

# SUPPORTING NHS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE UK



## MEETING THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF INFANTS, CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES\*

- mental illness in children and young people is recognised as a major public health concern with evidence of rising prevalence, exacerbated by COVID-19
- the NHS in all parts of the UK has committed to additional funding for child and adolescent mental health with ambitions to increase access to services for 0-25 year olds
- investments are being made to develop comprehensive multi-disciplinary services through an expanded and more diverse workforce and ensure help is offered in the right time and the right place
- Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists, as one of the 12 core NHS Psychological Professions, are working with government bodies, service providers and our fellow professionals to support these welcome developments
- as part of long-term plans for effective and cost-effective services, child and adolescent psychotherapy has an important contribution to meeting the needs of infants, children, young people and families

*"We have a referrals meeting every fortnight and the Child Psychotherapist always comes with a multi-disciplinary approach – informing whether we need to make a referral or not."*

Ward Manager, London Hospital

## SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

**A comprehensive skill mix is needed for effective services to:**

- meet high levels of demand and, for some, high severity of need
- ensure patients receive the help they need on first referral, and can be discharged with better outcomes
- reduce risk and reduce demands on other services such as inpatient units, A&E and social care
- deliver integration across primary and specialist care, physical and mental health, and health with social care

*"The Child Psychotherapist's expertise spans the whole age range which is unique as working with children with high levels of aggression or young children individually is not routinely available in CAMHS."*

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, North West CAMHS

## PART OF THE SOLUTION

**Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists offer:**

- effective assessment leading to generic and specialist interventions
- consultation to teams and networks supporting complex casework
- brief or longer term treatment, including for the most vulnerable and disturbed children and young people
- treatment options for those whom other therapeutic interventions have not been able to help
- work with parents and carers in supporting the therapeutic needs of infants, children and adolescents

*"I believe that my work at school with our most complex and challenging students and their families has been enhanced by my long and successful relationship with the child and adolescent psychotherapist."*

Learning Support Unit Manager, London

## EVIDENCE-BASED

**Child and adolescent psychotherapy is:**

- supported by research and practice-based evidence including four systematic meta-analytic studies
- a NICE/SCIE treatment of choice for some of the most severely ill children and young people (moderate to severe depression, and after abuse and neglect)
- at the forefront of research, innovation and service development in many specialist areas including perinatal and infant mental health, children looked after and adopted, paediatric psychotherapy and work in schools
- one of the 12 core Psychological Professions in the NHS

*"Why didn't anyone ask me these questions before - I've been waiting such a long time for someone to help me understand. You don't seem phased, it's like I am not that crazy, it all has a reason."*

Teenager

## COST-EFFECTIVE

**Providing the right intervention at the right time in the right place is cost effective:**

- 40% of children with mental health problems have complex conditions often arising from early trauma or adverse childhood experiences, which are likely to require specialist input
- a year of community-based intervention costs 33 times less than inpatient care.
- child and adolescent psychotherapy expertise as part of a multi-disciplinary team or network can increase understanding and reduce risk
- child and adolescent psychotherapy can be part of the digital delivery of services

*"Our Child Psychotherapist is hugely helpful in formulation, complex case discussion and supervision meetings. For longer term work she will see young people who otherwise might be hospitalised."*

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, North Yorkshire Community CAMHS

## SUPPORTING THE WORKFORCE

**Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists:**

- can support the expanded workforce and new roles needed to meet the needs of all children and young people
- provide training, supervision and case consultation to colleagues of all disciplines
- offer clinical and system leadership for safe and effective services
- promote good staff development and morale, increasing staff retention and lowering vacancy rates
- receive an NHS funded doctoral-level training focusing exclusively on work with children and young people (0-25) and their families

*"The Child Psychotherapist boosts morale of teachers and SENCO teams. She meets with us all to talk through and understand why certain children are behaving a certain way."*

Primary School Teacher, London

## INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE

- the NHS Long Term Plan aims to create a sustainable workforce supply of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists that is both equitably spread across the country and representative of the diversity of communities it serves
- "We are the NHS: People Plan for 2020/2021 – action for us all" commits to increasing the number of training places for child and adolescent psychotherapy by 25% in 2020/21
- using RCPsych guidance on workforce and skill mix in specialist CAMHS the ACP recommends a minimum of 2 Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists per 100,000 total population to meet the needs of infants, children, young people and families

*"I would like to see more CAPTs in lead roles within CAMHS – being part of local leadership teams and being involved in decisions around service design and development."*

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, North West CAMHS

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Ensure you have a comprehensive skill mix including Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists as part of your multi-disciplinary mental health service
- Host child and adolescent psychotherapy trainees and ensure you have sufficient senior Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists to supervise them
- Support staff to access the child and adolescent psychotherapy training pathway
- View more information on the ACP website [www.childpsychotherapy.org.uk](http://www.childpsychotherapy.org.uk)

\*References can be found in the ACP report '[Specialist Provision for Complex Needs](#)'

The ACP is the professional body and accredited register for Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists in the UK. We have been working to improve the mental health of infants, children, young people and families since 1949.