

Relocation of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Tier 4 Inpatient Services in York

1. Introduction

Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) cover a wide range of services for young people up to the age of 18. About one in 10 young people will have emotional or behavioural problems at some time in their lives.

CAMHS is split into four tiers:

- The first three tiers are delivered in the community and provide a wide variety of assessment and support for mild to moderate mental health conditions. These range from common problems of childhood such as sleeping difficulties or feeding problems up to assessment of development or behavioural problems, autism, hyperactivity, eating disorders, depression and early onset psychosis. Services in Tiers 1 to 3 are commissioned by clinical commissioning groups.
- Tier 4 services consist of specialised day and inpatient units, where children and adolescents with more severe mental health problems can be assessed and treated. Tier 4 services are commissioned directly by NHS England specialist commissioners.

2. CAMHS provision in York and Selby

Tier 4 CAMHS is provided to young people up to the age of 18 in the York and Selby area by Leeds and York Partnerships NHS Foundation Trust (LYPFT).

The service is known as Lime Trees and is based in a building of the same name, which is located in the Clifton area of York. The building is owned by NHS Property Services. Whilst most service users are supported by the outpatient (community) team, which provides a range of assessment and treatment interventions including one-to-one, group and family therapy, some young people with severe conditions require more intensive assessment, care and support in an inpatient service.

Lime Trees provides mixed gender inpatient accommodation for up to nine service users. The majority of inpatients are female, which is in line with national trends. The most common conditions experienced by inpatients are anorexia nervosa (28% of cases) and self-harming behaviour (26%).

At present, demand for inpatient CAMHS beds for York and Selby is variable but at any one time there can be up to 14 service users who need an inpatient admission.

At Lime Trees only nine beds are currently available (with the unit having closed two of its beds at the request of NHS England due to the serious constraints of the physical environment of the unit). When demand is high, service users are admitted to other specialist units in other parts of the country and in some cases there is a waiting list for places.

In Yorkshire and Humber, up to 40% of patients are admitted to Tier 4 services outside of the region due to high demand for existing specialist services in the region. The closure of the two beds at Lime Trees will inevitably add more pressure on this.

3. Challenges of the current environment

The physical environment of the current Lime Trees inpatient building is not fit for purpose, and creates a number of challenges to the delivery of safe and effective care to children and adolescents requiring 24-hour care. LYPFT has, for some time, been working with NHS Property Services to find alternative premises for inpatient CAMHS at Lime Trees. The challenges of the physical environment were then highlighted in a recent (February 2014) Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection report relating to the service, and have also required NHS England specialist commissioners to issue an agreed derogation against national standards for Tier 4 CAMHS services.

The latest CQC inspection report highlighted that generally the care received by service users at Lime Trees is good. They found the service to be fully compliant in meeting standards for:

- Treating people with respect and involving them in their care
- Providing care, treatment and support that meets people's needs
- Staffing (providing skilled staff and the appropriate staffing levels).

The CQC highlighted some very positive feedback in their report. They said:

- Staff were interacting with patients in a positive, respectful and caring manner
- There was documented evidence which demonstrated that patients were provided with written and verbal information about their rights
- Each patient had a comprehensive risk assessment in place which included exploitation, vulnerability, nutrition, social isolation, self-harm, aggression and violence
- Patients they spoke with told them they thought they were cared for well by staff and felt safe on the ward.

However, as a result of the challenges posed by the clinical environment, Lime Trees was only partially compliant against two required standards in the CQC inspection:

- People should be cared for in safe and accessible surroundings that support their health and welfare (outcome 10)
- The service should have quality checking systems to manage risks and assure the health, welfare and safety of people who receive care (outcome 16).

An inspection of inpatient facilities found a number of potential ligature (hanging) points in bedrooms and bathrooms, and the CQC noted that the ward did not have risk assessments in place to manage the ligature risks identified. In addition, the bedrooms were found to present a risk in enabling service users to barricade themselves into rooms, and there were concerns relating to adequate ventilation. These were identified as serious concerns that needed prompt resolution.

The CQC concluded that the building is not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) because the corridors and some rooms are not accessible for wheelchair users.

A number of issues relating to the provision of separate services for male and female service users also meant that the inpatient service was not compliant with the Department of Health Single Sex Accommodation (SSA) requirements, and the environmental layout may compromise the privacy and dignity of patients. The accommodation is such that the number of male inpatients is therefore limited to two at any one time.

A number of these concerns are equally reflected in the feedback given by both service users and families/carers as part of the annual Quality Network Peer Review process. Last year, the comments raised included concerns relating to the size and layout of the bedrooms, a lack of adequate visiting space, a lack of bathrooms, poor ventilation, and a general sense of the whole unit feeling very small and cramped.

