For several years professionals in health and social care have been seeing an increase in the demand for mental health services and support. Evidence from the North Wales Population Needs Assessment (2017) and other subsequent research / reports in North Wales have noted the increase is as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of people with mental health problems are increasing, including Children's mental and emotional health which is consistently raised as a concern, as is the rise in self-harm, eating disorders and attachment issues. • The most common mental illnesses reported are anxiety and depression. • Research suggests a high number of people with mental health problems are not seeking help. • An estimated 16.2% of adults in Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) area have at least one common mental health problem. • The number of adults in BCUHB with a mental health problem is predicted to increase to around 58,500 by 2030. • The European age-standardised rate for mortality from suicide in BCUHB (10.3 per 100,000 population) is above the average for Wales (9.2 per 100,000 population). • In BCUHB, an estimated 8,830 children aged 5 to 16 years have a mental health disorder. • The number of admissions to mental health facilities is reducing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of people with more complex needs is increasing. • People with mental health problems are more likely to have poor physical health. • The number of unpaid carers presenting with a decline in their mental health is increasing • There appears a lack of appropriate MH placements, where needed. This has led to the use of acute beds and specialist placements outside North Wales, which is far from ideal for patients, their carer's and families. • There are a high number of detentions under section 136. • In BCUHB an estimated 9,800 people aged <65 have dementia, the prevalence of dementia is expected to almost double by 2030.
1.02	<p>Flintshire Social Services delivers mental health support services to people with mental health needs. The teams work in partnership with individuals and their families so people can live meaningful and independent lives in the community, as well as helping to prevent crisis, avoiding admissions to hospital and supporting discharges into the community. The services use the 'recovery approach' to support people to live independently, people are encouraged to join in with social and leisure activities, be employed, and take part in volunteering or education. Please see appendix 1 for our staffing structure for the internal mental health teams.</p>
1.03	<p>In addition, Flintshire supports the primary and secondary care mental health services delivered within the Local Health Board with social work interventions and support – there are x3 Social Workers located within the Primary Care Team and x7 Social Workers within the Community Mental Health Teams which enables a multidisciplinary response to supporting people with mental health problems.</p>
1.04	<p>BCUHB are responsible for collating the performance data for the mental health teams (such as Primary Care and CMHTs) under the Mental Health Measure. As of February 2020 (pre Covid-19) referrals received were on average 190 referrals per month, there is an expected 80% target for assessments undertaken and Flintshire was compliant with this target until May 2020. It can be a struggle for the BCUHB East to meet this target but generally Flintshire has been performing well in this area in comparison to other counties. As of February 2020 there were 815 open cases across the mental health teams and the performance measure for Care and Treatment Planning. BCUHB are responsible for data capture, this information ceased as part of the C19 responses and staff were diverted elsewhere. As the pandemic eases we expect to have more stats going forward.</p> <p>Across North Wales BCUHB, local authorities and mental health charities are working together to deliver the 'Together for Mental Health in North Wales', which is an all-age plan to improve the mental health and well-being of people across North Wales. The wide ranging and ambitious strategy aims to improve</p>

	<p>child and adult mental health, ensure parity with physical health needs and shift the focus of care to prevention and early intervention. To help ensure that people can access the early support they need in the community, the partners are introducing new services through the ICAN campaign. These are discussed in more detail below in bullets 1.24-1.33.</p>
1.05	<p><u>Impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on mental health</u> Through the coronavirus pandemic we've seen a rise in depression and other mental health problems; new Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures show that twice as many adults in the UK are reporting symptoms of depression now compared with this time last year. But even before the pandemic we were seeing childhood mental health problems, severe mental illness and the mental ill health of young women increasing. New research has also shown anxiety trebling in young adults since 2008, affecting 30% of women aged 18 – 24.</p>
1.06	<p>The Health Minister, Vaughan Gething, has recently announced a £1.3m support package of mental health services for all in Wales. The package of support includes a new online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy course, for anyone over the age of 16 years, and other online and phone support services. This funding will enable existing on-line based support services already in place in parts of Wales to be extended further.</p>
1.07	<p>In the announcement, the Minister shared the Welsh Government's commitment to supporting the mental health of the public, and that it wanted to ensure the package of additional support is in place ahead of any potential second wave of Covid-19 and as the impact of the pandemic is felt more widely.</p>
1.08	<p>These services are aimed at helping low level mental health issues; they are not a replacement for more specialist services but it is hoped by providing instant access to support they will help reduce the pressures on primary care and other more specialist services.</p>
1.9	<p>In Flintshire, community based mental health support services adapted their offer of support during the lockdowns and following recognition of the importance of these services to people and their families, these services were one of the first in social care to re-open on a phased basis and when it was deemed safe to do so.</p>
1.10	<p><u>Current challenges in mental health services</u> It is acknowledged that there has been leadership and management changes within Mental Health BCUHB, and we have worked hard to ensure continuity of our partnership working. A formal partnership arrangement with clarity and clear roles and responsibilities is being developed by BCUHB and this will be welcomed by managers across Social Services.</p>

