Our Ref:CH/ADHD

**CAMHS West Team**

**Child and Family Services**

2nd Floor, Horizon

Western Community Hospital Site

William Macleod Way

Millbrook

Southampton

SO16 4XE

Tel: 0300 123 6661

[www.solent.nhs.uk](http://www.solent.nhs.uk/)

28th April 2021

Dear Parents / Carers and Colleagues

**RE: Referrals for children and young with symptoms of ADHD**

You will be aware that the Specialist CAMHS (SpCAMHS) team has been closed to referral requests for ADHD. This has been for two reasons:

* To enable us to redeploy resource within the team to best support the needs of children and young people over this pandemic.
* To enable us to focus our capacity on delivering assessments to those young people waiting.

I am pleased to be writing to inform you that from May 2021 the service will be lifting its pause on referrals for children and young people who have symptoms suggestive of ADHD.

Over the months we have been closed for ADHD the service has continuing to deliver assessments to young people waiting whilst also working with our partners in the City to develop information on the broad range of services and input available for children, young people and families.

In the time we have been closed we have delivered assessments for 285 children and young people waiting. Reducing the longest wait from just under 3 years to 1 year. As you might expect there has been a shift in wait times for medication following the completion of these assessments and we are seeing wait times for this increase. As a service we are continuing to do what we can do to minimise this wait. The service has transformed the way in which it delivers the New Forest Parenting Programme for ADHD and has been able to offer this to over 90 families at the time of writing.

**Referral Criteria**

Referrals for young people whose needs appear to be connected with symptoms of ADHD are required to meet the SpCAMHS referral criteria withsymptoms having an adverse and significant impact on levels of risk and functioning. The service criteria can be found here:

<https://www.solent.nhs.uk/our-services/services-listings/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-camhs-southampton/>

All referrals to the service are triaged by our Single Point of Access (SPA). The purpose of SPA is to speak with families to gain a broad view of the needs of children and young people to assist with securing the most appropriate service at the right time. If a child/young person hasn’t accessed other services or support prior to a referral to SpCAMHS then we would make recommendations on the best services to access.

Our parent/carer group in the City, Re:Minds has pulled together a very useful resource list of services available in the City and this can be found here:

<https://www.reminds.org.uk/advice-1>

Examples of input or services that can be accessed include:

* Speaking with the school about your concerns and identifying what additional input can be put in place within the school environment.
* You can refer to the Early Help Service in the City if you feel your child or family would benefit from further support. They offer a range of parent led interventions. <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/health-social-care/children/child-social-care/early-help.aspx>
* Linking in with Re:Minds to be able to access support from other parent/carers alongside talks and drop in clinics from services in the City.
* Attending an Non Violent Resistance (NVR) course which can be accessed via Early Help or Youth Options. <https://www.youthoptions.co.uk/what-we-do/parent-carer-support/non-violent-resistance>

**Current Demand on Service**

In line with the picture seen nationally the local demand on our SpCAMHS team has increased by 50%. We continue to prioritise children and young people with the highest levels of need. Examples of such need would include, but is not exclusive to, young people with eating disorders, mental health needs leading to suicidal thoughts with intention and planning and/or young people with early signs of psychosis. The service has noted an increase in referrals of this nature and so regrettably wait times for some therapies and assessments are increasing.

**Wait Times**

Current time between referral acceptance and initial assessment is 9 weeks. Our projections are that this wait time is likely to double once referrals connected to ADHD symptoms are received again. As a service we are committed to meeting the needs of all children and young people who require our service to the highest possible standard and we wish to assure you that we continue to work at keeping our wait times as low as possible.

There are many services and self-help resources that can be of help and are able to be accessed regardless of SpCAMHS involvement. Such services are contained within the Re:Minds resource (above) as well as on the Solent website just below the link for the referral criteria (<https://www.solent.nhs.uk/our-services/services-listings/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-camhs-southampton/>)

For convenience we have attached the details of self-help resources and services that can be accessed across our City.

Once again we thank you for this understanding, patience and partnership.

Yours sincerely



**Chantal Homan**

**Service and Quality Manager**

**CAMHS West**