



21 December 2015

**Press release**

## **Agreement on mental health transformation plan**

Extra emotional wellbeing support will be offered to young people and their families following agreement of the county's five-year *Child and Adolescent Mental Health Transformation Plan*.

The agreement by mental health commissioners at Suffolk County Council and the NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk and NHS West Suffolk clinical commissioning groups will lead to better quality services which are easier to access and result in improved outcomes for young people and their families.

The plan was created in conjunction with young mental health service users and their families and follows the award of £6 million over five years by NHS England to transform young people's emotional wellbeing services in east and west Suffolk.

Plans for the first year also include the development of a single point of access and assessment for young people's emotional health, wellbeing and behaviour referrals so that help can be provided more quickly and by the appropriate service; redesigning the county's eating disorder service so that it can provide better in-county support, reducing the need for out-of-area placements; a shift in support to deliver "whole family assessments" rather than focussing only on the young person and a 24/7 crisis care service.

A key element of the transformation plan includes a £225,000 fund, administered by Suffolk Community Foundation, enabling voluntary organisations to bid for funding for local projects.

Dr John Hague, mental health lead for the NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group said: "The agreement of this transformation plan is a significant step forward and enables us to begin to make the changes that are needed to improve services. It is important we properly address the mental health needs of our young people as if we can deal with their issues early on, it reduces the likelihood of them needing support later in life.

"The plan is significant because it has been created through extensive input from service users and their families, as well as health commissioners. Obviously, the changes cannot be made overnight, however the first 12 months will see the introduction of significant improvements to how services are delivered.

"It is particularly pleasing that we can enable local voluntary organisations to play their part in improving how we do things. The creation of the fund with the Suffolk Community Foundation will undoubtedly result in some great ideas for services that will really help our young people."

Councillor Gordon Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education & Skills for Suffolk County Council, added "I am personally very pleased we can work with the voluntary sector to develop new and innovative services for our most vulnerable children and young people. Suffolk's voluntary sector is a thriving and enterprising community. I've already seen how charities are rising to the challenge through counselling support to families, group work and even connecting with teenagers through music production, sport and other activities that give them self-worth. I look forward to hearing directly from young people about the impact these new services will have on their lives."

Stephen Singleton, Chief Executive of Suffolk Community Foundation said "We are delighted to be working with the NHS and Suffolk County Council in this important area. Through our existing work with charitable organisations supporting young people in Suffolk, we are seeing both increased pressure on mental health and emotional wellbeing services and the impact that these issues can have on the lives of young people and their families. Charitable organisations have a vital role to play and this fund will provide an invaluable addition to help support young people and their families in Suffolk."

You can view a copy of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Transformation Plan at <http://www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/healthy-children/EWB2020>

## **ENDS**

Information on applying for a grant can be found on the Suffolk Community Foundation website <http://suffolkcf.org.uk/apply/grants/> or by calling 01473 602602 and speaking to a Grants Officer.

Issued by The Communications Team on 01473 770014