

**A Delphi consensus study to define the features of a community based model to promote and protect the emotional wellbeing of children and young people living in the East of England.**

**Study overview**

**Study team:** Peter Jones (PI), Emma Howarth (senior researcher), Ayla Humphrey (clinician), Chiara Lombardo (research associate), Maris Vainre (research assistant).

**Aim**

To identify, measure, and develop consensus around the key features of a comprehensive service model to promote and protect the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in the East of England. It is anticipated that the study will yield information about:

- Specific activities that should (according to consensus opinion) be undertaken to promote mental health and emotional wellbeing, as well as prevent the onset of difficulties.
- Early interventions and specialist interventions for more severe problems
- Specific groups at whom services should be targeted, and methods of engaging them in support
- Settings of service delivery and routes of access
- Barriers and facilitators to receipt of effective and supportive services
- Strategies to facilitate integrated working amongst professionals
- Common outcomes for measurement across different types of service

**Purpose**

To produce good quality, local evidence to inform the design and resourcing of community based services to improve mental health and well-being outcomes for children and young people living in the region.

**Initial sponsoring partners**

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG; Cambridgeshire County Council; Peterborough City Council; Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust; Cambridgeshire Community

Services Trust; Cambridge University Hospitals Trust; Cambridge Institute of Public Health; NIHR CLAHRC East of England.

### **Study methodology**

- A three round mixed method study involving professionals from a range of sectors and children, young people and parents.
- A mixture of purposive and snowball sampling used to recruit professionals to the study. Children and young people and parents recruited via gatekeeper organisations
- Round 1: *Opinion gathering* (completed).
  - Open ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews and focus groups used to gather local opinions about the availability and quality of existing services and priorities for future service delivery.
  - Supplemented by a non-systematic review of UK consultations, carried out with children and parents.
  - Qualitative analysis undertaken to identify key themes and subthemes, to guide the development of statements to be included in the round 2 questionnaire.
- Round 2: *Consensus building* (completed).
  - Participants rated agreement with, or importance of, statements generated from round 1, on a ten point scale.
  - Items rated by >80% of the sample as either important or unimportant defined as having reached consensus.
- Round 3: *Consensus building* (pending).
  - Respondents asked to re-rate statements where no consensus has been reached.
  - Respondents are informed of the average group rating and their own rating for each remaining statement and asked to re-rate, which sometimes encourages convergence.
- We will identify areas of consensus within and between (children/parents vs professionals) participant groups.
- For those elements where agreement is not reached it will be possible to explore the views of particular sectors to understand whether there is disagreement across the board or whether between particular groups.
- We are also undertaking a systematic scoping review of the evidence base us to build a picture of the breadth and depth of evidence underpinning each of the identified priorities or service features. This will also enable us to identify gaps in the evidence base.

### **Output**

- Consensus statement identifying features of service delivery deemed to be important by children and young people and parents as well as professionals.
- Where agreement is not reached it will be possible to explore the views of particular sectors to understand whether there is disagreement across the board or whether between particular groups.

### **Progress to date**

- Round 1: Completed April 2015.
  - 95 professionals from various sectors recruited and completed open ended questionnaires; 24 parents and 29 children and young people took part in semi-structured interviews and focus groups.
  - Themes coalesced under three key headings:
  - ‘Well-being’ – items relating to the promotion of positive mental health and the prevention of mental ill health.
  - ‘Support’ – items relating to support and intervention that is required once a mental health problem has been identified.
  - ‘Service delivery and commissioning’ – items relating to inter-agency working practices and policies, commissioning arrangements and outcome measurement
- Round 2: Completed March 2016.
  - 44 professionals completed online survey (46% response rate);
  - 12 parents completed online or paper surveys (50% response rate);
  - 5 eligible children and young people (>12 year) completed online or paper surveys (29% of eligible children from first round).
  - We had anticipated significant attrition between round 1 and 2, and therefore the numbers retained at round 2 is as expected.
- Round 3: Due for completion in March/April

### **Purpose of expert (by experience or progression) meeting**

- Sense check findings
- Identify gaps
- To consider resonance with current policy initiatives
- Identify opportunities to use evidence to inform practice
- To identify barriers to implementation of identified service features