Abstract

Improving Mental Health Services for Children and Young People During Covid 19; Transforming Mental Health Services for Children and Young Adults.

What has happened to young people’s mental health over the past 2 years? In this talk, I will look at the situation before the pandemic, the effects of the various lockdown’s and pandemic anxiety and where we are now and what we can do to help the enormous numbers of children and families who are currently struggling with mental illness and distress related to poverty and childhood trauma.

I will look with a practical eye, on how to manage the situation currently affecting CAMHS nationally of waiting lists and increasing complexity of cases. Our greater understanding of the roots of childhood mental illness and how it develops eg an understanding of neurodevelopmental conditions and the sequelae of childhood trauma, has made the assessment of children more complicated and time-consuming. Silo-working in CAMHS has led to patients being shuffled round clinicians rather than held and understood by one team or individual. Group work may not be suitable for all children. How can we keep the child in mind and prevent deterioration of mental health conditions? Who should be doing this work? All these questions and many more need urgent discussion, as CAMHS is currently under fire from all quarters. There is much that is valuable in CAMHS and we find ways of protecting the delivery of assessment and treatment to children and families.

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