

West Berkshire Community Adult Mental Health Health Overview Scrutiny Committee

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Community mental health transformation

Mental health Integrated community service (MHICS)

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- MHICS team – provides specialised mental health support in the community, focusing on resilience and recovery.
- A collaboration of GPs, mental health professionals, pharmacists, community connectors, psychiatrists, psychologists, voluntary sector and local authority
- Offering support to adults living with difficult challenges to their mental health and life including those with a significant mental illness, those with life events significantly contributing to poor mental health such as financial worries, relationship breakdown, housing issues and those who struggle to engage with other mental health services.
- Support includes short term one to one or group sessions and may include appointments with specialists - Psychological assessments / care planning / information and guidance around emotional and physical wellbeing / access to consultation from a psychiatrist or mental health pharmacist/ support with medication/ bridging and supporting referrals to other services

MHICS roll out

- MHICS was rolled out in a phased way and started in Wokingham and Reading before being rolled out in West Berkshire
- The MHICS teams will be attached to individual practices and PCNs and will have regular direct contact with them
- The team will take direct referrals from the mental health service, GP practices and talking therapists and other community voluntary sector services (they do not accept self-referrals)
- They aim to see all patients referred to them within 4 weeks
- Went live in February 2024 in West Berkshire and had 17 referrals in 3 days.
- Phased roll out initially just taking referrals from secondary care, next phase includes referrals from primary care and Voluntary Community Social Enterprises (VCSE) planned by June
- The team currently has 3 mental health practitioners, a psychologist and consultant support and are actively trying to fill all the available roles
- One of the significant challenges to the service roll out has been recruitment and the team are working hard to overcome this
- The Community Wellness Outreach (health checks) service assesses mental health and wellbeing and refers on as appropriate

Community connectors

- Specialist voluntary sector partners within the MHICS team who have expert knowledge of the local area and who work together to access the local support that a patient needs
- Include drug and alcohol support groups
- Debt and housing support
- Social networks to combat loneliness
- Volunteering opportunities

MHICS Peer Support Service

- Offer one to one peer support to people with significant and / or long-term mental illness
- Support is provided by trusted lived experience practitioners
- Sessions can be face to face in the community or online

VCSE

- VCSE workshop took place on 16th May 2024 focusing on mental health/well-being and the NHSE Navigator Scheme working collaboratively across the BOB System

ARRS Mental Health Practitioners (MHP)

- The additional roles reimbursement scheme (ARRS) introduced in England in 2019 to improve access to general practice
- ARRS mental health practitioners are part of the wider transformation and expansion of community mental health services. Experienced practitioners who are employed by the secondary care mental health provider (BHFT) but jointly funded by primary care and BHFT.
- Operate as a fully embedded member of the PCN multidisciplinary team – sitting within GP practices
- Act as a bridge between primary and secondary care mental health services and can facilitate onward referral to a range of services to meet the patients' needs as well as providing short term treatment / therapy
- Most practices in West Berkshire now have an ARRS MHP within their team
- Patients care directly book an appointment with them via the GP practice or be signposted to them by the GP if presenting with lower-level mental health conditions
- The feedback both from patients and GPs practices is that the roles have made a significant impact in care and support for patients with mental illness in our communities
- The role has significantly improved communication between primary and secondary care services because the practitioners sit within both services, and this has significantly benefited patient care.

Glossary

- **MHICS – Mental Health Integrated Community Services**
- **GPs - General Practitioners**
- **PCN – Primary Care Networks**
- **VCSE – Voluntary Community Social Enterprises**
- **ARRRs – Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme**
- **MHP – Mental Health Practitioner**

Thank you
questions...?