

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

From Essex Clinical Commissioning Groups, Southend-on-sea Borough Council, Essex County Council and Thurrock Council

**Immediate release: 15 January 2016**

***Open up, Reach out*** - Southend, Essex and Thurrock launch £3.3 million plan to improve mental health for children and young people

- **Plan receives top rating from national leaders**

An unprecedented partnership of ten authorities covering the county of Essex has today (Friday 15 January) published ***Open up, Reach out***, a five-year local transformation plan for the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

The plan includes major improvements and new services with an investment of £3.3 million per year added to the current £13.2 million a year budget – an increase of 25%.

In a recent assessment by NHS England, the plan was rated the highest in the Midlands and East region.

Some of the planned improvements over the next three years include:

- Nearly £1m per annum extra to expand services for eating disorders
- Enhanced crisis services working 9am-9pm, 7 days a week
- An increase in staff providing single points of access in each local authority area – Southend, Essex and Thurrock – making it easier for young people, families and professionals to get the support they need

- Special training and support for schools and other places that help children and young people.

Said Dr Caroline Dollery, Clinical Director of the East of England Strategic Clinical Network for Mental Health, also an Essex GP;

“The Southend, Essex and Thurrock plan stands out, firstly because it has gone to great lengths to listen to young people and build a very different service around what they say. Secondly, because of its ambition to bring specialist expertise out of old style clinics and closer to children, families and schools at a much earlier stage.

“There is significant evidence that in around 75% of adults with mental health illness, the problems start before the age of 18.

“**Open up, Reach out** gets to the heart of the matter by building resilience in children and young people, in families, schools and other places. It starts with the right information being easily available, instant help and advice, in some instances via the web, and easy access to professional support, including training for schools.”

Essex County Councillor Dick Madden, Cabinet Member for Adults and Children, said:

“Nationally, it is estimated that only one in four children and young people who need help are actually receiving a service. This is also what we found in Essex.

“We are tackling the stigma that prevents young people seeking help. We also need to move away from old-style clinics and get our services into familiar places. Support in schools is something our young people have said they want.

“Our children and young people have said we don’t know enough about mental health or the services available. More knowledge and skills within our communities could save young lives.”

Anne Jones, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council’s Executive Councillor for Children and Learning, said:

“Young people in Southend-on-Sea tell us that emotional wellbeing is a real area of concern for them. We are therefore delighted to launch these joint plans to transform emotional health and wellbeing services for young people across Southend-on-Sea and the whole of Essex.

“This new service commissioned jointly across the county, added to additional funding will help to further transform the way the services are delivered and make a real change for young people.”

Cllr Barbara Rice, Thurrock Council's portfolio holder for health and adult social care, said:

"This is an excellent piece of work showing how working together to address issues as early as possible gives everyone the best possible mental health outcomes."

Said Clare Morris, Chief Officer of NHS West Essex CCG and lead NHS commissioner for children's mental health;

"***Open up, Reach out*** is currently the biggest transformation in progress across health and social care in Southend, Essex and Thurrock. We are one of a very few areas in the country to combine our funds and create a countywide emotional wellbeing and mental health service for children and young people.

"With a single service and pooled resources we can achieve bigger and better things. As well as an increase in services, we are building a cultural revolution that makes mental health everybody's business."

The improvement plan and additional money for emotional wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people is in addition to the recent investment pledge made by the Prime Minister for all mental health services across the country – see *national story* at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-pledges-a-revolution-in-mental-health-treatment>

**ENDS**

## **Editors' notes**

1. For interviews and further information please contact:  
Wendy Smith 07748 116416
2. Photo images used in ***Open up, Reach out*** are licensed for use in news articles. Please contact us on the number above to request a high-resolution image.
3. The partners delivering ***Open up, Reach out*** are:
  - NHS Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group

- NHS Castle Point and Rochford Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Southend-on-sea Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group
- Southend-on sea Borough Council
- Essex County Council
- Thurrock Council

For a downloadable copy of the full plan and a short version for young people, visit:

- [Full version – Open up Reach out](#)
- [Short version – Open up Reach out](#)

4. A new single emotional wellbeing and mental health service started on 1 November 2015 serving the children and young people of Southend, Essex and Thurrock. This involved a change from four previous service providers to a single contract with NELFT NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT).

For further information and a downloadable booklet on the new service, visit <http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs>

## 5. Vision of improvements

Support in daily life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and advice for children and young people, available from the NELFT website and places in the community</li> <li>• Information and advice for parents and carers</li> <li>• Training and support for schools and others</li> </ul>
Help from local services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services working with families at home</li> <li>• Services in schools, GP surgeries, community and children’s centres</li> <li>• Evidence-based interventions and therapies for children, young people and families</li> <li>• A confident and empowered children’s workforce</li> </ul>
Expert help from specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist help for long-term and serious problems</li> <li>• Joined-up services for several problems</li> <li>• Referral to more specialised services</li> </ul>
Help in a crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast response with support at home</li> </ul>

- Links with other emergency services
- Overnight and short stays in specialist services, if needs be

## 6. How the model of care will work for children and young people

- To begin with, the right kind of support should be there for children and young people in daily life - people will have a better understanding of the risks to mental health and how to cope.
- Families and professionals will be able to find out where to get help quickly and easily and have the support and tools they need for self-help.
- Where extra help is needed, services will be ready to step in at an early stage, in convenient, friendly places where young people feel safe, listened to and respected.
- Workers within services will have the confidence and skills to understand needs early on and give the right support.
- Children and young people will have a say about their own care and in the design and development of services.
- Expert help for long term and serious problems will expand across Southend, Essex and Thurrock.
- Experts will be ready to act quickly in a crisis, whenever and wherever that may be.

## 7. National context

The local transformation plan is part of a high profile national commitment to improve children's mental health. It was one of the recommendations of a national taskforce report called ***Future in Mind***, which was launched in March this year by the then Minister of State for Health, Norman Lamb.

For further information and a copy of the national report, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-mental-health-services-for-young-people>

## 8. Some background facts and figures

- The population of Southend, Essex and Thurrock is 1.75 million.

- 24% of the local population is under the age of 19. Thurrock has the largest proportion of young people, some 27% of the Thurrock population.
- In Southend, Essex and Thurrock it is estimated that around 9.6% (nearly 22,420) children and young people aged between 5 and 16 have a mental health disorder.
- In Essex, around 33% of children and young people on the edge of care and known to Essex social services were also receiving mental health services in 2014/15.
- Vulnerable groups include:
  - o Children who experience bullying
  - o Children with substance misuse problems
  - o Teenage parents
  - o Young offenders
  - o Children with disabilities
  - o Children of parents with mental health problems and substance misuse problems.
- Among the most frequent emerging emotional health needs are anxiety, depressive symptoms, behavioural problems and deliberate self-harm.
- Among the most frequent severe, complex or persistent mental health problems are anxiety, self-harm and suicidal thoughts.
- Healthwatch in Southend, Essex and Thurrock and youth councils associated with the three local authorities helped to engage young people in designing the local transformation plan.
- Some of the relevant findings from the Healthwatch Essex Yeah! Project were:
  - o 8 in 10 young people did not know how to get mental health support
  - o 9 in 10 wanted to learn about mental health
  - o Some young people would like mandatory education about mental health

YEAH! Stands for Young Essex Attitudes on Health and Social Care.

For further information visit:

<http://www.healthwatchessex.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/The-YEAH-Report-Healthwatch-Essex-March-2015.pdf>