4 August 2022

**Southampton CAMHS Referral Criteria and Guidance**

Dear GPs

We are writing to remind you of the CAMHS referral process and criteria.

As I am sure you are aware, CAMHS is receiving a very high number of referrals each month. This has increased from 131/mth before the pandemic to 192/mth in the last 12 months, so more than a 47% increase. CAMHS is also seeing an increase in the complexity and functional impairment of children and young people coming into the service (e.g. Eating Disorders and self-harm/suicidal intent).

While the demand is high, in the most recent 12 months the service is signposting more than 2 in 5 referrals (42%) that could be seen more appropriately by other services.  This has resulted in the team having to redirect clinical resources to the front door that could be used more appropriately in the treatment of children & young people with mental health conditions.

We receive a number of referrals where other local help and support for the family needs to be accessed in the first instance such as Families Matter/Early Help, No Limits, Yellow Door etc. before a referral to CAMHS. We also receive a high number of referral forms with limited information, so are unable to triage the referral as the form is incomplete.

Referrals for Autism Assessment should be referred directly to the Solent Autism Assessment Service [snhs.autismsouthampton@nhs.net](mailto:snhs.autismsouthampton@nhs.net).

Attached is an updated Specialist CAMHS referral criteria to support professionals in considering the most appropriate service to meet the needs of children and young people.

Thank you for your support and understanding regarding the current pressures on CAMHS.

Yours sincerely



**Satty Basra, CAMHS West Team Manager**