

Neurodevelopmental Conditions Pathway: Waiting Time Review Through COVID-19

WHAT ARE WE MAKING BETTER?

The Neurodevelopmental Conditions (NDC) Pathway was redesigned and launched in October 2019 to improve the experience of children and families seeking a diagnosis for neurodevelopmental conditions (including autism and ADHD). There were 1,261 people waiting for a diagnosis as of April 2019 and one aim

of the redesign was to reduce this waiting list. Unfortunately, the waiting times have been further impacted by the need to put on hold accepting new referrals due to suspended face-to-face work during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Parents are understandably concerned about the impact that this closure will have had on waiting times and when children will be seen for assessment, and Swindon SEND Family Voice raised this concern at SEND board in June 2020. Bath, North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BSW CCG) are committed to reducing the waiting list and continuing to improve the experience of children and families accessing the NDC Pathway.

WAITING LIST	April 2019	November 2019	June 2020
2017		60	28
2018		360	248
2019		287	321
2020			94
Early Years Pathway Transfer onto NDC Pathway			118
Total	1,261	707	809

We appreciate that there are 28 children and young people that have been waiting since 2017 and the community paediatric team are working hard at addressing the current waiting times. The 118 children from the early year's pathway are from previous years and are being transferred over to the Community Paediatric Team onto the current NDC Pathway. The new cases that would have previously gone to early years are already incorporated into the new NDC Pathway waiting list numbers.

WHAT ARE WE DOING

The chart below shows the current waiting times broken down by year. An update was provided towards the end of 2019 with how the waiting times looked after several weeks of the new NDC pathway commencing and most recently June 2020. Following the suspension of referral during covid-19, acceptance of referrals resumed from mid May 2020 and the Community Paediatric team have been operating virtual clinics using both telephone and video consultation.

During the pandemic the GWH clinical team continued to review the existing waiting list assessing the appropriateness for assessment and working with the parents/carers with signposting to alternative support or if they would benefit from support by other community services. Continuing this work through COVID-19 has meant only those children and young people who need to be on the waiting list are progressed to GWH for assessment.

Two specialist nurse posts have been recruited too and will be both in post by the end of July 2020 to support the team. Unfortunately, a consultant is due to leave the team in the summer of 2020, however the hospital is working hard with recruitment to fill the post.

Recently NHS England have provided confirmation of funding that is available to the South West region to support Learning Disability and Autism. A multidisciplinary Group alongside the Learning Disability and Autism Boards have come together to submit a bid across the BSW CCG which will focus on reducing the current waiting lists.

In addition to the above BSW CCG have confirmed additional funding in collaboration with SBC to provide additional Managing Challenging Behaviour Courses. These courses will include age 0 to 15 years and will enhance the pre diagnostic support to parents and carers.

WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL THIS MAKE?

All actions aim for children and families to be able to access the right support, from the right service, at the right time. By providing advice and signposting at the point of referral and pre diagnostic support for parent and carers (in addition to children and families accessing the right support) means only children and young people needing assessment are placed on the waiting list reducing the waiting time for children and young people that need assessment.

Good progress has been made in reducing the waiting list since the introduction of the NDC Pathway. With the additional support continuing to be put in place by BSW CCG and our partners we hope that we can continue to reduce the waiting time for children and families whilst providing a good quality service.