

Report to Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board

Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Brownridge, Cabinet Member Health and Social Care

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Purpose of the Report

This report provides an overview of provision delivered by Oldham's Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service to improve the health and wellbeing of Oldham's residents.

Executive Summary

Having a high functioning sexual health and substance misuse offer for young people is an essential component of the range of activity required to achieve better population health and reduce demand on health and social care services. As per Public Health funding conditions and mandated responsibilities, we are required to deliver drug and alcohol services and ensure access to sexual health services for young people.

HCRG Care Group work in collaboration with Early Break to provide an integrated Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service (Meeting Your Needs Oldham – MYNO) and have been commissioned to deliver this service since 1 April 2021. Cabinet recently approved the option to extend the contract for a period of 2 years, until 31 March 2026.

The provider has been delivering the service to the requirements set out in the specification and meeting performance requirements through the contract to date. They have received positive feedback from service users and professional partners and have responded collaboratively and innovatively to the requirement to make budget reductions to contribute towards the local authority's ongoing budget challenge

An update on progress made by the service to improve health outcomes and a summary of future priorities will be provided.

Recommendations

Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board is asked to consider the update on recent delivery of the Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service, including relevant performance information and contributions towards improving health outcomes.

Sexual Health - Update

1 Context

- 1.1 Adolescence is a crucial time for physical, emotional and social development, and good quality advice, information and support for young people on sexual health and substance misuse has an important contribution to make to health, wellbeing, education and wider social outcomes. Having a high functioning sexual health and substance misuse offer for young people is an essential component of the range of activity required to achieve better population health and reduce demand on health and social care services. As per Public Health funding conditions and mandated responsibilities, we are required to deliver drug and alcohol services and ensure access to sexual health services for young people.
- 1.2 Good sexual health is important to individuals, but it is also a key public health issue. Sexual ill health and poor sexual wellbeing are strongly linked to deprivation and health inequalities, with our more deprived populations experiencing worse sexual health, and present significant costs to society, as well as to the individual. Sexual and reproductive health is not just about preventing disease or infection. It also means promoting good sexual health in a wider context, including relationships, sexuality and sexual rights
- 1.3 Preventing harmful alcohol and drug use is central to a public health approach, which emphasises tackling the root causes of health and social harms and dependence and aims to reduce the number of people whose alcohol and drug use has a long-term negative effect on their own and their family's wellbeing. The Greater Manchester Drug and Alcohol Strategy sets out the collective ambition to make Greater Manchester a place where everyone can have the best start in life, live well and age well, safe from the harms caused by drugs and alcohol. Reducing these harms is central to improving the safety, wellbeing and prosperity of our residents.
- 1.4 There is a relationship between sexual health behaviour and drug and alcohol use among young people. Research has shown that alcohol consumption can result in lowered inhibitions and poor judgements regarding sexual activity and risky sexual behaviours in young people. It was also found that young people want to understand the influence of alcohol on sexual behaviours and where to get confidential support to manage their emotions if they make a bad decision as a result of drinking. We, therefore, recognise the need for the implementation of a more holistic approach to sexual health and drugs and alcohol through an integrated service.
- 1.5 Oldham has poor outcomes in relation to sexual health and substance misuse and remains consistently worse than Greater Manchester, North West and England rates for under 18 conceptions, abortion rates, LARC uptake, STI diagnosis (including Chlamydia detection rates) and hospital admissions due to substance misuse and alcohol (15-24 year olds).

2. Background

- 2.1. In January 2021, the Director of Public Health (in her delegated capacity as approved by Cabinet) agreed to award the contract for the provision of Oldham's Young People's Integrated Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service to Early Break (in partnership with HCRG Care Group and The Proud Trust) from 1 April 2021 for an initial period of three years up until 31 March 2024, with an option to extend for a further period of two years plus two years dependent on performance, achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs), continued funding and local need. In December 2023, Cabinet agreed to

the proposal to enact the provision to extend the contract for a period of 2 years from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2026 (with a remaining provision to extend for up to a further 2 years up to a total contract length of 7 years) as permitted in the original terms and conditions for the contract.

