How children and adolescents potentially at risk of developing mental health problems are identified and how those problems should be prevented

After a meeting with those involved in the management of the CAMH’S programs in Lanarkshire it appears that GP’s and Social Work and nursing play a key role in identifying those young people. The place of care for the young person is of concern as some are being given beds on adult wards for anything up to 6 months.

It does appear that life stress events play a role in effecting mental health; home life, pressures from family and from schools. Perhaps a more flexible service, doing home visits to see the young person at their home to assess them would be beneficial.

What obstacles there are in identifying children and adolescents with mental health problems and how they might be overcome.

Stigma, schools, family. Perhaps services could be open at weekends with the aim being to assess people at home rather than in a hospital or health centre. This approach could lead to a much more informed assessment of the pressure on the person; divorce, housing, drugs, siblings, stepparents etc.

What action is being taken to facilitate early intervention and what else can be done

Phased introduction of named CAMHS link person for schools in Lanarkshire. At present this covers Airdrie, Uddingston and Hamilton. Perhaps more could be done to support parents and is the school the best place for mental health services.

How access to services and ongoing support can be improved

I would argue for weekend services which would have a home visit assessment protocol. There would not be an “opt in or opt out”, which in my experience can prevent the most anxious clients from being seen, allowing all to be seen however I do appreciate that many services case loads are expanding but there must be a way of trying to involve all those who are referred in some form of health care with that is a referral back to the GP for an appointment or Social work.
There could be referrals from groups such as StreetBase who work with young people and substance misuse.

**What problems there are around transition from CAMHS to adult mental health services and how a smoother transition may be achieved.**

There are still staff who see young people as being out with their remit – despite training. Should there be a separate CAMHS or should it be one branch of an adult service?

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19 January 2009