

Item No. 7.	Classification Open	Date: 18 November 2019	Meeting: Health and Wellbeing Board
Report title:		Health of Southwark Looked After Children	
From:		Dr. Stacy John-Legere, Designated Dr. for LAC	

RECOMMENDATION

1. The committee note the oral presentation given

BACKGROUND

2. This presentation offers the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board insight into of areas of significance for children looked after by the London Borough of Southwark. It provides an overview of multiple areas of importance and continues the theme of partnership working across the sectors; and expands on the client experience.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. We define health in this document as "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". This definition underpins the work of the designated professionals and the many teams providing services to Southwark's looked after children. Health care forms an explicit part of care planning for looked after children.¹

Key Points

- Children placed more than 20 miles away are as likely to have a health assessment in date as children placed closer to Southwark; and these are of equitable quality.
- There is a demonstrable improvement in quality of completed health assessment reports.
- Carelink CAMHS continues to provide a high-quality service with positive outcome measures to children local to Southwark as well as those placed >20 miles away
- Children's social care and the Southwark CCG are committed to completing initial health assessments within 20 working days of entry into care. There is a shared understanding that it will take time to fully meet these timescales in all cases.
- Both the Southwark LAC health team and Carelink CAMHS travel to where children are placed as required
- The Southwark LAC health team and Carelink CAMHS contribute to some placement planning decisions particularly placement changes.
- Audit has shown that health recommendations are being actively included in some care plans
- 2-way communication on health needs and safeguarding vulnerabilities occurs for looked – after children no matter where placed
- CAMHS and The LAC health team have actively contributed to EHCP assessments and reviews for looked after children

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/959/contents/made>

- Access to services for care leavers remains a priority. Links have been established with the All Age Disability team.
- Ongoing joint attention and focus is being paid to achievement of all health outcomes for looked after children including ensuring access to timely dental checks, developmental assessments and immunisations.
- Southwark's looked after children remain vulnerable to wider issues of contextual and specific safeguarding.
- Adoption services are changing with the formation of the Regional Adoption Agency which went live on 1st September 2019. There is also the formation of a consortium of Local Authorities working together around kinship care and fostering called "South London together for Permanence" was launched in July 2019

Table 1: Summary Statutory performance figures YTD 2019

	31st March	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
	CLA at 31st March	550	503	477	498	491	461
	CLA looked after for 12 months continuously at March 31st	325	365	340	341	348	343
Key performance Indicators	Health Assessments up to date	90.8%	92%	96%	91% (n=311)	91% (N =315)	94%
	Immunisations up to date	69%	74%	69%	85% (n=291)	71% (N=246)	90%
	Dental Assessments up to date	84.6%	85%	83%	89% (n=294)	80% (N=278)	79%
	Developmental assessments up to date		100% (n=50/50)	80% (n=20/25)	93% (n=14/15)	92% N = 11/12	82%
	Substance abuse problem	2.6%	6%	3.5% (n=17)	6.7% (n=23)	6% (N = 21)	4%
	SDQ % completed	35%	68%	75%	82%	71%	86%
	SDQ average score *	13.6	14.5	14.8	14.9	13.9	13.9

4. Strengths

- Multi-agency investment in getting it right for looked after children and careleavers
- Improving outcomes and life chances for Looked after children and careleavers remain a Southwark Council and Southwark CCG priority
- There is a robust system in place for challenge and scrutiny for issues pertaining to looked after children and careleavers
- Strong performance on health measures is maintained
- There remains equitable consideration of looked after children placed further away as those placed within LB Southwark boundaries.

5. Challenges

- There is a changing statutory landscape across the country resulting in difficulties in access to resources such as school placements and mental health support depending on where children are placed
- There is an increasing complexity of individual children and the cohort as a whole – particularly around safeguarding issues such as exploitation and violence including exposure to knife crime, impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs); and mental health need.

6. Opportunities

- Delivery of the NHS Long-term Plan goals
- Southwark CCG is engaged in work across the 6 CCGs of the STP, which could result in shared best practice.
- Children's Social Services have established multi-agency panels to enhance care planning and delivery for looked after children and careleavers
- There is access to the Transforming Care pathway for some of our most vulnerable as well as use of Care, Education and Treatment Reviews (CETRs)² in planning care for children and young people with acute mental health needs
- Access to the support provided by Education and Health care Plans (EHCPS) which continues to age 25years
- Work by the Careleaver Partnership to develop and enhance support to careleavers
- The refreshed Sufficiency Strategy and work thereof includes looked after children and careleavers

7. Threats

- Transition to adult services remains an area of further work. Ensuring a smooth transition across health and social care systems remains a challenge for a significant proportion of young people.
- Completed Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) indicate increased vulnerability for looked after children and careleavers including poorer mental health and significant representation in the rough sleeping population

Conclusion

8. There is a good working knowledge across health, social care, education and the police, the local community and the voluntary sector of the issues noted above; with resulting focus; and increasing coherence on strategy and delivery related to looked after children and careleavers.

² <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/children-young-people-cetr-code-toolkit.pdf>

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Dr. Stacy John-Legere Designated Doctor for Children in Care	
Report Author	Dr. Stacy John Legere Designated Doctor for Children in Care	
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CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
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