1.11	<p>There is a need for a formal transition planning processes to be in place for young adults (18 years old) to support transition from CAMHS to adult mental health services; The reason for this is that the criteria and models that support adult mental health are different to the delivery model in children’s mental health.</p> <p>A joined up approach to supporting transition will be hugely beneficial. Flintshire has a successful transition process in learning disability service which supports individuals, families and carers with transition planning from 17 years of age. The individuals and families are supported by their Social Worker and plans are put in place for their move on into adult services. This successful approach could be replicated in mental health services by utilising a multidisciplinary approach. Senior managers in Flintshire continue to work with BCUHB on this in this area. BCUHB are recruiting new Regional Patient Experience Leads to better understand the experience of young people and their families in CAMHS with the view to this learning feeding into service improvements; this is another positive move in strengthening the transition for young people and their families.</p>
1.12	<p><u>Flintshire’s response and what’s working well</u></p> <p>Across all the multidisciplinary mental health teams, the professionals in health, social care and the voluntary sector generally work extremely well together, taking a holistic and strengths based approach to achieving individual well-being outcomes, recovery and independence. The working relationship between Social Services and BCUHB has strengthened the support available to individuals and their families by respecting one another’s professional contributions. Furthermore, the partnerships with our local third sector partners have been developed over many years and operates very successfully; in social care we commission a range of partner organisations (ASNEW, MIND, KIM, Unllais and HAFAL) to deliver information, advice, support and advocacy to individuals with mental health problems and their families.</p>
1.13	<p>Flintshire is part of the North Wales Transformational Programme delivering the ‘Together for Mental Health in North Wales’ strategy; this strategy is receiving ‘Healthier Wales: Transformational Funding’ from Welsh Government to deliver a range of initiatives that supports prevention, early intervention and community resilience. Focus of the Healthier Wales Programme has been to develop a regional model for early intervention and crisis prevention, which is known as the ICAN Integrated Pathway. Some of the key achievements for the programme over the last 6 months have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of ‘Stay Well’ telephone service delivered by ICAN Volunteers. • Testing of ICAN Connector Role (Community Navigation) • Greater integration with CMHT’s and Primary Care • Establishment of ‘Virtual ICAN Community Hubs’ • Enhanced and accelerated the Digital and Virtual Offer • Strengthened and enhanced Partnership working

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued with the recruitment of ICAN Volunteers Continued in the delivery of ICAN Training – although ‘virtual’ Commenced the implementation of a ‘Trauma Informed Approach’ to service delivery
1.14	Here is a summary of the activities that are taking place in specifically in Flintshire:
1.15	<p><u>Learning and Well-being Programme Website</u></p> <p>In Flintshire the Learning and Well-being Programme is a multi-agency developed brochure which pulls together information and activities that are accessible locally and aimed to improve an individual’s well-being whilst meeting new friends, developing confidence and learning new skills. The Programme has previously been shared and distributed in a hard brochure format, however the Transformational Programme has funded the design of a new website to help share information more widely. The website was completed by Double Click and coincidentally became available just in time for the first Covid-19 lockdown, which assisted partners in keeping individuals and carers informed during this period and aware of what support was now available to them virtually.</p>
1.16	<p><u>Community Resilience Project</u></p> <p>The Community Resilience Project will support the delivery of the Together for Mental Health Strategy in North Wales. Improving Community Resilience was selected as a priority for North East Wales area because of the growing body of evidence that suggests there is a strong correlation between resilience and positive physical and mental health outcomes.</p> <p>Do-Well and Wrexham Glyndwr University are piloting a new approach by developing people’s skills in systems leadership and public narrative to improve community resilience with people who live and work in 3 distinct communities – Holway in Holywell, Flint Town Centre and Gwersyllt in Wrexham.</p> <p>The project is adopting a test and learn approach, as well as identifying areas where community resilience can be improved locally, using the experience of people who live and work in each community; it will produce evidence-based learning for other areas in North Wales.</p>
1.17	<p><u>Flint Well-being Hub</u></p> <p>The Flint Well-being Hub started from 1 April 2020 and the provider commissioned to lead the project is Flintshire MIND. The initial plan was to be based in Flint Library to provide a comprehensive connecting, support and signposting community well-being service. The Hub is designed to assist people to link in with support and activities which are most relevant to them. The aim is to provide early intervention.</p>

