

ASSESSMENT AND THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS

Reasons for the Report

1. This report provides the Committee with information in relation to the commissioning of assessments and therapeutic interventions within Children's Services. The report aims to inform the Committee on the current activity being undertaken in this area in line with Priority 1 of the Corporate Parenting Strategy – Improving Emotional Wellbeing and Physical Health.

Background

2. Prior to the establishment and involvement of the Children's Commissioning Team, Assessments and Therapeutic Interventions were commissioned on an individual case by case basis led by the Social Worker.

Short to Medium Term Actions

3. All short-medium term actions have been completed and are under review as part of the pilot process, these are:
 - The commissioning of all independent assessments and therapeutic interventions including safeguarding and procedural checks has been centralised within the commissioning team
 - The commissioning of the Assessment element of the pilot has been implemented
 - A Quality Assurance process for commissioned assessments has been developed and recently launched

- A Therapy Pathway has been developed (**Appendix A**) to reduce duplication for Social Work teams and provide an efficient process where therapy is identified as a requirement for a child / young person
 - The Therapy Pathway has been enhanced through the alignment of the process with the ENFYS service to ensure the provision of therapy for children and young people is consistently considered and consulted on in conjunction with Health Board colleagues and expertise
 - Communication with ENFYS has been strengthened to include collaborative working on process and data collation across all therapies being delivered within Enfys and externally
 - The Therapy element of the pilot has been implemented
 - Planning has commenced for tender activity
 - Initial Market engagement has been undertaken with Assessment and Therapy providers / professionals
4. ENFYS (previously developmental trauma service) is referenced within the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The Assessment and Therapies process has been aligned with the service provided by ENFYS to enable consultation with Health Professionals for all children and young people who are identified by the Social Work team as requiring Therapeutic Interventions. This has widened the understanding within the Social Work Teams as well as the options available to support long term sustainable outcomes for our children and young people through the identification of the appropriate type of therapy as well as the appropriate time for the child or young person to engage in therapy. Where therapy is not recommended by Enfys they are able to suggest alternatives which would better meet the emotional wellbeing needs of the child at the time.
5. The pilot therapy pathway (**Appendix A**) is currently being piloted and has so far been found to be a streamlined process which provides easier access to therapeutic interventions where this is the right action for the child or young person at the time. This process ensures all commissioned activity is fully informed and appropriate interventions are provided, delivered at the right time for that child / young person.

6. The therapy pathway also aligns with the Brighter Futures Panel where all commissioned activity in relation to therapeutic interventions are subject to review and approval and the Health Funding Panel. The pilot therapy pathway (**Appendix A**) is intended to result in Social Work Teams having the information available to them to understand the expectations and present requests to these panels. As the therapy element of the process evolves through the pilot this area will require further actions and amendments.

Medium and Long Term Plans

7. As a pilot, a project group is in place to review and embed the process. The process is evolving on a regular basis with a focus on removal of duplication and increased streamlining to ensure any delays in the process are removed to ensure children and young people are able to access identified therapeutic interventions in an appropriate and timely manner.
8. The next steps / medium to long term plans also include:
 - Increased market engagement events to increase the professionals available to undertake this work
 - Increased market knowledge and evaluation to ensure high quality therapeutic interventions are being accessed
 - Development of a Quality Assurance process for Therapeutic interventions
 - Increased data collection and analysis including wider gap analysis related to the data produced from the commissioning arrangements
 - Increased activity in relation to Value for Money including analysis of spend and costs against Legal Aid Agency Rates
 - Increased access to Health Board funding for therapies through the provision of appropriate interventions to meet the needs and evidence available on the professionals completing the interventions to assist with funding application to panel
9. Consultation will be undertaken with children and young people who have experienced assessments or therapeutic interventions to enhance the

specification and ensure commissioning for assessments and therapeutic interventions is informed by the experiences and requirements of our children and young people and adaptations are made to ensure potential for engagement through for example alternative models of delivery.

Issues

10. The volume of work is very high in comparison to the capacity within the team.
11. There is currently limited professionals and available capacity within the market as COVID has increased demand across all Local Authorities, Further market engagement events are required to engage the market and develop a provider base alongside the gap identification and consideration of further development of Health Board Services, including Enfys.
12. Enfys are an ICF commissioned Service and therefore funding for this element of the service is currently due to end 31st March 2022. Work will need to be undertaken to review this service and determine future funding options if appropriate.

Benefits

13. All children looked after in Cardiff who have a need identified for therapeutic intervention by their Social Worker will have their needs discussed at an Enfys Consultation. This ensure consistency in approach and ensures that we are working in conjunction with our Health Board colleagues in determining need in this area.
14. All commissioning of therapeutic interventions is informed by Health Board expertise through Enfys (what intervention, when the intervention is appropriate and what expertise is required to deliver)
15. Where therapy is not recommended Enfys will make recommendations for alternatives. This process has aligned and strengthened the links with the service and ensure that prior to instigating therapeutic interventions Health Board expertise is obtained.

16. As well as benefiting the children and young people through the delivery of appropriate interventions at the appropriate time and access being simplified the process supports the Social Work and Legal Teams in the identification of the appropriate professional to meet the identified needs removing the searching and contractual requirements from the Social Work responsibilities.
17. The process centralises the commissioning of these professionals, ensuring safeguarding and procedural checks are completed efficiently and in line with standing orders and procurement legislation and data is collated to inform future requirements.

Financial Implications

18. The Assessment and Therapies process includes the centralisation and increased detail surrounding financial information and therefore will increase our understanding of spend in this area and ensure value for money is being obtained. It is envisaged that the staff costs of running the pilot will be covered through the savings achieved through appropriate commissioning in this area.

Legal Implications

19. There are no legal implications arising from the report

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- a. Consider the report and identify how the committee would like to monitor progress in the development and roll out of the Assessment and Therapies pilot process and the outcomes that are anticipated to be achieved from its roll out.
- b. Note the development of the Assessment and Therapies process and the alignment of this process to other services and work key to Priority 1 within the Strategy

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