

Mental health



What we do

Deliver and support the national programmes for eating disorders and neurodevelopmental services, identify variation in mental health outcomes and support the implementation of innovation to address challenges, while creating collaborative opportunities to improve mental health care



Why are we doing it?

Mental health problems currently cost the UK at least £117.9 billion a year, with 10.3 million instances of poor mental health recorded in 2019. We support organisations to test and evaluate what works, speeding up the spread and adoption of best practice and proven innovation

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

In the UK, children can wait on average 18 months from their first appointment to receiving a formal ADHD diagnosis, with the annual cost of ADHD assessments to the NHS estimated at around £23m.

Research has shown that the use of an objective assessment tool alongside other clinical information can provide a more rapid diagnosis, fewer patient visits, and an improved experience for patients, family, and clinicians. The Focus ADHD intervention simultaneously measures the core ADHD symptoms of attention, impulsivity and motor activity to support objective and timely diagnosis.

The resulting reduction in time to diagnosis is:

- increasing staff capacity by reducing the number of diagnostic appointments needed
- reducing waiting lists and allowing clinicians more time for complex cases.

Early Intervention Eating Disorders

The FREED (First episode Rapid Early intervention for Eating Disorders) model is an evidence-based, specialist care package for 16 to 25-year-olds with a first episode eating disorder of less than three years.

Developed by South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and King's College London, FREED aims to:

- reduce the duration of untreated eating disorders in young people
- reduce waiting times and day/inpatient admissions
- improve clinical outcomes.

We are supporting Dorset and Hampshire to embed the FREED model into their eating disorder service, ensuring a focus of early intervention and sustainability.



Wessex
Academic Health
Science Network



FOCUS

Part of
The AHSN Network



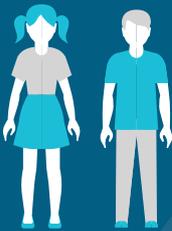
Mental health

Peer Support

We are collaborating with industry and voluntary organisations to understand the need and activity around peer support worker innovations.

Student mental health

We are also supporting local systems to identify gaps and opportunities to improve the student mental health offering. We host a Network meeting bringing together multiple organisations across the region to share best practice and enhance the student mental health pathways.



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The annual cost of ADHD assessments to the NHS is estimated at around **£23m**



Mental health problems currently cost the UK at least **£117.9 billion** a year



3 out of 4 mental health trusts have implemented the QbTest for ADHD

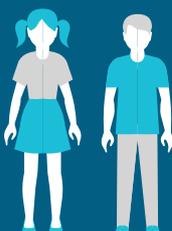


Across all age ranges in the UK in 2019, ADHD had a prevalence of **436,000** cases in men and **187,000** cases in women; a total of **624,000** individuals diagnosed with the condition and representing a **6%** proportion of recognised mental disorders



Data shows an increase in first year students experiencing mental health problems

37% depression
39% anxiety
23% anxiety



575 children and young people received the QbTest in 2021

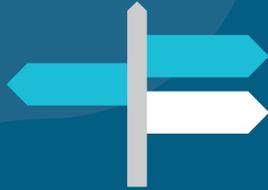


100% of adult eating disorder services in Wessex have implemented the FREED model



It is estimated that around **1.25 million** people in the UK have an eating disorder

What we delivered in 2021-22:



Focus ADHD programme

- Worked with mental health trusts and community paediatric services to improve the ADHD assessment pathway by implementing QbTest to supplement current clinical assessment processes
- Supported partnership working across the South East, implementing a Community of Practice group with colleagues from Kent Surrey Sussex and Oxford AHSNs, bringing together providers and clinicians with an interest in improving ADHD services
- Worked with commissioners and clinicians to understand how QbTest could impact current pathways.



Student mental health collaboration

- Collaborated with the South East Academic Health Science Networks (Kent Surrey Sussex, Oxford) and NHS England and NHS Improvement to support the student mental health agenda
- Hosted an inaugural event to bring together key partners to inform and share good practice to improve the student mental health care offer. Over 100 people participated including representatives from local authorities, Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) providers, universities, NHS, the voluntary and community sector and students' unions, all with the common vision of working together and sharing best practice to improve student wellbeing.

Mental Health Innovation Support programme

- Offered over 1,500 hours of tailored support to our local systems and innovators to develop innovation in mental health, and more than 125 hours of evaluation expertise
- Established a national network with our colleagues across all 15 AHSNs, enabling us to understand and learn about successful innovation adoption across the country
- Worked with NHS Innovation Accelerator Fellows to help spread and implement promising innovation in mental health across Wessex.



Early Intervention in Eating Disorders

- Supported the spread and implementation of the FREED model in eating disorder services across Dorset and Hampshire, promoting early assessment and intervention to speed up diagnosis and treatment in young people aged 16 to 25
- Collaborated with Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust and Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust to implement FREED
- Collaborated with fellow AHSNs in the South East region (Kent Surrey Sussex and Oxford) to co-host a bi-monthly community of practice meeting with services implementing the national programmes.

Mental health



Plans for 2022-23:

- Continue to deliver and support the national programmes for eating disorders and neurodevelopmental services:
 - Support the spread and adoption of the Early Intervention Eating Disorders FREED model (nationally commissioned programme)
 - Support the spread and adoption of the Focus ADHD programme to improve the ADHD assessment offer to children and young people through an evidence-based objective diagnostic tool (nationally commissioned programme).
- Add value to the mental health agenda, supporting innovators and local systems to increase the speed and scale of innovation, by identifying areas where innovation could impact mental health pathways and system transformation
- Organise the national AHSN Mental Health Network meetings, ensuring connectivity between all 15 AHSNs
- Work collaboratively with our health and higher education partners to improve the mental health and wellbeing of students
- Review the peer support offering and training available to enhance peer support within our local eating disorder services
- Ensure inequalities are considered throughout these projects, both with those who deliver support and those who receive it.

Want to find out more?

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