- 2.2. The Meeting Your Needs Oldham (MYNO) service, delivered by Early Break (in partnership with HCRG Care Group and The Proud Trust), offers specialist support for sexual health, contraception, and the prevention and treatment of substance misuse for young people. This enables young people to access high-quality information, advice and treatment for both their sexual health and substance use in a single location and transaction.
- 2.3. MYNO is an integrated offer for young people aged under 19 (or aged 19-25 if they are a child looked after by the local authority or care leaver, or SEND), providing a holistic service addressing young people's health and wellbeing, specifically providing advice, information and treatment for both sexual health and substance misuse. The service:
- Provides support to the wider Oldham system (including schools, youth services, and children's social care) to deliver Tier 1 substance misuse interventions, information and advice, and relationship and sex education.
 - Provides information, advice and guidance for young people attending the service, through outreach activities, and to a wider audience through digital channels, including a website which aims to improve knowledge and understanding of sexual and reproductive health and drugs and alcohol among young people living in Oldham.
 - Supports young people in contact with the service to develop their knowledge and understanding of sex and relationships, skills and confidence to protect or improve their sexual health.
 - Provides Tier 2 and Tier 3 substance misuse services for young people who misuse substances (including psychoactive substances, illicit or prescribed drugs and/or alcohol).
 - Provides support for young people who misuse substances to access Tier 4 services, where their needs cannot be met in the community (provision of tier 4 services is out of scope for this contract)
 - Provides support to young people whose parents misuse substances, including young people who act as carers for parents with substance misuse issues.
 - Helps address offending and anti-social behaviour in young people linked to substance misuse in young people through effective interventions.
 - Supports and work with other agencies to provide intensive interventions to families where parental and/or young people's substance misuse is identified as problematic.
 - Works with adult services, specialist drug and alcohol, and sexual health services and universal services such as primary care, to ensure a seamless transition for young people who are approaching the age limit for the service.
 - Provides clinical contraception and sexual health services through clinic-based and outreach (community based) activities.
- 2.4. The Service is expected to contribute to the following outcomes:
- Increased access to contraception, including LARC.
 - Reduction in under-18 conception rates
 - Reduction in under-18 abortion rate
 - Controlling the transmission of STIs/HIV
 - Reducing the prevalence of STI, including HIV via improved diagnosis rates
 - Reduction in number of alcohol and drug misuse related admissions to hospital and deaths
 - Improved recovery rates and increased number of successful completions

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- Reduced harm and improved resilience amongst young people, including vulnerable groups.

2.5. The original contract value for the delivery of the service was £600,000 per annum, funded by the Public Health core budget. As part of the ongoing corporate budget challenge, it was agreed in February 2023 to reduce the budget for the provision of the service by £150,000 (over two years, to be achieved by end of financial year 2024/25). The service achieved the required budget reductions with minimal impact on service delivery. The revised contract value remains in line with other neighbouring and comparable authorities for the delivery of this type of service and presents good value for money. In applying the budget reductions, the provider has worked to minimise the impact on front line delivery and service deliverables by focusing primarily on creating efficiencies in back office and running costs and from the sexual health element of the service with due regard being made to avoid any reduction in investment in substance misuse service delivery in line with OHID substance misuse grant conditions. An update regarding how the efficiencies were achieved, and an overview of progress, was provided to Scrutiny Board in March 2024 as part of the Sexual Health Update.

3. Progress to date

- 3.1. The Young People's Service, MYNO, continues to deliver an effective integrated service delivering both sexual health and substance misuse interventions for young people in the borough. The service receives approximately 350 referrals for drug and alcohol support and engages approximately 250 young people in structured Tier 2 and 3 substance misuse treatment per year (with an 84% successful completion rate), primarily supporting around cannabis and alcohol use but is seeing small but increasing numbers of young people using other substances such as nitrous oxide, ketamine, LSD and benzodiazepines.
- 3.2. The service works closely with schools and education settings and the outreach team works closely with the youth service and detached youth team to provide assertive outreach and brief interventions, advice and support to young people in our communities, based on local intelligence. The service flexes its delivery and approach to meet the needs of the young people they are working with recognising that there are differing needs, stigma and complexities within different groups and communities. Over 50 families a year access the innovative Holding Families programme provided by the service, which provides whole family support for children and family members affected by parental substance use and the service works with parents and carers at any stage of their recovery from drugs and alcohol use.
- 3.3. Around 400 young people per year (a 40% increase on previous years) are accessing clinical (face to face) sexual health appointments with a further 400 accessing STI testing kits and almost 700 packs of condoms and lube being distributed via the condom distribution scheme, plus there is a comprehensive online support offer including online emergency contraception and oral contraception (subject to Fraser Competency to ensure appropriate safeguarding is in place).
- 3.4. The providers continue to be active system leaders and lead around substance misuse and sexual health locally, regionally and nationally. Notably, Early Break has led on the delivered of a variety of events for professionals, including lunch and learn sessions and topic-specific workshops and events such as a recent OHID-funded event on Ketamine and a session on 'Responding to Young People at Risk', plus educational videos and resources to educate staff and professionals around the risk of substances (Cannabis, Illicit and nicotine vapes, Alcohol, Ketamine and Cocaine) and harm reduction advice, with a view that referrals to the service are made appropriately.

