



On 11th January United Communities members came together virtually for their first meeting of 2021 which had a focus on services for families, children and young people.

United Communities brings together service users, carers, local support organisations and professionals from across the North East Hampshire and Farnham area to discuss local mental health provision, local priorities and new initiatives. If you are interested in seeing notes from previous meetings you can find them [HERE](#) and browse through the sessions using the menu on the left.

The group of approximately 30 were welcomed by Steve Manley, Engagement Manager and Michael Scammell, Commissioning Manager for Mental Health and Learning Disabilities at North East Hampshire and Farnham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), who laid out the agenda for the meeting.

As part of the standing agenda item of Clinical Commission Group updates, Steve reminded people:

That the Community Forum was taking place on the 12th January (a recording of this public meeting and associated slides can be found [HERE](#))

That the innovation Conference is now open to accept applications (further information [HERE](#))

That we would like to understand your experiences of receiving the Flu vaccine this year. It would help with our planning if you could take 5mins to complete the survey [HERE](#)

That the COVID-19 vaccination programme is being rolled out across the North East Hampshire and Farnham area with great success. Further information [HERE](#) and on the vaccine itself [HERE](#)

Michael then took the virtual floor to share an update of how local commissioned services are currently supporting clients within the lockdown restrictions placed upon us. A detailed list can be found on pages 4 & 5 of the attached presentation. In some cases this change of delivery method has meant that some services waiting lists have been reduced.

For those who may be interested in online resources to support their mental wellbeing we would like direct you to:

[TalkPlus](#)

[The Recovery College](#)

[Every Mind Matters](#).

Please also take note of the following information:

Frimley Health and Care



Know where to go when feeling unwell

Urgent help with mental health

- Use [NHS111 online](#) or call if unable to get help online
- If you've injured yourself, taken an overdose or are in an emergency & believe your life is at risk, dial **999**
- Find local services at www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/mentalwellbeing
- Text **Shout 85258** for a free, confidential 24/7 text messaging support service



Our first presentation was delivered by Rebecca Isherwood Smith, Surrey Heartlands ICS Interim Mental Health Programme Lead - who updated on a chance to get involved in shaping work around support for 18-25 year olds who are transitioning from children and young people's mental health and wellbeing services into adult services across both [Surrey Heartlands](#) and [Frimley Health & Care Integrated Care System](#).

The project focuses on 3 areas:

Transition & Access – preparation for transition, how to define the transition processes and how to provide safe appropriate environments

Prevention & Training – to co-develop a training package for young adults transitioning, as well as a specific package for workforce, families and carers

Communication & Messaging – to find a way to clarify and convey a system wide mental health pathway, creating a clear signposting method through targeted communications and messaging about transitions.

If you or someone you know would like to offer views and experiences on these subjects, you can find more information and a link to the questionnaire [HERE](#).

Our main presentation was given by Tim Davis, Associate Director: Children's Mental Health and commissioning lead for Maternity and Child Health for North East Hants and Farnham CCG, and Anna Bennett, Senior Transformation Manager – NEHF CCG Children and Maternity Commissioning. Both link into the Frimley Integrated Care System Children's Commissioning Collaborative.

Tim and Anna discussed the provision of services for both the Surrey and Hampshire areas. Full details are given in the attached slides but the highlights were as follows:

No services have stopped since the beginning of the pandemic but nearly all have had to be delivered in a different way. It was and remains, a challenging time for staff, families and the young people receiving support.

It is acknowledged that services in both areas were hampered by the existing underfunding and extended waiting lists

In the initial lockdown over March/April 2020 a drop in referrals across all services was seen but this picked up to expected levels by August 2020 and then rapidly exceeded them. This increase also includes a 78% rise in eating disorders.

Extra funding has now been pledged from central sources, much of this will go into supporting specialist services such as Autism reviews, young people in crisis and those with eating disorders.

Locum staff have been brought in to support the existing workforce and weekend and evening clinics have now been introduced which have been very well received by families and clients

Please do take a look at the attached presentation for more in depth and detailed information.

At this point we opened to questions from the group.

Question: How are we supporting local young people who may not be known to services? Are we well connected into the schools and college across the area? We need to ensure people are not falling through the cracks.

A national initiative called the Link programme is improving support to schools and colleges as well as bringing in the voluntary sector and community groups where there are benefits to support closer working with education. In North East Hampshire and Farnham, No Limits has recently taken over provision of the young person's safe haven service. You can read more about the service [HERE](#) or visit the No Limits website [HERE](#). There is also a willingness to work with the schools, colleges and local authorities to disseminate information on mental wellbeing and support to parents and carers through school newsletters and on their websites. One such resource are the #coping guides which are linked [HERE](#) You will see that the guides are specific to geographical areas to ensure the information is local to the young person or family using them.

Question: Is child abuse becoming a bigger problem because of the restrictions and lack of interaction with young people at risk?

Certainly during the first lock down the number of safe guarding concerns rose considerably. Learning has meant that services such as midwifery and health visiting have continued in a face to face capacity in subsequent lock downs, in order to reduce the chance of a harmful situation occurring. Schools are also far better equipped this time around to support vulnerable children and have places for them in school. However it is still the case that there are growing numbers of children in need and entering the care system.

Tim commented that the commissioners really want to hear and understand the impact and concerns of individuals, families, carers and schools so that they can tailor service provision to better suit the needs of the clients. As an example it's becoming clear the lack of access to hobbies and activities that many young people take part in which give them confidence, purpose, exercise, enjoyment and social interaction has been particularly hard on them and affected their mental health.

The meeting finished with the invitation to get in touch if you have particular views or experiences regarding young person's mental health support that you would like to share.

As always we would like to extend our thanks to members who continue to support this forum and to those who joined us to present.

We currently do not have any further meeting dates in the diary but will be looking to schedule our next meeting for April. If there are any particular subjects that you would like included in our agendas for the 2021/2022 United Communities meetings please do share them with us by getting in touch at nehfccg.events@nhs.net