

LAC Team Alternative Service Offer during Covid-19 Restrictions

Due to the Government advice around Covid-19, the LAC Mental Health Team is operating an alternative service offer at the moment. **We are not currently able to see clients face-to-face for non-urgent appointments.** Below is a list of what we are offering and how to access our service. Please be aware that this offer will be reviewed regularly and may be changed subject to new Government guidelines.

LAC Mental Health Team Contact Details – 01604 658977 or email Lac.Duty@nhft.nhs.uk

DUTY LINE

- The Duty Line will remain open Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm on 01604 658977 or email lac.duty@nhft.nhs.uk
- We will have two duty workers allocated each day
- Please ensure Foster Carers are using EDT first if the main issues are social / placement-related
- We will still offer urgent mental health and self-harm assessments for Children in Care Monday - Friday, but we will aim to see young people in our community bases (Newland House, Northampton and Sudborough House, Kettering) wherever possible
 - o All young people **MUST** be accompanied by an adult for these assessments – either their allocated Social Worker, a Duty Social Worker or Carer
 - o This is to maintain safety of everyone and allow us to make a discharge plan
 - o If a social care representative is not able to attend in person, then they **MUST** be available by telephone so that the discharge plan can be ratified
- If staff shortages occur within the LAC MH Team then the contingency plan is for the CAMHS Crisis Team to offer cover for the crisis assessments.
- CAMHS crisis will continue to provide out of hours support (4pm - 10pm) for Children in Care who have open referrals to the crisis team. Outside these hours, NHS 111 or out of hours GP services should be utilised.

REFERRALS

- New referrals are still being reviewed and accepted
- During the restricted contact period, the LAC Duty Worker will review referrals and respond to any urgent referrals within 48 hours.
- Any non-urgent referrals will be discussed with the team at the weekly team meeting (via video conference) and a plan agreed
- Obviously we are unable to offer face-to-face assessments for non-urgent cases, but we will make contact with carers to gather more information and offer advice in the interim

CONSULTATIONS and LAC SURGERIES

- Social Work Consultations already booked in will go ahead as telephone or video calls so please be available at the agreed time
- All non-urgent Social Work Consultations will be offered by telephone or video conferencing
- If there are exceptional circumstances that mean a consultation must be done face-to-face then please contact the team on 01604 658977 to discuss how this can be accommodated
- All LAC Surgeries for Social Workers are currently suspended. If you would like to discuss a case, please email lac.duty@nhft.nhs.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible
 - o Please **DO NOT** send a client's personal details by email as it is not secure
 - o Please **DO** provide your phone number so we can contact you
 - o Please **DO** tell us how urgent your query is so we can prioritise requests each day
 - o Please **DO** give a summary of your concerns or question

MANAGING BEHAVIOUR WITH ATTACHMENT IN MIND GROUP (MBAM)

- All face to face groups and one-to-one sessions for MBAM are currently suspended
- We recommend carers read the following books to promote empathic parenting and learn behaviour management techniques specifically for children with attachment difficulties
 - o Why Can't My Child Behave, Dr Amber Elliott
 - o Attachment in Common Sense and Doodles, Dr Miriam Silver
- Where needed, one-to-one MBAM sessions can be delivered by telephone or Skype. For any cases already open to us and waiting for this work, they can contact us on 01604 658977 to request telephone or Skype sessions. *Requests will be prioritised based on clinical need*
- We plan to create videos of the MBAM group sessions so these can be emailed out to carers as an alternative to attending the group
- If the current restrictions continue longer-term, then we will look at delivering the group "live" online to encourage more interaction with group members.

