

**FALKIRK COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK SERVICES
FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND ANNUAL REPORTING STATEMENT
2014/15**

Organisation Name	CAMHS, NHS Forth Valley
Project	Clinical Psychologist, Looked After Children
Agreement Dates	January 2014 - January 2016
Name of Lead Officer	Kathy McCarroll

A OVERALL ORGANISATION AIMS

Summary of Key Aims & Objectives

To provide a specialist clinical psychology assessment and therapy service for:-

- Children and young people who are looked after by Falkirk Council, either at home or away from home, and who are the responsibility of Falkirk Council, even when living outwith the area.
- Children and young people residing in the Falkirk Council area whose family placement is at high risk of breakdown, leading to them becoming accommodated whether or not they are at that point looked after by the Local Authority.

List of Agreed Outcomes

- To provide highly specialist psychological assessment and therapy to the above noted specific group of children.
- To provide advice, consultation, support and training to social workers and other professionals working with looked after children and young people, including foster carers, residential staff and voluntary agencies, where appropriate.
- To contribute to care planning for children and young people who are the responsibility of Falkirk Council by way of the provision of specialist advice to Falkirk social work staff.
- To participate in multi-agency planning forums, e.g. Health of Looked After Children meetings and Corporate Parenting Agenda.
- To facilitate access to CAMH services when appropriate.

Why Service/Project is Funded Externally Rather than by the Council

This post is a partnership arrangement with CAMHS NHS Forth Valley which means that the post holder is employed by NHS Forth Valley. This arrangement ensures that the post holder has access to the required level of professional support and clinical governance which Children's Services would be unable to provide.

The establishment of this post reflects the recognition that looked after children often have key mental health needs that may not meet the criteria for a service from CAMHS. Looked after children often experience difficulty in engaging with formal mental health services and there can be differing criteria and variability in access to mental health provision for children who are placed out with the Falkirk Council area.

The establishment of this post also reflects a commitment to improving the awareness of and skills in working with mental health issues amongst foster carers, residential workers and social workers, thereby enhancing their capacity to maintain young people in local placements.

A trainee Clinical Psychologist has also been in post on a 2 day per week basis from September 2013. This is fully funded by the NHS and only possible because the current post holder is able to provide the necessary supervision. The trainee has been able to increase provision, and has completed a number of cognitive and neuropsychological assessments. NHS also funded a one day a week assistant Psychologist for a 6 month period, who focused on neuropsychological assessment.

NHS FV also funds the Link-up Service which provides support to vulnerable children and young people with less severe needs.

B ACTUAL PERFORMANCE vs. OBJECTIVES / AGREED OUTCOMES

Summary of Key Achievements

Core Activity-direct clinical care

Over the last year, 80% of the post holder's time has been spent on direct clinical care/core tasks. This includes:-

- Direct patient contact
- Clinical meetings
- Complex case discussion
- Report writing
- Scoring clinical tests
- Correspondence
- Records
- Providing reports for Court cases in permanence cases (this continues to be a more prominent feature than last year relating to the higher number of young children going forward for permanence)

During the period 2014/2015, there has been contact with 90+ young people and current ongoing involvement, at varying levels of intensity, for direct work with 60+ young people. 30 young people have been seen on a multi-consultation basis including their foster carers/adoptive carers/parents or staff. 12 neuropsychological assessments have also been completed.

LAC Psychology involvement in one case resulted in the young person being admitted to a specialist NHS resource funded wholly by NHS. The alternative would have been secure accommodation arranged and funded by Falkirk Council.

This was a substantial saving to the Council over a 2 year period of approximately £572,000.

The neuropsychological assessment service for looked after children whose cognitive abilities are in question is crucial. Without such assessments, access to learning disability services becomes extremely difficult or impossible. Filling this gap is absolutely essential for future planning for Falkirk's looked after population. Within the last year, a number of young people have been diagnosed with a learning disability as a result of these assessments. These young people are now eligible for learning disabilities support services.

Strategic Engagement/Commitment

- Strategic Parenting Group (monthly)
- HOLAC (health of looked after children) (quarterly)
- Corporate Parenting Operational Response Group
- CAMHS Liaison

Service Development

- Input to foster carer support groups- bi-monthly.
- Consultations with social workers/foster carers/residential staff x2 per week.
- Training input (child development/attachment/loss) to Family support staff and others- 6 sessions.

Summary of Key Issues/ Challenges Facing Organisation

- The service is currently funded on a temporary basis with the agreement being renewed every 2 years. This impacts on long term planning and has implications for the young people currently engaged with the service.
- Members took a decision in February 2015 to cease funding this post from 1 April 2016 on the basis that NHS FV should be providing the service. However, as can be seen from this report, NHS FV provides funding for other parts of the overall service. I am concerned that there may be an unintended impact of increasing costs elsewhere.
- Issues arise in relation to, for example, multiple young people in the same placement being referred to the service and the challenges this brings in relation to respecting their confidentiality.

- There is an increasing demand for input from the LAC clinical psychologist.
- The administrative tasks associated with the role are increasing.

How has Organisation Contributed to Council/ Service Priorities

- Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities (SOA).
- Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination (SOA).
- Improving health and wellbeing (ICSP/GIRFEC).
- Young people are safe and their wellbeing is paramount (Children's Services Plan, Social Work Performance Outcome Framework).

List any Areas where there has been Shortfall in Performance

N/A

How often are Review Meetings held with Lead Officer

This service has been reviewed at regular intervals, with the most recent review having taken place in June 2015.

The Team Manager of the Intensive Family Support Service oversees allocation of workload on a monthly basis.

C FINANCIAL / RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Total Support Provided (Financial & In- Kind Contributions)

£64,264 for Clinical Psychologist office accommodation and equipment
£9,000 for admin support

Last Period of Submitted Audited Accounts

N/A

Future Risks (Financial, Operational or Structural) Faced by Organisation

Were this service to be discontinued, there are likely to be increased risks to the mental wellbeing of looked after young people for whom Falkirk Council has responsibility, with concomitant issues associated with unemployment, drug and alcohol misuse, offending and increased dependence on benefits and health agencies. Withdrawal of the service is likely to increase the number of young people who require to be accommodated.

Overall Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High)

Low financial risk.

D CONCLUSIONS

Summary/ Opinion of Organisations Overall Progress During Year

The development of the LAC Clinical Psychology post has enhanced the service provision to some of the most vulnerable looked after children and young people of Falkirk. This improvement has been both in terms of direct work with young people and in terms of awareness and skills development with those delivering care and support to these young people.

The service is proving to be very effective in improving outcomes for children and young people as well as assisting with efficiency savings to avoid purchasing more expensive residential placements.

E COMPLETED BY

Name

Kathy McCarroll

Designation

Head of Service (Children & Families and Criminal Justice)

Date

30 September 2015