

Working collectively to transform the mental health system

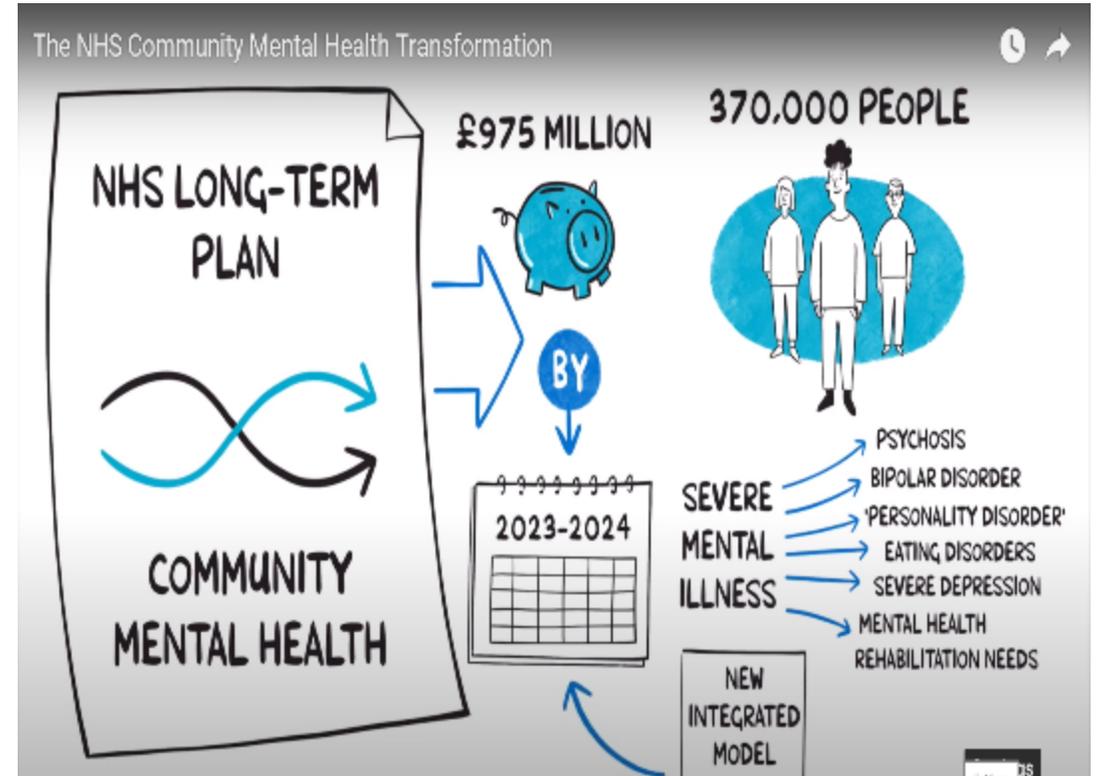
Darlington Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee

April 2025



Reminder of core aims of Community Transformation

- To deliver a new mental health community-based offer which allows for collaborative pathways across the system it operates within.
- Create a **core mental health service** which is aligned with **primary care networks and voluntary sector organisations**
- Ensure services are **accessible** to the community it serves and **inclusive of population need**.
- Allow the individual seeking advice and support the right care, at the right time in the right place and in doing so **ensure timely access to care**

