

BRIDGING THE GAP: AN AUDIT OF THE TRANSITIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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Introduction: Transitions from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS) can often be problematic due to high eligibility thresholds, inconsistent support during transition and limited participation from young people. The TRACK Study highlighted several clinical, organizational and policy related reasons for Services to develop and implement transition protocols effectively.

Aims and objectives: This audit aims to examine whether the Trust's Transitions Policy is adhered to during transitions of young people across services. It also aims to review the qualitative experience of young people and professionals involved.

Method: A Questionnaire Survey method was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data from involved professionals and young people who moved from CAMHS into AMHS (Aug11 - Jan12). The data was analyzed against the audit criteria, which relate to specific aspects of the Transitions Policy.

Results: A variable response rate showed that majority of the young people and involved professionals were satisfied with the planning and transfer of care with high policy adherence rates. Young people wished for better communication, more information on the nature of services offered and greater support, while professionals hoped for greater consideration of engagement levels and joint working. Alternative support was requested for declined referrals.

Conclusions: Improved adherence to the Transitions Policy can be achieved through proper planning, better communication, more joint working and regular feedback from young people and professionals. It can also help to achieve higher standards and continuity of clinical care to meet the needs of young people.