

Young Inspectors REPORT 2014

Inspection of the health support for looked after children by the Young Inspectors Team

This report is a summary of the findings by the Young Inspectors Team

1. Who are the Young Inspectors?

The Young Inspectors are young people aged 16-21 who conduct research into the views of service users and professionals about the social work and LAC health service in Camden.

Each Young Inspector has experience of having a social worker and of receiving support from the looked after children health team. Because of this experience, they have a sound understanding of the service from a service-user point of view.

2. Why did the Young Inspectors inspect health support for looked after children?

The Camden social work service and the looked after children health team want to make sure that children and young people get the right service and support.

Being fit and healthy is a Camden promise to help keep children and young people in good health by making sure that professionals work together to ensure that: doctors and dentists understand your needs and listen to your problems; you get the information and support to help you with any difficulties with your health and any treatment you need; your medical appointments are kept; even if you live outside Camden, information about your health is kept confidential and only shared with the people who need to know, such as your carer and doctors.



3. How did Young Inspectors gather the information?

Information gathering and research consisted of four main parts:

- Reading documents¹
- Researching information on websites² about health support for looked after children
- Interviewing key people who make decisions about the service³
- Consultations. A series of consultations took place to establish what support was currently offered to LAC and how this could be improved⁴.

¹ **Documents:** Annual report – Camden looked after children health team; Promoting the health of looked after children – CSF policy; Health Indicators data – Annual FSSW Management Information Report 2014; Multi-Agency Liaison Team (MALT) – information for young people; Your Health Assessment Information for young people and foster carers – Looked After Children Health Service; Delivering the health reforms for looked after children – National Children's Bureau; Improving mental health of looked after young people – Young Minds; Telling health staff who is in care, children's views – Children's Rights Director.

² Websites: Open Minded – tavistockandportman.nhs.uk, National Voices, National Children's Bureau – health reforms briefing, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

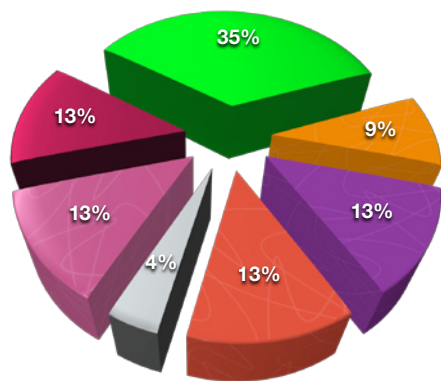
³ **Interviews:** looked after children team managers; looked after children social workers; looked after children Health team; Camden CAMHS staff (Open Minded).

⁴ **Consultations:** looked after children, looked after children social workers, looked after children health staff.

Key consultation responses

Young people's views

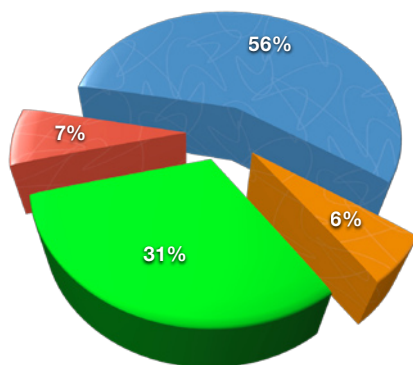
13⁺ yrs



If you are worried about your health who would you feel comfortable to speak to?

1

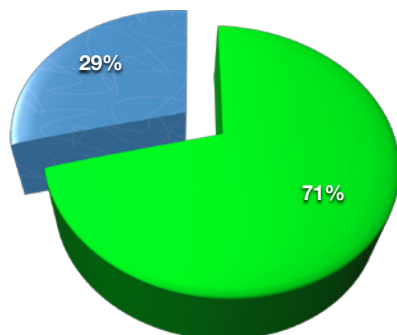
- Social Worker (13%)
- Friend (13%)
- Foster Carer (35%)
- Teacher (4%)
- GP (9%)
- Other (13%)
- LAC Nurse (13%)



Your health assessment report is confidential. Does it mean that...
(Choose one answer)

