

Equality Impact Assessment - head of service review

Reference: EQIA278314524

Submitted: 30 November 2020 14:49 PM

Executive summary

Title of policy or decision: Recommissioning of the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services (EWMHS) for children and young people

Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): This decision is on the commencement of the joint work towards a new child and adolescent mental health contract in 2022, designed to further improve the support for children and young people with mental health issues and their families, improving their experience of services and ultimately the quality of their lives.

The provision of services for children and young people's emotional (which is sometimes called the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)) is a joint responsibility of local authorities and the NHS. Since 2015, this service, the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS) has been commissioned collaboratively by Essex County Council, Southend and Thurrock Unitary Councils and NHS partners and this has resulted in an integrated, joined up service. The lead commissioner for this service has been, and will continue to be, West Essex CCG. It is proposed that Essex County Council continues to work in a collaborative way to commission an integrated service.

The services are provided in four tiers, which range from services designed for everyone (tier 1), to complex and critical services (tier 4) which will only be needed by a few people. This service is aimed at those needing Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Tier 2 'targeted services' include things like youth offending teams, primary mental health workers, educational psychologists, school and voluntary third sector provider counselling. Tier 3 'specialist services' include things like community multidisciplinary teams which are not provided exclusively by the NHS. Currently this service is delivered by the North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) and has been since 2015 when the contract was awarded. With the current contract due to expire at the beginning of 2022, Essex County Council are taking part in the recommissioning exercises as a key stakeholder in the Collaborative, led by West Essex CCG.

The current service has delivered demonstrably positive outcomes for children, young people and their families, with a consistent offer across Southend, Essex and Thurrock and more collaborative working across the wider system. These outcomes include an increased understanding and knowledge of mental health across the system and easier access pathways, with a single point of access and self-referral option making it significantly easier for children and families to receive support. The recommissioning exercise will draw on the successes of the collaborative approach we have had since 2015 and also bring into force further improvements, including closer links with education and greater whole family working. Importantly there will be improved outreach and inclusion, removing perceived barriers and prejudices if children and young people need to access support.

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve?: Help people get the best start and age well

Which strategic priorities does this support? - Help people get the best start and age well: Help keep vulnerable children safer and enable them to fulfil their potential

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?: a new policy (or decision)

Please provide a link to the document / website / resource to which this EqIA relates: Cabinet Paper forward plan ref: FP/852/10/20

Please upload any documents which relate to this EqIA, for example decision documents: Cabinet Paper forward plan ref: FP/852/10/20

Assessing the equality impact

Use this section to record how you have assessed any potential impact on the communities likely to be affected by the policy (or decision): Supporting children and young people who are experiencing mental ill health is a key priority for Essex County Council and one which we have a statutory duty to deliver in collaboration with the NHS.

Essex County Council has been part of the Greater Essex Collaborative for the commissioning of services for children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health since 2015. Working in this way has made significant, tangible improvements to ensuring easier access to services (via a single point of access) and equality of service and uniformity of approach via a united service across Greater Essex.

Essex County Council have been clear about their priorities for the newly commissioned service, which have been developed in conjunction with a wide range of stakeholders, including children, young people and their families and numerous professionals from the wider system. These priorities have been translated into a set of core requirements which specify that the new contract:

- Must emphasise outcomes for children, young people and their families
- Must ensure access to services for the most vulnerable cohorts
- Must ensure good access to more intensive provision where appropriate
- Must ensure high, continuing levels of collaboration across the system
- Must include Approved Mental Health Practitioners as part of the contract

In terms of the impact on groups where there are known inequalities, it is considered that this decision will have a positive impact. There is a strengthened provision for children and young people (up to 25ys) with SEND. There is more emphasis on transitions for this and other cohorts. Significant engagement has taken place with social care colleagues to ensure that the needs of children in care and care leavers are well met and provision is made to meet their specific requirements. More broadly, there is an emphasis on improved outreach and inclusion, removing perceived barriers and prejudices if children and young people need to access support.

Based on the broader evidence and assessment of local services which has fed into commissioning plans within the Collaborative, our assessment is that this service positively impacts children, young people and their families who are in need of tier 2 and tier 3 mental health services.

Does or will the policy or decision affect:

Service users: Yes

Employees: No

The wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities: Yes

Which geographical areas of Essex does or will the policy or decision affect?: All Essex

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?: No

Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?: No

Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies?: No

Is the new or revised policy linked to a digital service (website, system or application)?: No

Description of impact

Description of Impact. If there is an impact on a specific protected group tick box, otherwise leave blank.

You will be given the opportunity to rate identified impacts as positive, negative or neutral on the next page: Disability - learning disability, Disability - mental health issues

I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics: I confirm that I have considered the potential impact on all of the protected characteristics

Describe any actions that have already been taken to mitigate negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics: No negative impacts have been identified

Disability - learning disability

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: Children with special educational needs and disabilities are specifically catered for, with an Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service for CYP with Learning Disabilities and Difficulties (EWMHS/LD), providing a specialist multi-disciplinary community mental health service for children between 5 and their 18th birthday who have a full statement of Special Educational Needs and who have a severe to profound learning disability with additional mental health problems.

Extent of impact: High

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: The needs of this cohort are specifically considered and catered for within the specification to ensure that their specific needs are well met.

Disability - mental health issues

Nature of impact: Positive

Please provide more details about the nature of impact: This service is for children and young people who are experiencing emotional wellbeing and mental health issues. There is a specific emphasis on improved outreach and inclusion, removing perceived barriers and prejudices if children and young people need to access support

Extent of impact: High

Please provide more details about the extent of impact: This service is for children and young people who are experiencing emotional wellbeing and mental health issues. By the nature of the service, it will have a highly positive impact on children and young people experiencing issues with emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

Does your EqlA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?: No

Details of person completing the form

I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance: I confirm that this has been completed based on the best information available and in following ECC guidance

Date EqlA completed: 30/11/2020

Name of person completing the EqlA: Kim Gisby

Email address of person completing the EqlA: Kim.Gisby@essex.gov.uk

Your function: Children, Families and Education

Your service area: Children, Families and Mental Health Commissioning

Your team: Children, Families and Mental Health Commissioning

Are you submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team?: No

Email address of Head of Service: emily.oliver@essex.gov.uk