

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Children and Young People Select Committee
Date:	11 July 2023
Title:	Update on Autism Services Commissioning for Children and Young People in Hampshire
Report From:	Mental Health and Learning Disabilities / Autism Delivery Directorate, Southampton and Isle of Wight ICB

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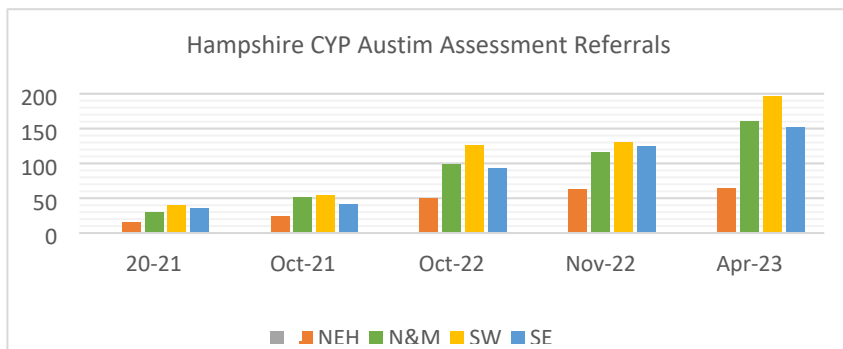
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1 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the current status of action that is underway by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board to tackle the ongoing challenges in relation to ensuring access to autism assessments in Hampshire.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 For the Children and Young People Select Committee to note the issues outlined in the following update report and in particular:
- The HIOW ICB has successfully achieved the increases in Autism Assessment activity that it set out to achieve, moving from an average of 600-700 assessments per year before 2020 to approximately 1,500 per year from 2021 onwards.
 - Increased waiting lists times continue to put pressure on Hampshire services since October 2021 when the contract first commenced.



- Autism assessment capacity in Hampshire is not sufficient to achieve the objective of 3 month (12 week) wait by March 2024. The current average wait in Hampshire is now 18 months.
- Continued partnership with HCC SEND services and other education colleagues will be necessary to help understand, address and potentially reduce (if appropriate) current levels of referrals.

2.2 Given the length of time this report has been routinely submitted to the Select Committee with little change, that the next report is provided to committee in November 2023 via face to face attendance to enable the ICB to focus on service transformation – see section 4.5.

3 Executive Summary

3.1 This report updates the Select committee as to the current state of progress in relation to achieving timely access in relation to ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition) assessments and related support and services, outstanding and new issues to address, and next steps.

3.2 Whilst the NHS has implemented significant financial investment to expand Autism Assessment activity across Hampshire, referrals have continued to increase which has resulted in a growing assessment waiting list. To address this, the ICB:

- Has established a new all-age commissioning framework which supports more agile arrangements for procuring additional Autism assessment activity.
- Is working with system partners to develop longer term capacity to meet ongoing needs for Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Is reviewing aspects outside of the assessment pathway, such as mental health inequalities, age based thresholds, transition, mental health comorbidities, needs led support and workforce training.
- Has worked with Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Autism Partnership Board to develop a new Local Authority Autism Strategy.
- Has worked with Public Health to highlight mental health inequalities for those with Autism within the Hampshire County Council Mental Health Wellbeing Strategy.

4 Contextual information

4.1 Nationally, regionally and locally, Autism Spectrum Condition (Autism) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) assessment services are facing significant capacity issues due to large waiting lists and an unprecedented surge in demand. Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, long waiting times for both ADHD and Autism assessments were widely reported and acknowledged by the NHS Long Term Plan and the national strategy for autistic children, young people, and adults.

4.2 In 2018 a decision was made by the then five Hampshire CCGs to transfer a large cohort of children and young people waiting for an autism assessment from Hampshire CAMHS to an interim service, in order to clear the backlog. In early 2021, a revised and improved service specification for a new assessment service (across Hampshire the Isle of Wight) was jointly designed with families, clinical experts and relevant professionals across multiple agencies and disciplines. Following a competitive tender process Psicon Ltd was awarded the contract (see above table). The current service contract expires on the 31st March 2023.

