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**Bwrdd Iechyd
Addysgu Powys
Powys Teaching
Health Board**

CS/HJ

18 November 2020

Lynne Neagle MS
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Annwyl / Dear Ms Neagle

COVID19- and Children and young people's mental health

Thank you for your letter requesting information on our approach to supporting children, young people and families during the challenging time brought about by the pandemic. As a health board we are, alongside our partners Powys County Council and the Voluntary Sector, working hard to ensure that children, young people and their families can to be supported with their mental health and well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic. We recognise the significant impact that the pandemic, both directly and indirectly is having on young people and their families as we are committed to doing all we can to support people through these times.

We have made some changes have been made to the way that services are delivered in order to facilitate social distancing, however wherever possible, families are able to choose how and where to receive their services to ensure continuity of care. I set out below details of how our mental health services are ensuring continued access by children, young people and their families and we hope that this provides the Children, Young People and Education Committee reassurance of our commitment at this challenging time. I have also included information links which support patients and families to access services and support.

SilverCloud – online CBT

SilverCloud is an online platform for cognitive behavioural therapy for mild to moderate, common mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and stress. Whilst it is provided for users aged above 16 years, it is pleasing that over 200

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young people between the ages of 16 and 20 have accessed the service, 55 of them since the start of September this year. Several modules have been adapted for young people in education with specific content for students and younger presenters.

<https://pthb.nhs.wales/services/adult-and-older-peoples-mental-health-services/silvercloud-online-cbt/>

During the pandemic, SilverCloud became open to self-referrals, thus removing the need for a GP referral and removing a potential barrier to access:

<https://nhs.wales.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>

School Nursing

School nurses are continuing to support children and young people in schools and are particularly sensitive to the challenges children and young people are experiencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

With this in mind, the school nursing team has developed a booklet of useful resources for children, young people and their families, which is in the process of being made available on the Powys Teaching Health Board website.

Useful resources
for school aged chil

Kooth

Kooth is an online counselling service aimed specifically at children and young people aged 11-25, living or attending school in Powys. The service aims to work with young people who need support before any issues or problems they face become overwhelming. As Kooth is available via the internet, support can be flexible, accessed at home or school and at a time that suits the young person.

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/9124/Counselling-services-for-children-young-people-and-families>

Referral link for professionals - www.koothf2f.com

Self-referral link - <https://tinyurl.com/PowysKoothF2FSelfReferral>

Website - www.kooth.com

Voluntary Sector

The health board has continued to support the Powys Citizen's Advice Bureau and various local community support and volunteer bureaux within Powys to provide information and advice to Powys residents.

Website - <https://www.powyscitizensadvice.org.uk/>

Children and Young People's Neurodevelopment Assessment Service

Following a temporary hold on assessments over the initial Covid-19 period, the Neuro-development team are now undertaking assessments and working hard to

ensure that children and young people waiting for initial assessments are seen as a priority.

Families may be contacted by telephone initially to gather information about development and behaviours. This will be followed by a face-to-face appointment with the neuro-developmental team. A Service Statement, with contact details, is available on the PTHB website.

<https://pthb.nhs.wales/services/childrens-community-services/>

In addition, information for families is available on the service Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/powysNDLD/>

The service also runs the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Incredible Years parenting programme.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

For all new referrals and those open to the service, CAMHS are offering a choice of how to access services for children and young people and are asking which approach they would prefer:

- Face-to-Face
- Virtual by the Attend Anywhere platform or WhatsApp
- Telephone contact

Those children and young people requiring medical support from the consultant psychiatrist are also offered their preferred choice of how they would like to attend their appointment. Psychology offer their interventions either by virtual platforms or face-to-face. Service users are utilising the virtual platforms for their psychology sessions and this appears to be a preferred choice at the moment as this is reducing their travelling time to get to appointments. Psychology continue to offer a variety of different interventions, including CBT and family therapy. Psychotherapy is being undertaken face-to-face.

Specialist CAMHS – eating disorders and early episode psychosis

Children and young people experiencing an eating disorder or early episode psychosis are being seen weekly face-to-face, either in clinic or by home visits. Providing treatment for an eating disorder by offering help with meal planning at home is often an essential part of supporting the young person and their family and this is offered in the evenings and at weekends.