2

- Nobody gets to see my health assessment (7%)
- ☒ Your report is sent ONLY to your social worker, foster carer and GP (56%)
- Only my school nurse gets to see it (6%)
- Don't know (31%)



Do you feel you can talk to the LAC nurse about any areas of health you are worried about?
(For example: sexual health, alcohol problems, drugs, emotional worries)

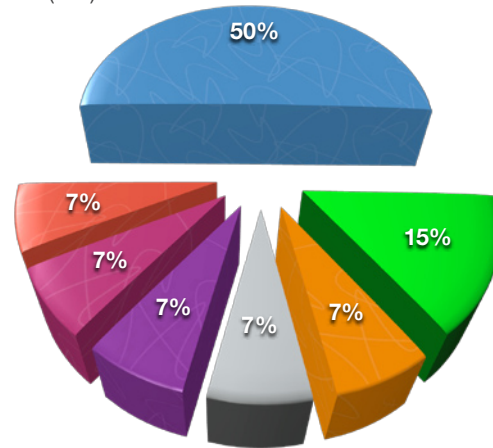
3

- Yes (71%)
- No (29%)

We know sometimes YP don't come for their health assessments.
Please tell us which of these could be a reason why you don't come.

(Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Worried if friends at school will ask what the meeting is about (7%)
- ☐ Don't understand why I need an assessment (0%)
- ☐ Don't want to miss out on school (0%)
- ☐ Can't be bothered (50%)
- ☐ Too far to travel (15%)
- ☐ Don't want to be different (0%)
- ☐ I feel embarrassed (7%)
- ☐ Would I have to take any clothes off? (7%)
- ☐ Are you embarrassed about your body? (7%)
- ☐ Don't understand what the assessment is about (7%)
- ☐ Are you worried about any aspects of your health that stops you from coming? (0%)



4

It is important you take more responsibility for your health as you get older, such as making your own health appointments. What support do you need to help you take care of your health?

5



What are the things about your health that you are most worried about?

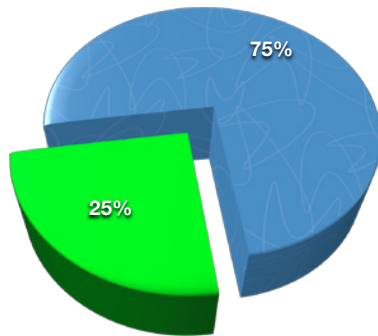
6



Key consultation responses

Children's views

7-12 yrs



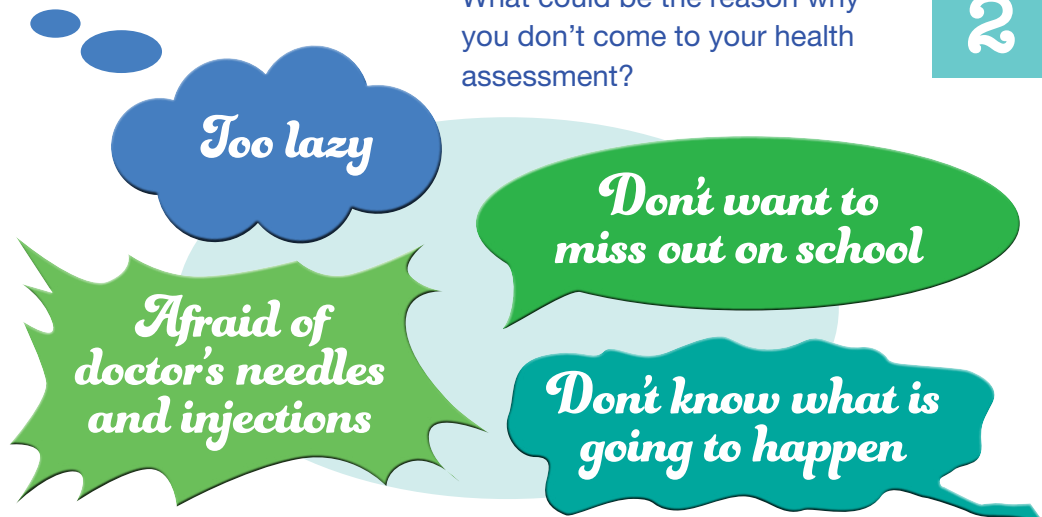
Your health assessment report is confidential. Does it mean that...
(Choose one answer):