Although a number of short-term actions have been taken to reduce the risks identified, it is fully agreed by LYPFT and NHS England specialist commissioners that the current unit cannot remain open due to the environmental challenges and an inability to ever fully comply with national standards and other legal requirements (such as the DDA).

4. Proposed solution

LYPFT has worked closely with NHS England specialist commissioners and NHS Property Services to identify optimum solutions for enabling Lime Trees to meet CQC standards and deliver high quality, safe inpatient care in line with national guidelines. Due to the urgency of the need to relocate the service, a current property was identified that could be adapted to meet the required standards, and this was proposed as a temporary interim solution.

LYPFT, NHS England specialist commissioners and NHS Property Services have therefore planned to relocate inpatient services to an alternative NHS building in the Huntingdon area of York. The Mill Lodge building is currently unoccupied, although was previously designated as a 20 bedded inpatient unit for older adults. Outpatient services will remain at Lime Trees.

Subject to refurbishment, the Mill Lodge building will provide suitable accommodation for young inpatients and will enable the service to:

- Increase bed capacity, which would reduce the number of local young people receiving their inpatient care out of the York area
- Develop a high dependency area as part of the inpatient service, which would enable the unit to care for more acutely ill young people
- Minimise ligature risk and make bedrooms, bathrooms and other facilities safer
- Make the inpatient wards single sex and improve dignity by introducing washing facilities in all the bedrooms and separate facilities for male and female patients
- Ensure that the service is wheelchair user-friendly and compliant with the DDA
- Provide more relaxation space and space for family visits, which is not currently available at the Lime Trees building
- Increase space at the Lime Trees building for outpatients and other community services.

Mill Lodge has previously received capital investment from the former North Yorkshire and York PCT and is therefore of a high internal and external standard already. By utilising this existing inpatient space, LYPFT will be able to reduce costs and make the best use of resources whilst ensuring a prompt transition to the new premises.

Based upon the work that has been undertaken to date to develop plans for Mill Lodge, NHS England specialist commissioners have given their support to a business case to proceed with refurbishment of the building; and we expect (a different part of) NHS England to give approval to the capital funding for the refurbishment shortly. A specification for the refurbished building – based upon the identified needs of the service user group and the national standards related to Tier 4 CAMHS units – has been developed, and is currently going to tender.

NHS England specialist commissioners have been clear that failure to implement an urgent resolution to the relocation of the service would inevitably result in a closure of the service; and a loss of a local Tier 4 CAMHS service to the young people of York and North Yorkshire.

5. Service user involvement

LYPFT and NHS England have been working closely with service users, families and staff to ensure that their views have assisted in – and continue to inform - the development of these proposals. Some current inpatients were involved in a site visit to the proposed new premises. During the visit the young people were very positive about the potential and in particular commented on the space throughout the unit, both internally and externally. They liked the fact that there would be better visiting space and more 'chilling out' areas. They wanted the lounge to remain as one room but liked the different zones in the room – a sense of being together but having some space apart. The young people advised on furniture choices and wanted a combination of sofas and chairs in the lounge, citing how challenging it feels in the current unit when everyone has to 'squash into the sofas' in the lounge.

In addition, a session was held with the York Youth Council, asking them to comment on the requirements they would want from an inpatient service. The general feedback included:

- Homely feel with a place to lock personal belongings
- Own bedroom and own bathroom
- Community area and opportunities to watch TV, read books, play games and listen to music
- Warm colours
- A safe place
- A gardening area to grow vegetables
- Stationery to keep a diary
- Good food (and possibly a tuck shop)

The feedback is being used to shape the plans for developing the Mill Lodge site; and young people and their families/carers will be invited back to further inform the next stage of the development, including the choice of colours used in the unit and the general look and feel of the decor.

6. Next steps

Assuming that the current specification for refurbishment is successfully tendered and the timescales anticipated within the work programme are achieved, the intention is for the Tier 4 CAMHS inpatient services to relocate to Mill Lodge by early November 2014. This will provide an interim solution to the environmental needs of the service. It is anticipated that the refurbishment project will cost around £1m inclusive of fees, contingency and VAT.

It was originally proposed that NHS Property Services might provide a new entirely fit-for-purpose development on the Lime Trees site at an estimated cost

of around £3m. However, due to both the urgency of the need to relocate the service and a planned national procurement exercise by NHS England for the provision of Tier 4 CAMHS this was not a viable solution in the short term. It is anticipated that this will need to be explored further, in particular depending upon the outcome of the national procurement process for Tier 4 CAMHS provision across Yorkshire and Humber.