

Lewis Macdonald
Convener, Health & Sport Committee
T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Date 5 December 2018

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Dear Mr Macdonald

I refer to your recent letter in which you request an update about Forth Valley Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services particularly regarding staffing and performance against the 18 week Referral to Treatment Target.

Workforce

The Service continues to report an improved position with the upward performance trajectory closely mirroring the anticipated increase in staffing. I previously advised that our performance against the target was adversely affected by absence with conditions out with our control, e.g. several cancer related issues, bereavement and maternity leave. This unfortunately coincided with an unusually high vacancy rate within the service, which meant that approximately 23 % of all patients open to the service were unallocated. This required the Service to divert any new available capacity to continue treating these children.

Although CAMHS staffing remains sensitive to fluctuations in the available workforce nationally, on a positive note, the recruitment of band 5 nurses has provided a degree of succession planning for vacant Band 6 nursing posts. The Service has however had one psychology post vacant since March 2018. This is despite 2 preferred candidates being identified from 2 separate recruitment campaigns. The workforce development plan for Child Psychology is currently under review. Staff retention and recruitment, are key strategic objectives for the CAMHS Management Team and Board.

Performance

As predicted performance remained steady during June and July (48.3%) and in August the RTT was (58.2%). This was achieved due to marginal gains achieved through the implementation of the multi-level recovery plan. In September, performance significantly improved to 83.6% but plateau'd somewhat during October 80.5% and it is anticipated that November's performance will be approximately 81%. It remains our view that NHS Forth Valley will see and treat 90% of children within 18 weeks of referral in December 2018.

Chairman: Alex Linkston CBE
Chief Executive: Cathie Cowan

*Forth Valley NHS Board is the common name for Forth Valley Health Board
Registered Office: Carseview House, Castle Business Park, Stirling, FK9 4SW*

Performance Update

- Performance has steadily improved in line with projections
- Waiting List has significantly reduced and is the lowest it has been since June 2017 (when achieving target)
- All routine patients over 11 weeks now have appointments
- Average wait has reduced to 13.4 weeks
- 11 children are waiting >20 weeks, many of these at their own request
- New patient activity has steadily increased as new staff have come into post
- Sickness absence has reduced as people return to work

CAMHS Recovery Plan:

Forth Valley CAMHS are currently prioritising a multi level recovery action plan. The aim is to continue to optimise all available activity to meet the increased demand and complexity of children and young people presenting, as well as engaging with stakeholders to address the demand. The team continue to benefit from the ongoing support of the Board to assist in the delivery of this action plan.

This plan includes the following priorities:

- Medication Review Clinics: nurse led clinics have been implemented to assist the titration and review of young people in line with national standards.
- Centralised vetting to streamline the process and support consistency or referrals redirection /rejection and compliance against the Service Referral Criteria Document.
- Development of therapeutic groupwork intervention to better support the current therapeutic demand.
- Self help material and resources have been sent to those waiting as part of a 'Test of Change'.
- Experience of Service Audits have been undertaken with service improvement suggestions being actioned.
- Capacity Building at T1 and T2 continues with increased support being given to T1 professionals. Currently 27% of our current referrals meet the criteria for T2.
- FV CAMHS are key partners in all three local authority Children's Services Delivery Plans.
- Service leads hosted a meeting with key representatives from Education Services and a Child Mental Health Collaborative has been established to take forward actions.
- Engagement with parents and service users continues. The service now has a CAMHS Parent Panel, and we are attempting to establish a youth forum group.
- The Management Group continue to meet weekly to focus on the demand, capacity and queue analysis and to ensure activity is monitored to ensure this is in line with the available capacity.
- Mental Health Access Improvement Support Team (MHAIST): FV CAMHS are involved in the national improvement collaborative reviewing the Neuro Developmental Pathway. In addition CAMHS staff have attended intensive training on Demand Capacity Activity and Queue (DCAQ).

The Service continues to work through the multi level recovery action plan and utilise improvement methodology to undertake small tests of change to make marginal gains to ensure the target is maintained. This strategy also allows the Service to focus on several key treatment pathways e.g. NDD (in collaboration with MHAIST), as well as Eating Disorders and Anxiety.

In conclusion NHS Forth Valley CAMHS continues to implement a number of changes to achieve a sustainable improvement. It is anticipated that the standard will be achieved in December 2018. I hope the above provides you with the information requested.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Cathie Cowan'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single blue stroke.

Cathie Cowan
Chief Executive