

# **Progress Report on the Implementation of the Therapies Review in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames March 2021**

## **Introduction and background**

This report sets out progress with the implementation of the Therapies Review in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames.

In Kingston, therapy services are commissioned by AfC on behalf of the Councils and by the local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Some services are also spot purchased by partners from a range of providers. Therapies - occupational therapy (OT); physiotherapy (Physio); and speech and language therapy (SaLT) - support children and young people to develop skills that keep them safe and healthy; to communicate and interact with adults and their peers enabling them to build positive relationships; engage in learning and participate in activities in the wider community and with their families.

All three therapy services in Kingston provide the following services with variations in the range and quantum of service delivery:

- Multi and unitary assessment and intervention.
- Advice and support to professionals and parents.
- Specialist intervention and treatment.
- Provision of equipment.
- Moving and handling assessments.
- Workforce training.

The therapy services have different eligibility criteria which have been agreed by the commissioners, CCG and Councils. Service users access the service via the Integrated Team Around the Child (ITAC) referral process.

Therapy services work within the practice guidance set out by HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council), and in line with their Professional Bodies and NICE Guidance. In addition all recommendations made by professionals are based on clear clinical indicators set within their professional context. The therapy services are there to support families with a range of complex health conditions and SEND from birth.

## **Therapies Review**

The Therapies Review was carried out across Achieving for Children (AfC), the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and other key partners in 2019-20 with the aim of identifying areas of improvement in the provision of therapies. This was in response to concerns from children, young people and families about the quality of, and access to, therapy services and

an agreement from AfC and partners that there was scope to improve the quality of therapeutic support and the experience of children and young people accessing it.

The review identified a number of recommendations as set out below:

- Deliver improved outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- Enables the delivery of CCG statutory duties in relation to securing health services specified in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- Enable access to support for CYP on SEN Support and reduce the increase in the need for EHCPs.
- Increase access to therapy services and reduce waiting times.
- Enable the early identification and early intervention to services thus reducing the need for service interventions upstream.
- Improve patient experience, choice and satisfaction of therapy services.
- Enable the development and service improvements to several service pathways that are critical for improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Promote staff recruitment and retention due to lower caseloads.
- Upskill the children's SEND workforce thus enabling intervention programmes to be delivered within individual settings and by staff known to children and young people and families.
- Drive inefficiencies out of the system and promote joined up and partnership working.
- Reduce the need for parents to choose out of borough/independent placements.
- Promote local leadership of the SEND system by all statutory partners.

In addition, based on feedback, national research and successful implementation in the speech and language it was recommended that going forward, the aim should be to introduce a Balanced System model which is a whole system, outcome based framework to understand, plan and evaluate services to support children and young people.

AfC is leading on the implementation of the recommendations and has established a Therapies Oversight Group, which includes all key partners, to oversee the work.

### **Funding to implement the Therapies Review**

Kingston Council and South West London (SWL) CCG provided additional investment which commenced in 2020-21 to enable activity to begin to implement the recommendations. Progress is set out in the following tables in relation to each of the therapy services.

Please note that the speed of progress has been impacted by COVID-19 and the need to prioritise other areas of work, particularly for the CCG.

## Progress

Progress in each of the therapy services is set out below:

Occupational therapy	
Details of delivery	OT services are delivered by AfC in <b>Kingston</b>
Focus of activity	<p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Two OT and two OT Assistant posts have been successfully recruited to the AfC OT service.</li><li>● Whilst the recruitment process has been underway we have had locum support in place in both Kingston and Richmond. This has meant we have been able to fulfil additional SEN assessment requirements and continue to meet statutory EHCP assessment and intervention</li><li>● We have increased OT capacity at Special Schools, and planning additional engagement, support and advice for mainstream schools from April 2021.</li><li>● We are currently out to recruit three additional posts for year two. One of these posts will be a joint Therapy Assistant role, working across the Physiotherapy and OT teams to improve the integrated offer for families.</li></ul> <p><b>Service development</b></p> <p>The service development focus has been on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Updating service referral criteria.</li><li>● Developing the new service specification.</li><li>● Working on priorities for year two across services.</li></ul>

