

Commissioner response to our report ‘How to help...: exploring how mental health services can support emotional wellbeing’

In November 2018 we received a detailed response to our report from Surrey Mental Health CCG Collaboratives and Surrey County Council, the commissioners of mental health services for Surrey. This is a summary of the key points from the response:

The commissioners thanked Healthwatch Surrey for our report, *“It is always valuable to receive independent reports so we can be well informed and take action on the issues that are important to people.”*

Regarding the context for Mental Health provision in Surrey, the commissioners said:

- “Mental health has come through as a national priority. There is a significant gap between service and resource, but over the last 4 years important improvement work has been initiated.”
- “Mental health has been underfunded nationally, but Surrey County Council has maintained their level of investment in mental health, all our CCGs have met the Investment Standard each year, and we have seen improved investment for some services.”
- “Trained staff are in short supply nationally... which puts a strain on service delivery and on maintaining continuity”.

The response goes on to say “a workforce delivery plan is being developed, looking at new roles including peer support workers and trainee positions; at the same time more integrated working across teams including with the voluntary sector is being implemented.”

The response to key questions raised in the report was as follows:

- **Are issues important to service users being measured in service evaluation?** The commissioners and providers are reviewing their quality schedule for 2019/20. One objective of this review is to ensure patient-driven areas of importance are incorporated into service monitoring.
- **Care Planning - provision and involvement** Initiatives have been put in place to address challenges around care planning. However, our survey, local monitoring and national surveys still indicate this is an area that needs improving.
- **Do we understand what ‘good information’ looks like to service users?** Commissioners have been working with the Independent Mental Health Network on a refresh of materials. A Mental Health Single Point of Access is being

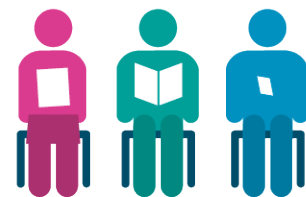


rolled out, and all materials are loaded onto the Directory of Services held by NHS111

- **Crisis Services** - This has been a significant focus of work - "we have been proud of ensuring we have direct feedback and utilise this in improving the commissioning and delivery of services". Among other initiatives the Single Point of Access, including a 24/7 crisis line, will be launched in April 2019

- **Mental Health and Service Integration** - 44 GPs have taken up the locally-commissioned Advanced Diploma in Mental Health for GPs, and this will continue to be commissioned in 2018/19. There is a focussed project supporting people with severe mental illness to attend a physical health check, along with other initiatives supporting health and social care integration. Commissioners and providers are also working with acute hospitals, the police and the ambulance service to ensure we are moving at pace in the right direction.

WAITING ROOM



Next Steps

The commissioners have invited Healthwatch Surrey to:

- Be involved in their review of the contracted quality schedule with providers Surrey & Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, to help ensure the quality measures reflect what is important to patients
- Discuss ways of learning more about current care planning practices and experiences
- Join the Crisis Concordat Delivery Group - a strong group that is leading and maintaining multi-agency commitment to improve experiences and outcomes.

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