

1 July 2020

## COVID-19 - update on our Mental Health and Learning Disability Services

In this briefing, Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) would like to provide an update on the work it has been doing to restore its services.

Importantly, **we wanted to reassure and remind you that all of our services are open and throughout the entire period our crisis services, urgent community and inpatient services** have been running as usual. At the start of the pandemic we also put in place enhanced 24/7 support line services for adults and young people needing advice and support, whether they were in a crisis situation or just needed to talk. We also opened an emotional support helpline for all HPFT staff and all other NHS and social care staff in Hertfordshire.

Understandably, and in line with the national and local picture, we saw a dramatic drop off in referrals into our services during the initial COVID-19 outbreak and as at the end of June, referrals remain down by approximately 30% across the Trust. For Community Learning Disability services, IAPT (Wellbeing Services) and older people's services demand is down by nearer 40%. That said, we are seeing a gradual increase in the number of people needing our services each week, and alongside this we are seeing increased levels of complexity and treatment needed.

Moving forwards, we welcome your support in helping us to identify and ensure that needs of those people with mental health and learning disabilities are referred, particularly those who may be more vulnerable and perhaps haven't engaged with any services over the past few weeks/months.

### Service Update

Referrals can continue to be made in the normal way via the **Single Point of Access (SPA)**. We are continuing to provide an enhanced SPA service with increased support available directly through SPA. The number is **0300 777 0707** and it is available **24/7**. The SPA team can now also be accessed **24/7 via NHS 111** for Hertfordshire residents. Selecting **Option 2** for mental health services, will transfer callers directly through to our mental health helpline team. Email: [hpft.spa@nhs.net](mailto:hpft.spa@nhs.net) for non-urgent enquiries.

### A&E Diversion Service

Our new A&E diversion hubs at Lister Advanced Day Treatment Unit (ADTU) in Stevenage and The Orchards ADTU in Hemel Hempstead have worked well and continue to provide a safe space for people in mental health crisis. They have been established to reduce people's exposure to potential infection and to ease pressure on our local A&E departments. They are providing all the services, previously carried out by our Mental Health Liaison Teams in A&E at the Lister and Watford General Hospitals. Over the next few weeks we will be evaluating these hubs more formally with partners to inform our decision about how we move forwards.

### Inpatient Services

Our inpatient services continue to remain open. Visiting is still being restricted and permission to visit is only being given in exceptional circumstances.



## **Community Services**

All of our community-based services remain open. During the COVID-19 incident, like most NHS services, we have moved to more care being delivered by telephone/virtual appointments where possible thus minimising face-to-face contact with our service users, where we can safely do so, to keep them and our staff safe. As we look forward, where it is safe to do so and more beneficial to the service user than a virtual/telephone appointment, we will be increasing our face-to-face contact with service users in the community and also in care homes.

This approach covers the following community services:

- Adult Community Mental Health Team including Psychosis Assessment and Treatment in Hertfordshire (PATH)
- Community Mental Health Services for Older People (CMHSOP)
- Early Memory Diagnosis and Support Service (EMDASS)
- Community Learning Disability Team (CLDT)
- Community Perinatal Team
- Adult Community Eating Disorders Service
- Enhanced Rehabilitation Outreach Service
- Children and Adolescent Community Mental Health Services (CAMHS) including the Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) team and School Support Teams
- Children and Young People's Eating Disorders Service
- Wellbeing (IAPT)

The following community services remain completely unchanged:

- GP+ Services
- CAMHS Home Treatment Team
- CAMHS Targeted Treatment Team
- Regular depot clinics

### **Wellbeing (IAPT) services and the Early Memory Diagnosis and Support Service (EMDASS)**

We are in the process of restoring IAPT and EMDASS services as, whilst not closed, both services were significantly reduced during the initial COVID-19 outbreak when staff were redeployed to support crisis and inpatient services.

For **EMDASS** we have a large number of service users, who have been referred over the last 12 weeks, who we need to assess. The service remains open to referrals, and we will be booking appointments, as soon as we can, for individuals who are referred, including into additional weekend clinics. However, it is likely individuals and their families will need to wait longer than normal, and this will be directly communicated with them and their referring GP.

For **Wellbeing Services**, although we anticipate significant increased demand in the forthcoming weeks, we are open and there is information on the Hertfordshire IAPT [website](#) about how to access these services.

We would also like to remind you of [SilverCloud](#) - a free online self-help programme that is proven to help with anxiety, stress and depression. The programme consists of informative and interactive modules which people can complete at their own pace to help improve their wellbeing. This programme is free for residents of Hertfordshire and Essex to use. The access code is: HPFT2020.

**We hope you and your teams are keeping safe and staying well, and we thank you for your continued support and understanding.**