4.3 Key improvements and changes that were introduced in the Psicon assessment service that started in October 2021 included:

- Expanded age range down to 3 years old (originally 5 years) to 18 years (and up to 19 years for those with a mild to moderate learning disability)
- Provide an accessible and flexible NICE Compliant service which supports patient choice, family life and offers a range of assessment formats including face to face, online and hybrid models and includes post assessment follow up sessions.
- Provide a local service, with established local links which ensures joint working with other agencies and services, including clear specific and meaningful signposting to the child and family.
- Ensure that children and their parent/carers are involved in each step of the pathway.
- Continue to work with Hampshire and Isle of Wight commissioners to develop services for Autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions.
- Expansion of referral sources to support referrals from any health education or social care professional.

4.4 The ICB is working with partners to deliver system wide transformation of all services related to Autism and ADHD Scope as follows:

Workstream 1: Transformed Service Model – Diagnostic Service

- Design a service that fully meets current and projected demand and offers a response which is proportionate to need.
- Meet the 12 week national waiting times target by maximising capacity and minimising waste.
- Facilitate the smooth delivery of triage, assessment, diagnosis, and prescribing services as well as signposting/referrals onto other services.
- Ensure reassuring and safe transition/discharge.
- Provide the infrastructure required to maintain safe and equitable shared care.
- Manage patient expectations and reduce inequalities.

Workstream 2: Transformed Service Model

- Secure funding for short term capacity to clear or reduce current waiting lists for BAU Commissioners
- Map entire pathway, to include early intervention to crisis – identify gaps, areas of good practice and areas of risk.

- Collate and maintain data sets to build a true, dynamic understanding of demand across the ICS.
- Assess the harm and costs of waiting to individuals and the system, using resulting data to anchor change.
- Implement sustainable shared care arrangements which match national policy and are locally agreed with Primary Care
- Codesign support services which meet need and offer evidence based NHS intervention at the right time – non diagnosis reliant.

Workstream 3

- Understand and implement change alongside those people with lived Experience as Subject Matter Experts.
- Enable access to innovative models of needs led and accessible support/alternative pathways for individuals across every stage of need, including evidence-based psycho-social interventions.
- Identify and mitigate interdependencies between agencies which are historically reliant on diagnosis to access support.
- Develop collaborative partnerships (example strategies) for action on local systemic change, to ensure consistency across the ICS.

Timeline

	2022/23				2023/24				2024/25			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
All Age ASC& ADHD Service Review												
Independent review	■	■										
service requirements review			■									
Engagement and Coproduction				■	■	■	■	■				
Business Case Submission					■							
Pilot transformation initiatives					■	■	■	■				
Service mobilisation							■	■				
Waiting List Initiatives								■	■	■	■	■
Service GO Live									■	■	■	■

5 Consultation and Equalities

- 5.4 Children and young people impacted by autism and neurodiversity are recognised by HIOW ICB as having vulnerability to poor outcomes under the Equality Act in relation to disabilities (learning disabilities) and age (children and young people).

6 Next Steps

- The main focus of the ICB's strategy is to address the wider challenge of developing sufficient capacity to meet the needs of children and young people in Hampshire communities for Autism Assessment.
- Commissioners are maintaining robust monitoring of the assessment service, with the key focus on assessment levels, maximising flow within existing resources and (where possible) using the new all age ASC / ADHD framework to commission additional activity whilst wider work to build a NHS capacity to meet current levels of need is developed. Monthly contract review meetings are conducted to monitor activity and performance, with quarterly quality focused meetings.
- Commissioners continue to work with Portsmouth colleagues and commissioners to understand their "Neurodiversity (ND) Pathway" to ensure that there is equity across the Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICS area.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Children and Families Act [Part 3 SEND] 2014 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted	September 2014
Statutory Guidance: SEND Code of Practice 0-25 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf	January 2015
Local area SEND inspection framework (Ofsted and CQC) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-area-sendinspection-framework	April 2016

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) *why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) *will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*