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- 3.5. Early Break have also developed a number of tools and protocols that are used across Oldham and GM, such as the Vaping Toolkit for Education Settings and the 'Early Intervention Parental Substance and Alcohol Use Conversational Tool' and have coproduced innovative training and resources, such as the Stressed Out Brain toolkit, that was developed with young people (a Stressed Out Brain 2 Campaign is under development, which will focus on the female adolescent brain and will be coproduced and codesigned with young women across GM and Manchester Metropolitan University, to produce evidence based and trauma responsive interventions and training).
 - 3.6. HCRG play an active role in leading the Oldham Sexual Health Strategic Partnership and associated Young People's Working Group, which focuses on local data on contraception, abortion and STI rates, key findings from research reports into young people's sexual behaviours and attitudes, pathways and workforce development and opportunities for co-production.
 - 3.7. The service has active Voice to Voice (V2V) workers who focus on youth participation, direct engagement and play an advocacy role to ensure that young people have a 'voice' ensuring that their experiences and perspectives are heard and allowing them to influence decisions and shape support programmes. Some recent examples of work undertaken by the V2V workers include: development of posters and marketing materials; videos to let people know how to access the service and what to expect when they do; review of the buildings and facilities, plus consumables (including STI test kits), to ensure that they are inclusive, accessible and meet the "You're Welcome" Standards (which aim to improve the quality of, and access to health and wellbeing services for young people).
 - 3.8. The MYNO Outreach Team continue to work alongside our Youth Service colleagues to carry out targeted street-based outreach with weekly sessions and delivers sessions at health and wellbeing events and young people's events and services regularly, including at Youth Provision, Secondary Schools and Further and Higher Education establishments.
 - 3.9. The MYNO service achieved £150,000 budget reduction between 2023/24 and 2024/25 without the need for any mitigation to the agreed service delivery model. To achieve the savings, the service providers were able to release some natural slippage due to changes in staffing and a reduction in overheads, plus they reconfigured the service delivery model to make better use of existing capacity.
 - 3.10. The MYNO service also achieved efficiencies around pathology and consumable costs as the provider of the sexual health element of the service (HCRG Care Group) also delivers the all-age Integrated Sexual Health Service and Oldham has benefitted from shared provision around community chlamydia screening and postal/online STI testing that is also available via that service (and that local young people can also access).
 - 3.11. In applying the budget reductions, the provider has worked to minimise the impact on front line delivery and service deliverables by focusing primarily on creating efficiencies in back office and running costs and from the sexual health element of the service with due regard being made to avoid any reduction in investment in substance misuse service delivery in line with OHID substance misuse grant conditions. The providers have worked with commissioners to prioritise options that have minimal impact on front-line delivery and our residents whilst ensuring that our most vulnerable young people and families are able to access the support and treatment that they need.
 - 3.12. To do this, work has taken place at a national level for both the main providers which has been beneficial to Oldham residents as it has significantly reduced the anticipated impact of the agreed budget savings on front-line delivery. The changes have had minimal impact

of the experience of our young people receiving support from the service and does not affect their ability to access the provision.

- 3.13. Moreover, work is taking place across the system to improve the strategic response to improving sexual health and addressing substance misuse via improved joint working arrangements that are in place as part of the revised alliance/partnership working and local strategic action plans.
- 3.14. Key activities and future plans for the Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service include: wider workforce development and training opportunities for the health and social care system and voluntary and community sector (including training developed and delivered by the V2V workers); contribution to GM Hidden Harm self-assessment; exploring any potential barriers and challenges which may be impacting on the uptake of provision (notably Chlamydia and other STI testing); contribution to GM wide comms campaign to tackle misinformation and misperceptions around sexual health and wellbeing (to be delivered via social media); roll out of more clinics at local community locations and increase in the number of school visits to ensure that young people can access support at times and locations that are best for them.

4. Key Issues for Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board to Discuss

- 4.1. Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board is asked to consider the Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service offer and how the service aims to reduce health inequalities, improve population health outcomes and build an open culture where everyone is able to make informed and responsible choices about relationships and sex and drug and alcohol use.

5. Key Questions for Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board to Consider

- 5.1. Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board is asked to consider the update on recent delivery of the Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service, including relevant performance information and contributions towards improving health outcomes.

6. Links to Corporate Outcomes

- 6.1. In Oldham, every individual matters and ensuring our residents have access to the care, support and opportunities to lead healthier, happier lives is a key collective mission for us. We recognise the need to pay particular attention to our most disadvantaged residents, who face the greatest barriers to opportunity. Supporting vulnerable groups, such as young people (especially those who lie at the intersection of a broad range of health inequalities), will contribute to a number of key priorities aimed at tackling poverty, improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities, including:
- Ensuring access to services by disadvantaged communities
 - Improving sexual health
 - Promoting treatment and recovery from substance misuse.
- 6.2. The commissioning and delivery of the Young People's Sexual Health and Substance Misuse Service is in line with one of the four main focus areas, or "pillars", in relation to prevention and early help as the service aims to actively works to reduce the need for our services by offering universal information, advice and guidance, as well as more targeted and specialist support.

7. Consultation

- 7.1. Quarterly formal contract and performance monitoring meetings take place between the Providers and Commissioners as part of contract monitoring arrangements plus regular

transformation meetings to monitor the delivery of any new elements of service delivery. Reports include consideration of service user engagement and feedback. The Director of Public Health, in her capacity as statutory officer, and the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care have been appropriately briefed regarding progress and performance.

- 7.2. A consultation exercise was conducted by Early Break's Voice to Voice workers of Oldham's young people to understand their thoughts on the current service offer and identify any areas of improvement. The findings from this consultation have been shared with commissioners and incorporated into service delivery plans to inform continuous service improvement.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None