

Policy Briefing: A Foot in the Door: VCS Providers' View of CAMHS Transformation

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Purpose of the document

Youth Access is the national association for a network of 170 Youth Information, Advice and Counselling Services (YIACS). YIACS are the main providers of mental health services for young people aged 13-25 in the Voluntary Community Sector (VCS). They have published the report, together with the Young People's Health Partnership, to show that Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and local authorities are increasingly turning to voluntary sector health and wellbeing models such as the YIACS delivery model, because they empower young people to help transform child and adolescent mental health services. The report is based on a survey of 58 YIACS members about their experiences of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) transformation programme.

Summary of contents

The report describes the findings based on a survey of 58 YIACS members, about their experiences of planning the transformation of CAMHS in their local areas. The findings are divided into 8 themes. They include: 1) Engagement of the VCS in the development of their local transformation programme; 2) Involvement of young people by CCGs and local authorities; 3) The role of the YIACS in the transformation of local youth mental health services; 4) Investment in VCS as a result of the local transformation; 5) Early intervention and prevention for mental health services; 6) Tackling the social influences of young people's mental health; 7) Transitions from child to adult services; and 8) Transparency with spending.

Summary of outcomes

The findings show that in many areas, VCS have managed to 'get their foot in the door' with their local transformation plans. This is because they recognise that health and wellbeing models should have a greater role in transforming CAMHS from its current state to being more accessible and integrated, with early intervention and prevention. This has also been welcomed by commissioners of local CCGs and local authorities. However, in other areas, the NHS system appears to be shutting the VCS out of the transformation of CAMHS, and resisting change.

Summary of recommendations

The government should take more action to ensure that CAMHS commissioners take on a lot more responsibility, and work more closely with their CAMHS colleagues to plan and commission together, better mental health services for young adults. Also, there should be stronger input from those at the heart of the VCS to ensure that they fully realise and understand the valuable contribution of the VCS.

Further information and resources

NHS England - Local Transformation Plans: Guidance and Support for Local Areas

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/local-transformation-plans-cyp-mh-guidance.pdf> Future in Mind

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414024/Childrens_Mental_Health.pdf

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