Details of delivery	SaLT services are delivered by Your Healthcare in <b>Kingston</b>
Focus of activity	<p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Discussions held with commissioners to frontload funding to support the reduction of waiting times.</li><li>● Vacancies reconfigured with frontloaded funding to create:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ A post focusing on reducing wait times for the early years population</li><li>○ A post focusing on reducing wait time for the mainstream school population (both posts factor in The Balanced model in the approach. Project mandates were drawn up for both).</li></ul></li><li>● An internal candidate was appointed for the school age project kick off in early January 2021 and an external candidate appointed for the early year project kick off in February 2021.</li><li>● The calibre of candidates for the early years post was so high we have assumed funding from year 2 to appoint another candidate to work with our complex needs early years population at Moor Lane. The postholder started on 1 March 2021.</li><li>● An internal candidate was recruited to a post specifically for EHCP requests but unfortunately the candidate has since left. This has now been reconfigured to a flexible post to meet high risk gaps in the service and interviews have been held recently.</li></ul> <p><b>Service development</b></p> <p>The service development focus has been on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Developing the new service specification.</li><li>● Establishing regular contract meetings.</li></ul>

## Physiotherapy

Details of delivery	Physio services are delivered by AfC in <b>Kingston</b>
Focus of activity	<p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <p>In relation to recruitment we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● focused on recruiting to vacancies in the service.</li><li>● developing the Manual Handling Assessor role.</li><li>● booked training for May/ June 2021 (COVID-19 allowing).</li></ul> <p><b>Service development</b></p> <p>The service development focus has been on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Developing the new service specification.</li><li>● Establishing regular contract meetings.</li></ul> <p>The year two focus will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Providing additional capacity.</li><li>● Establishing equipment contracts.</li><li>● Develop the Manual Handling Advisor role for schools- the training for this has been arranged and the recruitment is underway.</li></ul>

## Increased service offer

### SCAT (Social Communication Assessment Team) waiting list initiative

Additional capacity funded for the SCAT through the investment. This has meant that Saturday clinics have been running at Moor Lane since January 2021, and will continue until August. This has allowed the team to complete an additional 30 assessments to date.

- Jan - Dec 2020 - 99 children were given a diagnosis of ASD.
- Jan - Mar 2021 (with additional clinic capacity) - 69 children were given a diagnosis of ASD.

The feedback from families on Saturday clinics has been extremely positive:

- Made to feel very welcome as soon as we walked in!
- Amazing and positive experience from point of view of us, as parents, and my child.
- All staff were exceptional.
- It was so helpful to speak so thank you so much for doing the additional Saturday sessions. I really appreciate it and the advice really will change our life and understanding.

### **Specialist Support Team**

We have established pre and post diagnostic support for families with open referrals across Kingston and Richmond. Four WTE roles have been recruited to, with all staff commencing in post in January 2021. The new team has been working closely with both ITAC teams and EHS to support families awaiting assessment for ASD / ADHD or post diagnosis, and also supporting families with complex health conditions from initial referral into any ISCD services. To date over 50 families have been referred into the service and are receiving input.

### **Service user feedback and involvement**

Across all therapy areas, in relation to service user feedback and involvement:

- We have gathered individualised feedback following sessions to identify families' view of service. Going forward we will consider establishing an evaluation process for virtual sessions and review the timing of sessions. Anecdotal feedback has been that many families prefer virtual sessions wherever possible as they have to take less time out of work and it helps all members participate.
- We usually involve service users/ family members/ young people in interviews for new posts although this had to be paused because of COVID-19. This will restart as soon as possible.
- We will be developing experts by experience who will be paid for their time by either joining our staff bank or in kind (voucher). The aim is to develop a pool of people who would assist in interviews.

- We are developing greater involvement of service users/ families/ young people in transition planning by linking up with other transition redesign groups and adult social care services.
- We are developing greater involvement of service users/ families/ young people in service development planning and co-production. For example, this will include communication with stakeholders at forums where schools/ parents would attend.
- We have been updating local offer information.
- We are planning to complete a questionnaire/ satisfaction survey when the new model is in place.

The Therapies Oversight Group has signed off the year 2 priorities (April 2021 - March 2022) which have been developed and agreed across all Providers and the CCG.

**Report by:**

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