Children and Young People’s Autism Service

As part of the preparatory work that took place following the service transition, an introductory letter was sent to everyone whose active records were transferred over from the previous provider.

We asked that anyone who didn’t receive any correspondence from the service by the end of October, and believed they should have been contacted to get in touch.

The past week has seen a number of calls and emails from such parents who didn't receive a letter and have been querying the situation with their child.

We very much welcome and appreciate these parents contacting us. We understand and empathise with the concern that many of these parents have expressed and, since being made aware of their child’s case we have ensured their details are added to our system and will be making the necessary arrangements to agree next steps.

Appointments for interventions and assessments are being prioritised based on the length of time the family have been waiting and the level of clinical need, with those who have been waiting longest and those whose clinical need is greatest being the biggest priority.

We appreciate there are families who are waiting for an update in relation to an assessment or intervention and continue to thank them for the patience they have shown. We are unable to provide specific timescales to these families at present, but please be assured the team is working as quickly as possible to arrange and carry out appointments and will be in contact as soon as possible.

As part of the assessment process that is now underway, clinicians and assistant psychologists have been going into schools to carry out observations and cognitive assessments for pupils referred to the service.

Schools are a key partner and the good working relationship our staff have with education professionals is really important in ensuring the young people we see receive the appropriate support. The feedback we have received from schools has been positive and we continue to work closely with them.

As mentioned last week, we have seen a number of appointments for families waiting to commence or continue an intervention, which were not attended. Letters are being posted shortly to families on the intervention waiting list asking for confirmation they still wish to receive an intervention and we thank everyone for their support in helping to ensure that every appointment is being filled.
Workshops
Places are still available for our ‘Introduction to autism’ session on Thursday 28 November from 9.30am-12.30pm at Rugeley Community Centre in Burnthill Lane, Rugeley, WS15 2HX.

An ‘Introduction to autism’ session is also being held on Wednesday 4 December from 9.30am-12.30pm at St Peter’s Church in Hawksworth, Tamworth, B77 2HH. Both events will provide more information on the difficulties that are commonly seen in children with autism, alongside recommendations on how the team can support this.

Furthermore, we will be holding an ‘Understanding Sensory Processing in Children with Autism – Parent/Carer Workshop’ that will cover basic theory of sensory processing and help with identifying sensory behaviours in children with autism, thinking about strategies parents can use and developing understanding to help improve functioning in activities of everyday life.

Each session is only open to families in possession of a full or working autism diagnosis for their child and those wishing to attend are asked to contact the service directly on 300 303 0691 or email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk to register. This will be on a first come, first served basis and a copy of the child’s diagnosis will be required when registering.

As a reminder, a drop-in clinic is also being held on 28 November between 1pm-4pm at Rugeley Community Centre. It will be open to any family with a full or working diagnosis and provide advice or information, with no requirement for an appointment needed.

Contacting the service
The service can be contacted by calling 0300 303 0691 between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays). The team can also be accessed by email at cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk.

More information about the service can be found via MPFT’s website at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service. The service web page features:

- Referral information (NB: Referrals into the service can only be made by a professional who has met with the child and family)
- Frequently asked questions that provide more information both to current and new users of the service
- Information should urgent help be required
- Contact details for a number of other useful services and organisations
- Workshop information
- Previous weekly updates.
If you need urgent help between the hours of 9am-5pm from Monday to Friday, you can contact the Single Point of Access directly on 0300 303 0691, or call First Response (social care and health) on 0800 1313 126.

If you need urgent help out of hours (evenings, weekends or bank holidays) please contact:

- NHS 111, who have access to on-call mental health professionals; or the
- First Response Emergency Duty Team on 0345 604 2886

In the event of a medical emergency please go straight to A&E.

Should a parent/carer have a specific question relating to the care of their child, we ask that they email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk. For more general queries or concerns please contact PALS by:

- Email: palsandexperience@mpft.nhs.uk
- Telephone: 01785 783026