

Announcement of a Limited GP Liaison Service

TO ALL NORTH-WEST GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Dear Colleagues

It is with pleasure that I inform you of the establishment of a limited GP Liaison service by Mental Health Services North-West. We accept that the lack of such a service has been a frustrating issue for General Practitioners for a considerable number of years. I agree that it is fundamental to the provision of mental health services, considering the fact that Primary Care carries the burden of mental health issues. Despite the current global fiscal situation and the need for all services to make sacrifices, I believe that the service is still viable using current resources. It does however require understanding and a pragmatic approach from all parties to make it a success. The purpose of the service would be to provide advice to GP's, to assist with management of clients with non urgent psychiatric symptoms, presenting at their practices. The service will be available from 19th September 2011.

PROCEDURE

- ❖ During normal hours Monday to Friday, the GP will call Adult Community Mental Health, at Parkside or Oldaker Street, to speak with the Consultant Psychiatrist on call. Reception staff will transfer the call to the relevant Psychiatrist on-call. The Psychiatrist will respond immediately or as soon as available, and keep a record of the date, time and summary of conversation. The response will then be faxed to the GP.
- ❖ During after-hours, weekends and holidays, the practice will call the Psychiatrist on call for advice.

IMPORTANT CAVEATS

- ❖ At present this is an advice only service. The advice has to be generic for legal reasons.
- ❖ If the inquiry pertains to a client of MHS North-West, administration staff will put the call through to the case-manager of the client or the treating psychiatrist.
- ❖ All urgent referrals for assessment and treatment will be processed through the Help-line and CAT, as usual.
- ❖ All other referrals for assessment and opinion/treatment must go through Help-line as usual.
- ❖ This service is being provided by utilising the current resources of the MHS NW, without any expectation of funding from GP North-West, and thus its scope is limited.
- ❖ The service will be audited and changes made after a period of three months.
- ❖ This service is not to be used to bypass the Helpline process, if the client requires an assessment.

It is my view that with commitment from all parties, we can translate this initiative into routine practice.

Dr Mani Maharajh
Clinical Director, Mental Health Services North-West



CONTACT DETAILS

Monday to Friday

Parkside Adult Mental Health Service 03 64346434

Oldaker Street Adult Mental Health Service 03 64217663

After-hours, weekends and holidays 03 64306666

(Example of some demographic data required by Adult Community Mental Health Staff)

Name of GP:

Date & Time:

Current client of Mental Health Services North-West?

YES

NO