

Review of urgent mental health services across Lancashire and South Cumbria

Since early 2018 there has been a significant increase in the demand for mental health services across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

The increase in demand has led to people waiting too long for admission to hospital and has also had an impact on the ambulance service and police.

On behalf of all partners, including NHS, local authority, voluntary and charity organisations, police and other emergency services, Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria commissioned an independent review of urgent mental health services. This is because it was clear that no single organisation could provide a solution on its own.

Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, a mental health care provider recognised as 'outstanding' led the review. They spoke to 100 service users and carers, 105 members of staff, 50 GPs and more than 60 staff from voluntary, community and faith organisations.

The final report has now been shared and will inform a health and care system wide strategy for mental health services.

What does the report tell us?

The review offers an independent perspective of the issues across all partners that are affecting the delivery of urgent mental health services. We are grateful to the service users, members of staff and stakeholders who contributed to the review. Their open and honest input has helped to create a clear picture of where we have gone wrong, and what we need to do to improve.

The report includes 27 recommendations for improving mental health services. There is a strong commitment by all partners to act upon these recommendations in order to improve services and deliver better mental health care for people across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

What happens now?

We have listened to what our service users, staff and other stakeholders have to say and now we must take action. We understand that people will be quite rightly concerned, but we can assure you that we have dedicated staff, who want to improve services and service users' experiences of them.

Commitments to improve mental health services have been agreed by the organisations across Lancashire and South Cumbria including:

- Senior leaders across Lancashire and South Cumbria
- Mental Health commissioners
- Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Councils who provide social care services
- Hospitals
- Police and ambulance services
- Voluntary and charitable organisations

An important first step is to share the findings of the report, so that all partners are clear about what needs to be done. There will be some actions that can be taken quickly; there will be others that will require us to pull together frontline staff, service users and other stakeholders to develop solutions. We are also committed to keeping everyone updated on the progress that has been made.

To download a copy of the report visit
healthierlsc.co.uk/MentalHealth

Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria is a partnership of organisations working together to improve services and help the 1.7 million people in Lancashire and South Cumbria live longer, healthier lives. Find out more at healthierlsc.co.uk