1

- ☐ Nobody gets to see my health assessment (75%)
- ☒ Your report is sent **ONLY** to your social worker, foster carer and GP (25%)
- ☐ Only my school nurse gets to see it? (0%)
- ☐ Don't know (0%)

What could be the reason why you don't come to your health assessment?

2



Key consultation responses

from looked after children's social workers and health team

1. From your experience what helps to build a trusting relationship with children and young people so they feel comfortable to talk about their health issues?

- Spending quality time getting to know child or young person and doing things together that they enjoy.
- Assurance of confidentiality at the health assessment.

2. In your view, what are the main areas for further development and improvement of the support from the LAC health team?

- Finding ways to engage young people who are reluctant to access health services and asking them what they would like out of their health assessment.
- Enabling children to be involved in designing the services we provide.

3. How do you ensure that children and young people who live outside Camden get the support they need with health?

- Liaise with healthcare professionals and follow up any issues.
- Having a named local health person identified to take a lead role.

4. What support is available for care leavers (including those aged 18+) to access mental health services? What are the difficulties?

- Open Minded service (formerly CAMHS) provides support for young people until the age of 18. Once a young person is over 18, the service would transfer to adult mental health providers.
- Services are being withdrawn too quickly if young people don't engage.

5. What support is available for disabled care leavers (including those aged 18+) to access mental health services? What are the difficulties?

- MOSAIC provides a specialist transition services for disabled young people from the ages of 14 until 25 years.
- Professionals could be better at sharing information about services that they have used and have worked well.



Camden MOSAIC
integrated service for disabled children



Key recommendations for change

1

To establish a health assessment drop-in service or a web chat facility for looked after children and care leavers with the aim of providing an easy access to discuss health concerns with LAC nurse, ask questions, catch up on the missed appointments or to get missed injections.

2

Provide help to children enabling them to understand what is involved in health assessment and why it is important. The feedback from children indicates that sometimes they are not clear about the difference between the health assessment by the looked after children health team and seeing a GP or a school nurse. This can be achieved by reviewing or improving the present information leaflet, ensuring that social workers and foster carers give full explanations and introducing an appointment card with a brief reminder on what to expect at the health assessment.

3

Provide better explanation of all aspects of confidentiality. Confidentiality of the health assessment is a difficult area for children to understand. In the feedback to the questionnaire 31% of children said they don't know what it means and 7% said that nobody gets to see the health assessment. Using examples can help to understand that confidentiality does not mean keeping a SECRET but it is to keep children SAFE. Confidentiality can also be clearly explained in the reviewed information about health assessments.

4

Introduce the availability of private conversation about health prior to looked after children review meeting. Health and wellbeing is a very private and children feel embarrassed when this is discussed at the LAC review meeting in front of other professionals. Children prefer a private conversation about their health prior to the LAC review meeting.

5

Continue to offer support to care leavers with health by children health care until the age of 21. Young people coming back to live in Camden would be better supported with the transition by children's services. This will help with registering with a GP and transfer of the records.

6

Provide continuity with support from Open Minded (formerly the child and adolescent mental health service) till the age of 21. Transition to adult services is difficult and involves longer waiting times to receive services. This can have a detrimental effect on the health of 18 year old care leavers at this crucial time of change.

7

Improve communication between social workers and Open Minded (formerly CAMHS) by having a designated worker for looked after children.

8

Ensure that looked after children living out of borough have a named lead local health person to support them, the LAC health team to continue good liaison with local services and foster carers to ensure their health needs are met and continue visiting children in their homes.



If you would like to be a **Young Inspector** or would like to know more about the project, please contact us via www.backchatonline.org.uk