Position statement on children and young peoples’ mental health

RCGP/RCPCH/RCPSYCH

Background:

In the UK there are estimated to be 850,000 children and young people with mental health problems. At present, only 25% of them receive specialist intervention. The increased focus on early intervention, promotion of good mental health and investment in specialist Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) following the publication of Future in Mind\(^1\) by government is therefore welcome.

However, per the Five year forward view for mental health\(^2\), the proportion of children and young people receiving specialist intervention will only rise to 33% by 2020. Given the sustained cuts to all services since 2010 and the rising demand, a broader vision is needed. This vision should combine continued additional investment and a broader vision for children and young people’s mental health.

We would like to commit as Royal Colleges to the following statements of principle:

A child and young peoples’ (CYP) mental health system that works for all, requires in addition to the commissioning of specialist treatment, the following elements:

- CYP mental health is everybody’s business. This needs to be supported by a shared vision for CYP mental health across all government departments (especially Health, Education and Justice).

- A prev-entative, multi-agency approach to mental health across all ages, incorporating attention to education for young people and families, social determinants, and health promotion – focusing on public mental health and early intervention for CYP, including minimising the need for admission and effective crisis services to ensure that CYP can be supported and their treatment managed in their homes as much as possible.

- A system of national and local accountability for population-level CYP mental health and well-being, delivered via integrated local area systems.

- Training and education for the whole children's workforce in their role and responsibilities for CYP mental health.

- More support, both from specialist services and other sectors, for professionals dealing with CYP who do not meet referral threshold to a CAMH service and ensuring that CYP who require specialist CAMHS have access to a responsive service.

It is intended that these principles remain shared across our colleges for the foreseeable future. However, we do not intend that they remain simply statements, but that they lead to tangible actions to improve the care and support of CYP with mental health problems.

At present our shared commitments are that the Royal Colleges of General Practice, Paediatrics and Child Health, and Psychiatry commit to:

- Deliver the highest level of training and standards in CYP mental health.

- Explore policy responses to the emerging evidence base on Adverse Childhood Experiences, and how to ameliorate the prevalence and impact of these on CYP.

- Examine possible systems of local integration and accountability, including the concept of a ‘local offer’ for mental health, analogous to existing offers for special educational needs.

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● The RCGP/RCPsych/RCPCH will promote and support practice that supports early intervention, resilience and emotional literacy and wellbeing, working in partnership with schools and colleges.

● We will support the development of effective models of working with other healthcare professionals that work with CYP including midwives, health visitors, child development services and the third sector which promote the mental health and wellbeing of CYP.

● The RCGP/RCPsych/RCPCH will support the development of evidence based models of care that are focused on integration of care and deliver evidence based interventions in CYP friendly focused settings, which complement traditional service models.

● The RCGP/RCPsych/RCPCH will support the call for greater investment and resources to be focused on developing services in CYP friendly settings that promote early intervention and resilience.

● We will support the call for resources to be directed towards joint professional learning delivered through HEE and CCGs in England, NHS Boards in Scotland, Local Health Boards in Wales and Health and Social Care Boards in Northern Ireland.

● All three colleges support the involvement of CYP and their families in the development of values-based policy and service developments.