THERAPEUTIC STORIES GROUP and SELF-SOOTHING GROUP

- All face to face groups and one-to-one sessions for Therapeutic Stories / Self-Soothing are currently suspended
- We have resource packs for Therapeutic Stories and Self-Soothing that carers can access by contacting us on 01604 658977
- Where needed, one-to-one Therapeutic Stories or self-soothing sessions can be delivered by telephone or Skype. For any cases already open to us and waiting for this work, they can contact us on 01604 658977 to request telephone or Skype sessions
- There are lots of useful books and films that can help children understand a range of issues. Please contact the team for our full resource list

INITIAL ASSESSMENTS

- Any new referrals where an urgent Initial Assessment is required will be seen as usual in one of our community bases (Newland, Northampton or Sudborough, Kettering)
 - o Urgency is determined by a clinical assessment of risk undertaken by the team
 - o We may need to contact the referrer or carer to gather more information to determine the level of urgency for the completing the assessment
- Any referrals where an Initial Assessment is needed, but is not routine, will be conducted by telephone wherever possible. We recognise the limitations of this, particularly in engaging young people in tricky conversations. We will have telephone discussions with the carer / referrer / Social Worker and young person wherever possible in order to make an appropriate care plan
- If young people would prefer to wait for a face-to-face assessment when the restrictions have been lifted, then we can offer advice over the phone to help them manage in the meantime
- We are currently working on a resource pack for young people with a variety of useful information, worksheets and activities to help them manage while they are waiting. This can be made available to any young person while they wait for an Initial Assessment or intervention. Carers or professionals can request these packs by contacting us on 01604 658977

ONGOING THERAPY

- All open cases currently receiving therapy have been rated according to clinical risk. As per Government restrictions, we have had to suspend any non-urgent face-to-face appointments and switch to telephone or video sessions wherever possible
 - o We recognise that this is less than ideal, particularly for young people we have worked hard to build a relationship with as so much of the work relies on that face-to-face contact.
 - o Depending on the length of restrictions, some face to face therapy may need to recommence e.g. trauma therapy, or where difficulties worsen without school structure etc.

- The Duty Worker and CAMHS Crisis Team are aware of all of our medium and high risk cases in the event of staff absences so these cases continue to be monitored
- We are keeping in touch with clients by text, phone and email to ensure they feel connected and know how to access additional support if needed
- Carers can contact the Duty Line if they have concerns about their child's mental health and emotional wellbeing or if they have any questions: 01604 658977 / email lac.duty@nhft.nhs.uk

MEDICATION REVIEWS

- Young people who are prescribed medication will be offered telephone reviews by our Nurse Prescriber or the CAMHS Psychiatrist wherever appropriate. If this is not suitable then arrangements for a face-to-face appointment will be made, whilst following the Government guidance on social distancing
- For any queries or concerns regarding a young person's medication: email lac.duty@nhft.nhs.uk

WAITING LISTS

- For cases currently on our waiting list, we will regular review the list and make contact to check in with carers and young people.
- Anyone waiting for an intervention can contact the team if there are any changes or concerns, or they have any questions
- There is likely to be a longer than usual wait for therapeutic interventions to start, particularly where young people only want to have face-to-face sessions.
- We are currently working on a resource pack for young people with a variety of useful information, worksheets and activities to help them manage while they are waiting. This can be made available to any young person while they wait for an Initial Assessment or intervention.

CONCERNS

As a team we are concerned about the impact the current social distancing and self-isolation guidance will have on our young people, Foster Carers and placement stability. The high levels of uncertainty and significant changes to usual routines are likely to be particularly unsettling for children with attachment difficulties. We are also conscious that increased time at home, even if children continue to go to school, will add pressure on carers and placements. It's important for all professionals working with these vulnerable children to be proactive and keep in contact with carers to ensure they are managing.

[Covid-19 – Resource and Support Pack for Children and Young People](#)

Our Family Support Worker has developed a Covid-19 resource pack to help children, young people and carers with the current situation. The resource pack has ideas of things to do; links to age-appropriate information and stories about Covid-19; and tips for parents/carers.

This is available to be shared with any parents / carers / professionals and is not specific to looked-after children and families. Please contact lac.duty@nhft.nhs.uk for a copy

We wish you all the best at this uncertain and difficult time