

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services



Children and young people up to 18 years with emotional, behavioural and mental health problems.



Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (or CAMHS) is a framework of universal, targeted and specialist multi-agency services, including public, private and third sector providers. Universal services are available to everyone and include colleges, Connexions and youth offending teams. Targeted and specialist services support the most vulnerable. A young person using specialist CAMHS will have a care plan which should include action to help them to sustain or re-integrate into education, training or work, and deal with any crisis in their mental health condition. Some trusts have clinical liaison or link posts to facilitate joint working by CAMHS and adult services; these may be generic or specific to a condition or group of young people, e.g. transition teams for young people in or leaving social services care.



CAMHS advise anyone who is concerned about the emotional wellbeing of a young person to contact either Young Minds helpline: 0808 8025544 or Childline: 0800 1111.



- Many services are excellent but financial and workforce capacity issues can influence local provision. Access to services can be confusing and waiting times can be very long. Transition to adult services can be fraught with problems.
- CAMHS is working towards providing a service for all young people up to their 18th birthday but some services may not be available in some areas for those beyond the age of 16; others may stop at 17. Gaps in provision particularly affect young people who also have a learning disability and those who have a forensic history.
- CAMHS teams offer treatment to young people with neuro-developmental conditions such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) AND Asperger's Syndrome, but they often do not meet the criteria for referral to adult mental health services and are discharged.