	<p>The Hub team consists of two Mind Community Well-being Coordinators, a Flintshire County Council Well-being and Recovery Social Worker and will be expanded with volunteers.</p> <p>Due to Covid-19 it was not possible to have a physical presence in the library, as it was closed. The service was adapted to the new situation to provide much needed support to people in the area as quickly as possible. There are several strands to the project which dovetail together to create personalised planning for well-being.</p> <p>Initial reporting for the service shows that 65 individuals have been supported since the 1st April and 1st September 2020 (averaging 10-25 contacts per week). As the service moves forward with the virtual clinic, trends and themes will be acknowledged and group support tailored to meet the needs of individuals.</p>
1.18	<p><u>Well-being and Recovery Social Worker in the Early Help Hub, Children's Services</u></p> <p>The Well-being and Recovery Social Worker supporting the Flint Well-being Hub is also based in the Early Help Hub (EHH), Children's Services. This is a recent addition to the EHH as it had been noted for some time that there was an ever increasing amount of referrals entering the EHH where parents had low to moderate MH difficulties. What was evidence was that bespoke packages of support which were being implemented from agencies with families were failing when parents had an underlying mental health issue. It was recognised that by working with these parents in the first instance or alongside appropriate agencies working with their children, a better outcome would be achieved for the family.</p> <p>The 0.5FTE Well-being and Recovery Social Worker is based in the EHH and offers parents advice and guidance, 1-1 support, signposting to other services or referrals on to statutory services. The Social Worker acts as a vital connector between the EHH, mental health services and other voluntary or universal services. During the past two months alone, the Social Worker has supported 40 parents (through 31 referrals) and has completed a further 97 referrals checks that have entered the EHH.</p>
1.19	<p><u>Citizens access to Mental Health Support</u></p> <p>See appendix 5.03 for list of 'gateway' services to support citizens.</p> <p>There are a number of ways that citizens can access support during the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent period of easing measures and restrictions. The support that an individual may need will of course vary from person to person, however there is a real concern that there will be a significant demand on resources from individuals who have had no interaction or experience with mental health services prior to the pandemic.</p>

	A primary source for citizens to explore what is in the local area and what is important to them is to use the online DEWIS directory. This is a tool designed to support people in finding groups and organisations that can support their needs and wellbeing.
1.20	<p><u>Supporting Flintshire Staff</u></p> <p>As well as the support that staff have access to as citizens, Flintshire County Council uses CareFirst as an employee support organisation. They offer support around work place stress, problems and managing work life balance.</p> <p>Flintshire Social Services have also worked with NEWmind (previously Flintshire Mind) to establish a support service for those who have worked tirelessly in the care sector over the past 12 months, offering mental health support and a listening ear and where appropriate liaising with existing HR services to support the care sector workforce across Flintshire.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The current resource implications of the in-house Mental Health Services and the contributions to the Local Health Board Mental Health Teams are already met by the local authority's social care budget. This spend is fully committed going forward.
2.02	The mental health needs of people who need a residential care placements are the most complex and we are seeing increasing demand and costs for this support. The resulting impact is that there is a pressure on the Mental Health Residential Placement budget. We know the local population needs do vary over time, sometimes suddenly, and costs are subject to the same changes. The mental health budget like all social services budgets is closely monitored and reported on regularly.
2.03	North Wales has secured £2,320,000 in the North Wales Transformational Programme delivering the 'Together for Mental Health in North Wales' strategy. Flintshire are contributing to spend strategy.

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	As noted in 2.02 this continues to pose a financial risk to the authority in terms of meeting the growing financial demand upon services with limited resources. This is being mitigated by the shift in care to early help and preventative support with the aim of preventing the need for statutory services.

3.02	A significant risk to services and resources is the impact and lasting effects that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on people's mental health and the increased demand that this will create on services in the future. Evidence, research and operational feedback will be monitored and service responses developed accordingly to help mitigate the impact of this result of overwhelming demand for services and support in the future.
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4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	N/A – the purpose of this report is to provide a position update.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – 'First port of call' to access services
5.02	Appendix 2 – Workforce Occupational Health support
5.03	Appendix 3 – Joint work with Wrexham PSB

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Jo Taylor, Service Manager: Disability Recovery and Progression Telephone: 01352 701341 E-mail: jo.taylor@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
8.01	Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Adverse Childhood Experiences as described in the Public Health Wales national report e.g. domestic abuse, sexual abuse, mental health issues impacts and trauma causing experiences.
8.02	Carer

	Someone, usually unpaid, and often a friend or family member who supports a person with social care needs either full time or part time.
8.03	Out of county provision Specialist education/residential provision which is not maintained by local authorities but offered through independent providers