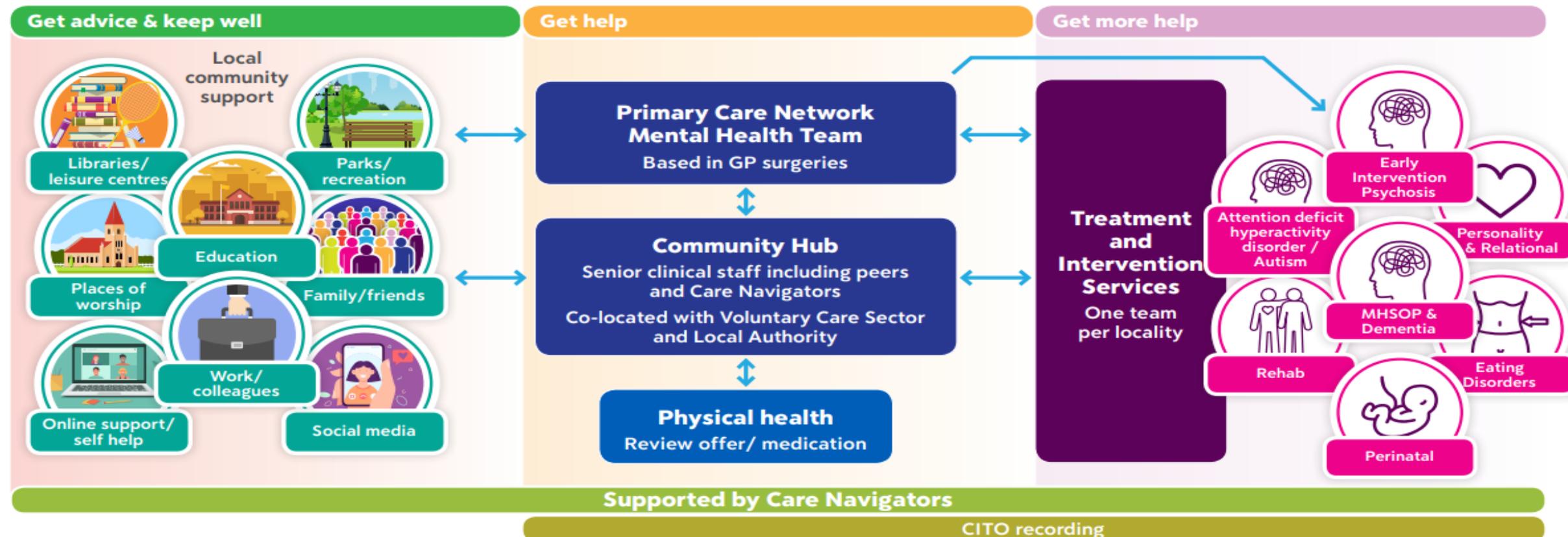


Community Transformation

Our vision:



- Integrated services delivering collaborative pathways which meet the needs of the local population
- Empowering individuals to choose and manage their own personalised recovery, as experts in their own mental health (informed by social, cultural and ethnic needs)



Principles:

- We accept each other's assessments
- We do not refuse a referral
- There is no wrong door to Get Help
- Patients are not "discharged" by services

Primary Care
Network Mental
Health Team

MDT input across both as
a shared resource

COMMENCED
February 2023

Community Hub

- Triage and assessment
- Medication reviews
 - Interventions:
- Graded Exposure
- Anxiety Management
 - Hearing Voices
 - Life line work
- Stress Vulnerability
 - Sleep Hygiene
 - CBT
 - Clinics
- Physical wellbeing checks
- Signposting and navigating
- Interface with PCN workforce
- ASD/ ADHD assessment
 - Peer support

Treatment and Intervention Services

- Complex presentation and prescribing
 - Risk Management
 - ASD/ADHD complex needs
 - Governed therapies
- Intense/high frequency /complex referrals
 - Physical wellbeing checks
 - Interface with PCN workforce
 - Peer support

*Access, Affective and Psychosis teams Re-configured
into the hub and treatment teams*

Darlington Connect

- A holistic approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing for the people of Darlington
- Opened March 2023 in the high street – 2nd anniversary!
- Led by 700 club with a range of VCSE partners – “connecting” the offer
- Approximately 500 appointments per quarter plus informal drop in advice
- Trained support staff delivering the service
- Appointments with specialist mental health team from the building
- Development of online directories including: Health, Utilities, Recreation, Clothing & Essentials, Finance, Training & Employment, transport.



Expectations/Impact of the model

- No wrong door – no rejections: *Community Navigator post pivotal to this.*
- Warm transfers of care.
- Pathway simplified: Easier navigation for people who need help and staff
- Holistic offer – people will receive a package of care from TEWV and system partners
- Staff recruitment/ retention and wellbeing
- Earlier access to support/ guidance and interventions
- Waiting times reduced from 6 months to within 28 day target
- Specialist caseload reduced to allow more meaningful therapeutic treatment



What have we seen?

- Over 40,000 appointments in primary care by MH Nurse practitioner or Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioners in 2024
- Only 948 (2.5%) of those patients were stepped up into secondary care services
- 15%-20% reduction in secondary care referrals, at a time when we expected secondary care MH referrals to increase (Pandemic impact on Mental Health and Wellbeing and impact of increasing Neuro referrals)
- 91% improvement in year-on-year changes in caseloads – caseload increase of 1821 in 2022 has reduced to 165 in 2024.
- 59% reduction in patients waiting for assessment, reduced from 3500 in January 2023 to 1428 in February 2025
- Weekly huddles established with system partners including TEWV, VCSE, local authority and drug and alcohol services. Integration and partnership working is now the norm but services still looking at ways to be innovative and support more joined up approaches on the ground e.g. new locations, training, hubs etc.
- Staff turnover still an issue



2025

- Peer Support service commencing May 2025
- Autism support service commencing May 2025
- Development of crisis safe haven
- Increased focus on alternatives to hospital admission,
- Increased focus on support for young adults (18-25)



Challenges

- Funding – targeted funding now “un-ringfenced”
- Unprecedented system pressure
- Specialist Workforce
- Time to transform
- Maintaining momentum



Questions?

