

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission March 14th 2022 Item 6 - Cabinet Q & A	Item No 6
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Outline

Cabinet members are invited to attend relevant scrutiny Commission's annually to respond to questions within their policy portfolio. Commission's may focus questions on up to three policy areas which are submitted in advance. Cabinet members are required to provide a verbal response to these questions at the meeting.

The Commission has chosen to focus on CAMHS services, and the Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Children's Social Care will attend to respond to the following questions:

1. Demand for CAMHS and waiting times in Hackney

Can you provide an update on the volume and nature of referrals to local CAMHS services pre and post pandemic?

There are a number of national standards for waiting times for CAMHS services:

- 95% of young people with an eating disorder to be seen within 4 weeks (1 week if urgent)
- At least 50% young people with a 1st episode of psychosis to get help within 2 weeks of referral
- 75% of young people referred to talking therapies (mental health, depression, anxiety) to start treatment in 6 weeks and 95% in 18 weeks.

Can you update the Commission on how waiting times for CYP in Hackney relate to the above standards? And in general:

- How do waiting times for CAMHS for children and young people in Hackney compare to other similar boroughs?
- How has covid impacted on waiting times?
- What support do young people receive whilst they are on a waiting list?
- Are young people provided with information and/or signposting whilst they are on a waiting list?
- What investments or adaptations have been developed to reduce waiting times for children and young people in Hackney?

2. Improving Access to CAMHS in Hackney

With multiple services and entry points, it is acknowledged that access to local CAMHS services can be complex and difficult to understand not only for young people and their families but also for referring professionals. A local key objective is to have a fully integrated pathway or 'no wrong door' approach for local services set up by/in 2022.

- How far have local CAMHS services progressed with this objective and what have been the key achievements to date?
- What improvement will this bring to the referral process and accessibility of CAMHS?

There is evidence to suggest that '*open access mental health hubs*' might be more acceptable to young people than CAMHS or school based counseling / therapy services which could help more young people to access the support they need. A consortium of children's mental health charities are campaigning for these to be established nationwide.

- What do we know about local young people's preferences for mental health service provision?
- Are there any similar initiatives in existence or planned for Hackney?

3. Mental health support to vulnerable groups

National reports indicate that the mental wellbeing of some groups of children and young people were particularly impacted by the pandemic: children from black and other minority ethnic communities, children with existing conditions, children from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds and children from LGBT communities.

- Given that some of these communities may already experience difficulty in accessing statutory services, how have local CAMHS ensured that mental health support remains accessible?
- What outreach activities take place with local communities to support access to CAMHS?

Attending

- Cllr Antionette Bramble, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care