

Healthwatch report

The experience of people who contact the Single Point of Access (SPA)

for adult mental health services in Kirklees and Calderdale.

South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SWYPFT) response.

14/08/19

1. From the initial conversations we understood that the Survey was access to SWYPFT mental health Services in Calderdale and Kirklees not just SPA. The SPA function is delivered by two separate teams, SPA 08:00hrs – 17:00hrs (Mon – Fri) and Intensive Home Based Treatment Teams for out of hours emergency crisis referrals including weekends and bank holidays.
2. The description taken from South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's website that provide the SPA service in Kirklees and Calderdale is reported correctly, however this wrongly informs people of the current purpose of SPA which is a triage early Mental Health assessment service. It is not a crisis team or helpline and doesn't gate keep hospital beds. Nor is it commissioned for adults with a primary Autism Spectrum Conditions or Learning Disabilities need but does accept such people who have these needs and need a mental health referral.

Changes are required by the Trust to accurately reflect what the service does and we would recommend that the report identifies an action point that the description of the service requires updating as soon as possible.

3. Pg.3- How will we use people's feedback?

The process has already begun through SWYPFT being at the Healthwatch presentation of the Survey on 30th July and a further proposed consultation event planned for 11 September. This will include service users, carers and professionals as well as CCG and SPA and other SWYPFT Staff. We will also review the recommendations and take appropriate action to improve the service offer where possible, working with Commissioners and other partners in health and social care.

4. Whilst accepting that 19 negative comments is not what we would want, it's a very small % of those who have been through SPA. Between April 2018 - March 2019 – The SPA service received on average just over 900 referrals per month who were referred from the following sources:

GP's – 78% of referrals
Primary Care – 12% of referrals
Police – 1% of referrals
Self / Carer – 6% of referrals
Others - 3% of referrals

Our friends & family feedback based on people referred for secondary mental health services for the SPA team for the same period April 2018 – March 2019 indicated the following:

- Kirklees from 55 responses – 85.45% would recommend the service
- Calderdale from 24 responses – 95.83% would recommend the service.

5. Why we wanted to speak to people who contact SPA – *‘In most instances, SWYPFT left a response to the reviews and in some cases were able to speak to the person directly to try to resolve any issues’.*

Some comments unfortunately reflect the incorrect use of or assumptions of the SPA role and were not able to be fully resolved because of those reasons. It not be unusual to receive a large number of complaints given that 1 in 4 of the population has mental health issues and over 9000 referrals are received by SPA per year but we recognise that any complaint is one too many.

6. Pg.6 – *‘In these cases, the individual may attempt to contact SPA for immediate support in times of significant difficulty, but are told they have already been assessed and that SWYPFT cannot support them’.*

Between 9:00am and 5:00pm in the best interests of the caller we would expect the individual to contact the Care Coordinator or Mental Health Team who are best placed to deal with the concerns. Often service users are correctly directed back along that pathway so as to ensure continuity and adherence to any management plans.

7. *We have also heard examples of people being told to go to A&E for crisis care when presenting to the SPA with significant mental health needs.*

SPA directs injured or medically at risk clients to A&E and the police also if required. This may well be appropriate if the primary health need is their physical health i.e. if they have taken an overdose.

The SPA is not commissioned as a blue light mental health service or a catch all for emotional issues. It is commissioned to support known patients and to triage potential new patients into mental health secondary and tertiary services.

8. 51% currently access support from mental health services. Just over half of these people receive support from the Community Mental Health Team and 24% from Adult Psychological Therapies.

These two services are the same service. This relates to a lack of communication/understanding of the Core model and we would include this in any communication following the planned changes to SPA.

9. Conclusion - People feel frustrated by aspects of the SPA service not working as well as it should.

We accept the findings and recommendations of this report relating to elements of the SWYPFT services offering support for people in crisis or in need of mental health services, taking action to resolve these frustrations. We will also continue to work with commissioners and partners to look at addressing the wider health and social frustrations/difficulties outside of the Trusts remit, to ensure better services and outcomes for the people we serve.

10. Recommendations

Ensure that staff can provide compassionate and appropriate responses to people who contact the SPA. – SWYPFT action - SWYPFT will address concerns raised in this report to ensure that all contacts are dealt with in a caring and compassionate way ensuring the people receive an effective and timely service.

To review the function of SPA in terms of its role as identified on their Web Page as it has become clear that the description at the beginning of this survey in “What is the Single Point of Access (SPA) for adult mental health services?” is no longer an accurate description of their role and function - SWYPFT action – The Trust will review its information for people who use the service and ensure that the description and purpose of the SPA is accurate and clear.

Provide people in Kirklees and Calderdale with accurate, accessible information about what is available to help support mental health and wellbeing. This information should be available online but also in other formats for people who are unable to access digital information. – SWYPFT will continue to work with Commissioners and other providers to ensure accessible and accurate information is available to support people in a mental health

crisis or requiring mental health services. Action for CCG and Health and Wellbeing commissioners.

Consider the possibility of extending or enhancing support available from Liaison Nurses at the Police Hub. Action for CCG

Consider the extent of crisis support available in Kirklees and Calderdale and whether this meets the needs of the population. Be prepared to look outside of 'formal' support from health and emergency services and consider harnessing community assets and volunteers. Deliver a consistent service across 24 hours. Action for CCG and Health and Wellbeing commissioners.

Following the transformation of the SPA, complete a program of communication that alerts members of the public and professionals to the scope of the SPA, and where else they can go to receive care. SWYPFT & CCG action -

11. New Recommendations

Crisis cafés- These already exist in Huddersfield and Halifax. To promote an awareness of the crisis cafes in the district include and the one opening in Dewsbury and support other development of safe alternatives to A&E – Action all to promote.

To ensure an appropriate helpline is available to people that supports people in a crisis - CCG action – The Trust to work with commissioners to ensure that a dedicated help line can respond to needs of individuals that require this service.