

EMBARGO 00.01 MONDAY 04.01.19

The Crisis in Children's Mental Health

Research from Liam Byrne MP

New research published by Liam Byrne MP reveals the scale of the crisis in children's mental health across the West Midlands

New research by Liam Byrne to mark Children's Mental Health Week reveals the scale of the crisis hurting the region's children:

- Over 1,000 children have now presented in the city's Accident and Emergency departments having self-harmed or tried to take their own lives in the last five years
- The region's overall number of children's mental health cases is rising eight times faster than funding
- A quarter of the region's residents live in authorities – including central Birmingham – that are actually cutting mental health spending despite a rise in caseload

Concern amongst parents is almost universal with:

- All parents we surveyed in Birmingham Hodge Hill worried about their children's mental health
- Of those who have tried to seek help, almost 90% have not found children's mental health services easy to access

Hodge Hill: Parents' Views

Of nearly 50 parents we spoke to, all worried about their children's mental health.

- Half of respondents had tried to access mental health services on behalf of a child. Almost 90% of these – 21 out of 24 – experienced difficulties obtaining the services the needed.
- Problems included:
 - Long waiting times
 - Difficulty obtaining diagnosis
 - Lack of specialist counselling for children with autism
 - Inability to self-refer
- Many parents cited the need for preventative measures to help children with the pressures of daily life – such as access to counselling at schools or affordable after-school activities.

“Young people need more meeting places like youth clubs made available that don't cost the earth.”

“Accept that as adults the children have pressures, cater for the bereavement and loss of parents, holistic support, CBT for them I feel is important.”

It was felt that a lack of awareness, particularly at primary school level, acts as an obstacle to early intervention.

“Roll out awareness and support into primary schools as this is where the issues begin. Due to lack of funds schools are not able to get the right support for children and it is impacting children as they get older into becoming adults”.

However, lack of funding and specialist staff within the NHS also a major concern.

“[People] need to be able to access services quickly rather than waiting until there is a crisis.”

“The levels of mental health medical staff has been cut to the bone.”

What do you think are they key pressures on young people's mental health today? Social media looms large as a cause.



The Statistics: Mental Health Provision

Children's mental health caseloads across the region have risen by 26% in the last year, but funding has only increased by 3%.

Our analysis of House of Commons Library data revealed the caseload for mental health services in the region is rising by four times faster than funding.

Number of people in contact with mental health services				
	2016/17	2017/18	Change	%
Aged 0-18	21,615	27,325	5,710	26.4%
Overall funding for mental health (£M)	597.0	615.1	18.1	3.0%

In the last five-year period, hospitals in Birmingham have treated children over one thousand times for self-harm.

Financial Year	Attendances
2012-13	207
2013-14	253
2014-15	219
2015-16	238
2016-17	219
TOTAL	1136

Count of accident and emergency (A&E) attendances with an A&E patient group of self-harm, within the Birmingham area (NHS Birmingham South and Central CCG, NHS Birmingham CrossCity CCG, NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG) for patients aged between 0 and 17

House of Commons library research shows that a quarter of the region's residents live in authorities that are actually cutting mental health spending – despite a rise in caseload – and spending per case varies wildly across the region.

The NHS in Sandwell & West Birmingham, together with the NHS in Birmingham South & Central – which covers the city centre – have both cut funding for mental health services, and do not meet the Government's own mental health 'investment standards'. Together, they serve 24% of the region – over 700,000 of the region's 3 million patients.

CCG	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	Change (£M)	Investment standard achieved?	Mid-2017 population (all ages)	Per capita	Mid-2017 population (18+)
NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG	100.5	96.5	-£3.93	No	501,260	£193	501,260
NHS Birmingham South and Central CCG	67.2	65.9	-£1.31	No	205,951	£320	205,951
NHS Wolverhampton CCG	45.2	46.5	£1.33	Yes	259,926	£179	259,926
NHS Solihull CCG	42.5	44.0	£1.53	Yes	213,812	£206	213,812
NHS Walsall CCG	58.6	61.0	£2.33	Yes	281,293	£217	281,293
NHS Dudley CCG	47.8	50.9	£3.12	Yes	319,419	£159	319,419
NHS Coventry and Rugby CCG	98.0	101.3	£3.31	Yes	466,499	£217	466,499
NHS Birmingham Crosscity CCG	137.3	149.0	£11.73	Yes	755,493	£197	755,493
	597.0	615.1		N/A	3,003,653	£211	3,003,653
% CHANGE IN SPENDING		3.0%					707,211
POPULATION WITH FALLING BUDGETS AS % OF TOTAL WMIDS POPULATION							24%

[Source: NHS Digital Mental Health Bulletin](#)