

Briefing from Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

1. Support provided by TEWV to people with Learning Disability (LD) and/or autism who need access to Mental Health Services.

a) The Community L.D team that supports the Stockton-on-Tees area aims to deliver a high quality, responsive person centred approach to promoting optimum health and wellbeing and in line with the Trusts vision to improve people's lives by minimising the impact of mental ill health or a learning disability.

b) The Community L.D team work in partnership with Mental Health services to support people who are able to access mainstream services with reasonable adjustments.

c) Nurses from the L.D team support colleagues within the Mental Health Crisis team when it is felt someone may have a learning disability. Often this is out of normal working hours and is provided by the on-call L.D nurse and support worker who can attend initial assessments with the Mental Health Crisis team.

d) Reasonable adjustments can be made within the inpatient units that can include the approach taken by staff, the use of concise language along with communication through symbols and pictures.

e) People with more complex learning disabilities and additional mental health needs are supported in a L.D specific inpatient unit within Bankfields Ct located in the tees area at Eston.

2. Support provided to people leaving services to enable them to live in the Community, including services such as Health Facilitation.

a) The Community L.D team is available 8am – 8pm seven days a week with additional on call arrangements out of hours (8pm – 8am).

b) The aim of the service is to provide support to people with a LD to live within their own home or other living arrangement (Residential care/supported living). The service delivers specialist health treatments and interventions within community settings and includes a range of professionals i.e. Community Nurses, Psychiatry, Psychology, Physiotherapies, Speech and Language, and Occupational Therapy.

c) The team endeavour to prevent the breakdown of individual support packages by providing health interventions and advice.

d) The enhanced community service which extended the working hours from 9am – 5pm to 8am – 8pm is relatively new and operational for approximately a year:

e) The additional available support has contributed to a reduction in inpatient admission. The team have also worked with partner providers and the local authority to support people with a learning disability who have moved out of inpatient units often after long periods of stay, into the community.

- f) This has proved a success with a number of examples of people with a learning disability settled and enjoying life in the heart of their local community.
- g) The health facilitation function within the team aims to help people with a learning disability understand health issues and to access mainstream health services.
- h) The team work with individual service users to develop Health Action Plans and Health Passports that can help to inform the Acute Services of the individual's needs. Reasonable adjustments can then be made. Some areas of acute care are performing better than others when asked to provide adjustments.
- i) GP Practices receive training from the team to encourage them to offer health checks to adults with a learning disability.

3. General Advice – how can we ensure accessible services in the wider community.

- a) The availability of accessible changing facilities for people with more complex needs can often preclude them from taking part in community based activities.

If changing places were factored in to the design of new buildings or large scale improvements of existing buildings the community would be more accessible.

- b) Many people with learning disabilities find it difficult to read. The use of picture symbols at places such as leisure centres could help with accessibility.
- c) Some activities are restrictive for people with learning disabilities as they have to incur an additional cost for their carer/supporter. Free access for a supporter/carer would increase opportunities to engage in community activities.
- d) L D awareness sessions are available