The majority of specialist CAMHS interventions are provided face-to-face by attendance at clinic, home visit or walk and talk.

Primary Care CAMHS

Primary Care CAMHS offer consultation to every school in Powys. They offer resilience training to any school that requests it. The service also offers Mental Health First Aid training to any school that wishes to train their staff in recognising mental illness and distress. There is a rolling programme of training, commencing

in December to those schools who have requested this support. The schools have a choice to either engage in this training face-to-face, classroom based or virtually.

Primary Care CAMHS are continuing with psycho-educational work, including CBT techniques, and validation of worries and concerns about COVID with individual children and young people.

Primary Care CAMHS are integral part of the Integrated Access Hub which supports the 'missing middle' seeking to support children, young people and families who require support but may not need specialist CAMHS. An integrated access panel, made up of a variety of different services discuss how the child or young person would benefit from support that they may be able to provide.

Online information on CAMHS is available via the new PTHB website:
<https://pthb.nhs.wales/services/childrens-community-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services/>

Whilst this new website is being updated, information is available from the legacy website in the interim: <http://www.powysthb.wales.nhs.uk/camhs>

Commissioning

The health board has continued to commission services from the following third sector organisations:

Bobath which provides specialist multi-disciplinary therapy support, as well as family support to families with children with cerebral palsy.

Website - <https://www.cerebralpalsycymru.org/get-support>

Hope House Children's Hospices providing respite care for families, antenatal and neonatal support for families whose baby has been diagnosed with a complex or life-threatening condition or has sadly died, end of life care and immediate care after death of a child or young person and counselling and bereavement services.

Website - <https://www.hopehouse.org.uk/>

Tŷ Hafan which provides holistic palliative care for children with life-limiting conditions and their families.

Website: <https://www.tyhafan.org/>

The health board also jointly commissions a number of services with Powys County Council which provide support to children, young people, and their families:

1) Tros Gynnal Plant

Tros Gynnal Plant offer Independent Professional Advocacy Services to children and young people. They also provide advocacy to children and young

people aged 0-18 years who want to raise a concern or make a complaint in relation to a NHS service.

Website - www.tgpcymru.org.uk

2) Credu (Young Carers)

The Young Carers Service will listen and understand, and provide young carers with the information and guidance they need. The service also organises and supports groups and activities and offers advocacy. The Team can offer emotional support, information and advice.

Website - <https://credu.cymru/>

3) CAIS (Young Persons Substance Misuse)

In Powys, CAIS works in partnership with Kaleidoscope, an established substance misuse service. CAIS can meet with a young person and/or their family at a time and place convenient to them, offer structured treatment and support plans, and support and information in respect of reduction or prevention work, and provide training and educational support concerning substance misuse to schools and other youth settings.

Website - www.cais.co.uk

Partnership Working

The Emotional Health, Wellbeing and Youth Support Services Subgroup, under the Start Well Programme and the Powys Regional Partnership Board, has continued to meet every three weeks during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure coordination of services. Three key communications have been issued from the Subgroup since April 2020, raising awareness of the services available and providing more information – this includes services within the voluntary sector, as well as those provided by Powys Teaching Health Board and Powys County Council.

Resources for parents, carers, children and young people from the Subgroup have been circulated via Powys schools and include practical advice, tools and information.

Website link to the resources - [Resources for parent, carers, children and young people.docx](#)

The central contact information for children, young people, parents, carers and professionals seeking information about emotional health and wellbeing services is available on the Powys County Council website: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/8831/Emotional-Health-and-Wellbeing-Services-for-Children-Young-People-and-Families>

I should also mention that the health board has recently distributed a hard copy booklet entitled *Nevill Hall Hospital is changing: what does it mean for me?* to 26,000 households and businesses in Mid and South Powys during November 2020 to outline the changes as a result of the early opening of The Grange University Hospital in Llanfrechfa. The booklet included information about

InfoEngine and Dewis Cymru, as well as a number of the services mentioned above to promote the full range of support available to individuals in Powys. Further copies have also been distributed to partner organisations. Copies of the booklet in various languages and formats are available from <https://pthb.nhs.wales/about-us/programmes/south-powys-pathways/useful-resources/>

I hope that this provides the assurances that the Committee is seeking and I would be more than happy to discuss this further.

Yn Gywir / Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carol Shillabeer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Carol Shillabeer
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive