

# Service design for children and young people with common mental health problems: literature review, service mapping and collective case study

Steven Prymachuk,<sup>1,2\*</sup> Susan Kirk,<sup>1</sup> Claire Fraser,<sup>1</sup>  
Nicola Evans,<sup>3</sup> Rhiannon Lane,<sup>3</sup> Liz Neill,<sup>4</sup>  
Elizabeth Camacho,<sup>1</sup> Peter Bower,<sup>1</sup> Penny Bee<sup>1</sup> and  
Tim McDougall<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Health Sciences, The University of Manchester and Manchester Academic Health Science Centre (MAHSC), Manchester, UK

<sup>2</sup>Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, Manchester, UK

<sup>3</sup>School of Healthcare Studies, Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK

<sup>4</sup>Common Room North, Leeds, UK

<sup>5</sup>Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, Preston, UK

\*Corresponding author [steven.prymachuk@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:steven.prymachuk@manchester.ac.uk)

## Dedication

In memory of Hannah Welsby, who was the study advisory group's young person co-chair at the study's inception. Shortly after the advisory group's inaugural meeting, at which Hannah proved to be an exceptional co-chair, we were saddened to hear of her death. We are grateful for the passion, leadership and humour that Hannah brought to the study. Her family are rightly proud of her contribution to this study and her other patient and public involvement (PPI) activities.

## Disclaimer

This report contains transcripts of interviews conducted in the course of the research, or similar, and contains language which may offend some readers.

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## Plain language summary

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## Plain language summary

**I**n this research study, we explored services for children and young people with ‘common’ mental health problems like depression, anxiety and self-harm. We aimed to find out what services exist, how children/young people and families find out about and access these services, what the services actually do, whether they are helpful and whether they offer value for money.

We looked at the international literature (reports and research papers) to identify different approaches to providing support, and to find out whether certain approaches worked better than others and whether children/young people and families preferred some approaches over others. The literature provided very little information about the value for money of services.

We also carried out a survey and used the internet to identify 154 relevant services in England and Wales. To explore services in more detail, and hear directly from those using them, we planned to visit 9 of the 154 services to interview children/young people, parents and staff. Unfortunately, coronavirus disease 2019 stopped us directly visiting the nine services and so we conducted phone and video interviews instead. We still managed to speak to, and hear the experiences of, more than 100 people (including children/young people and parents).

We combined information from the literature with information from the interviews to create an evidence-based ‘model’ of what services should look like. This model considers some basic things like how quickly children/young people could access a service, what information was available, the importance of confidentiality and whether staff make the service fit with the child/young person’s needs and interests. It also considers whether the service helps children/young people learn skills to manage their mental health and whether staff at a service work well together. We hope our model will help existing and new services improve what they offer to children/young people and families.

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## This article

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