

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services

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Dear Referrer,

Dear all, we are following up on our last letter to give you updated information.

This letter is accompanied by a letter from the local borough service setting put in more detail how they are now operating.

I am pleased to say that all of our outpatient services, ie all four boroughs and National/Specialist outpatients are now open to referrals as usual, ie as pre-covid. Referrals received will be triaged, assessed and either signposted to alternative resources in the same way they would have been previously, or assessed and/or added to waiting lists, depending on urgency.

Crisis services continue as they have done, with an enhanced crisis hub, 24 hour crisis line and home treatment where appropriate. The Crisis Assessment Unit on the Maudsley site is for young people aged 13 and upward from Lambeth, Southwark or Lewisham who are diverted from A&E if they do not require medical intervention. Crisis services in Croydon continue as before.

Snowsfields and Acorn Lodge inpatient wards remain closed at the present time. All children and young people are tested for Covid-19 prior to an inpatient admission and arrangements are in place for them to be cared for whilst test results are awaited.

Please note that face to face appointments require PPE and will currently be undertaken only where alternatives are not appropriate or possible. The majority of appointments are delivered via remote means, either telephone or video-link.

Children and young people who were already on waiting lists prior to lockdown have throughout this period been receiving remote appointments where possible.

We are currently working on environmental assessment of office and clinic spaces so that we can reorganise these to maximise safe working space, safe for both patients and staff. We will then be prioritising for face to face work those children

and young people most in need. The default option will continue to be remote/digital working.

We do have some difficulty with referrals for neurodevelopmental conditions, eg ASD, requiring play and school observation, we are working on how best we can offer assessments for these, in the meantime these referrals will need to remain on our waiting list.

Our child wellbeing practitioners and, where we have them, Mental Health Teams in schools, continue to provide services for children and young people who traditionally would not have met CAMHS criteria, and our schools teams have been working with school staff on how they can be most helpful in the current context, this includes materials for use with parents and children who are at home. As in the last letter, our EPEC service continues to provide materials for use by parents and professionals via social media, for which the take up has been very positive.

Regards

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Deputy Director CAMHS

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

