

Suffolk GP Practice

1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Dear GP practice professional,

We are writing to you as the new leadership team from Suffolk CFYP. We come to Suffolk having worked in mental health service for children and young people in Essex and East London. We bring a wealth of experience to Suffolk and are passionate about making a difference to bring about the change that is needed in Suffolk.

Our aim is to further improve the services we provide and to work with you and co-production partners to shape mental health services for the under 25s. Using the Thrive Framework we plan to create an accessible, responsive and effective mental health service that meets the needs of children, young people and their families.

We thought we would take this opportunity to write to you to introduce ourselves and provide you with an update about the NSFT children, family and young people's (CYFP) mental health services during COVID, how to get help and what resources are available during this time.

### **Service response during COVID-19**

As a nation, we are finding the impact of this pandemic extremely challenging, particularly in terms of how this affects the emotional wellbeing of children, young people and their parents and carers. Over the past few months our team have been working very hard to see as many young people as possible.

Unfortunately, we face a situation common to many NHS services, the continuing burden of COVID-19 has reduced our capacity to manage the demands of the service. We are trying to work as collaboratively and creatively as possible to stay connected with the people who use our services, as well as ensure that we can respond to new referrals. However, it is important to acknowledge that the surge of new referrals into the system is making it hard to be as responsive as we would hope to be.

### **Self-help guides and resources**

We are writing to you as a professional who may be supporting a child, young person or family. We have put together a list of resources for families and young people which cover topics that they are commonly struggling with at this time.

This includes:

- Anxiety
- Autism
- ADHD & SEND
- Behavioural difficulties
- Eating difficulties

- Emotion regulation
- General apps/website for wellbeing, and LGBTQ+, Loss & Grief, and Low Mood
- Self-harm & Suicidal thinking
- Sleep
- Staying emotionally well during Covid-19

We have also included a document providing an up-to-date summary of community service offers. We hope this will support you in your role of providing appropriate advice, guidance and signposting to families.

### **Parent Workshops**

We include a flyer advertising our monthly parent workshops that are popular avenues of support at this time on key topics like anxiety and low mood. Parents can book through Eventbrite. Please can we ask that you advertise these through your social media platforms and in your community.

### **Promoting positive mental health to parents**

Please share the flyer with parents reminding them of the importance of caring for themselves.

### **Referring to mental health services**

The Emotional Wellbeing Hub remains open, but we are running remotely and are responding to a large number of referrals. We would therefore encourage you to use the **GP professional consultation line** as an alternative to making an Emotional Wellbeing Referral on **0345 600 6540**. This will enable you to get timely and specific support and help regarding the young person or family you have concerns about. The team will also be able to support a referral, if necessary.

For those young people who are presenting with high levels of distress and who require more urgent support to ensure their safety, professionals can call the **First Response Service Professionals Line** for advice and support on **0300 303 4418**.

Young people, and families, can also contact the **First Response Service** on **0808 196 3494** (this is a free number) 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week.

We hope this information is helpful and hope you are safe and well, and able to find ways to look after yourself.

Thank you for your continued support at this difficult time.

Yours sincerely

CFYP Leadership Team:

Sarah Gibbs, Service Director

Kevin Beardsworth, Clinical Director and Head of Psychological Therapies

Paul Hill, Lead Nurse