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To: Cabinet – 15 January 2007

Subject: CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES JOINT
COMMISSIONING STRATEGY

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The attached report is the draft Joint Commissioning Strategy for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Kent.

The mental health and well being of children and young people is a high priority for all agencies working with children and young people both nationally and in Kent.

Wide ranging research indicates that mental health difficulties affect one in ten children and young people, with 7% having moderately severe problems requiring attention from professionals trained in mental health. This equates to 24,000 children and young people in Kent. The effects of mental health problems impact on children and young people's life chances and outcomes.

Research and local needs assessment also highlight a number of risk and residence factors which impact on the development of mental health problems and indicate that improving mental health and well being of the children in Kent will require a wide ranging and ambitious programme of reform across a number of work programmes.

The development of a Children's Trust in Kent presents an opportunity for a joint approach for the commissioning and delivery of services which promote mental well being, and prevent mental ill health and to provide timely and effective support to children and young people who are experiencing mental health difficulty.

This strategy reflects the shared concern of all agencies in Kent and a commitment to a joint commissioning approach.

This first draft has been prepared by the CAMHS joint commissioning board and the intention is to seek a wide ranging consultation with all key stakeholders in readiness for implementation from April 2007.

Introduction

1. (1) The Kent and Medway Multi Agency CAMHS Strategy Group was convened in 2005 to take a joint approach to commissioning mental health provision for the children and young people in Kent and Medway. This reflects the shared concerns of all agencies to improve the mental health and well being of children and young people and a commitment to collaborate in achieving this aim through a joint commissioning strategy.

(2) The strategy has been developed on the basis of a joint needs assessment, including the current service position, a mental health evidence base and within the most recent legal and policy frameworks.

(3) It sets out a framework for reform in the way our services are delivered and a set of recommendations for the commissioning of services to meet identified needs and improve mental health outcomes for children and young people. The intent is to commission a comprehensive range of outcomes-focussed provision based on an evidenced-based assessment of need, delivered by a workforce with the right skills, in the right settings and at the right time, and providing best value within the available resources.

(4) This is an ambitious programme which will require a staged approach and a clear time-frame for development and implementation. The change programme required cannot, and should not be delivered through or by any one agency in isolation but will be dependant on a commitment to a joint approach, reflecting the principle that children and young people's mental health is 'Everyone's Business'.

Results

2. (1) Recent needs assessment has indicated a high level of mental health need within the children and young people population in Kent. A review of services has indicated significant gaps, variation and unmet need. Furthermore, it is evident that a wide-ranging programme of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention services are needed, alongside services for those with complex mental health needs.

(2) A Commissioning Strategy has been drafted on this basis and is attached as Appendix 1.

Recommendations

3. (1) That the Commissioning recommendations within the Strategy are agreed.
- (2) A joint investment programme is determined and implemented following detailed service and financial analysis.
- (3) That the Strategy is distributed across key stakeholders for consultation prior to implementation.

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Background Documents:

None