

# Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)



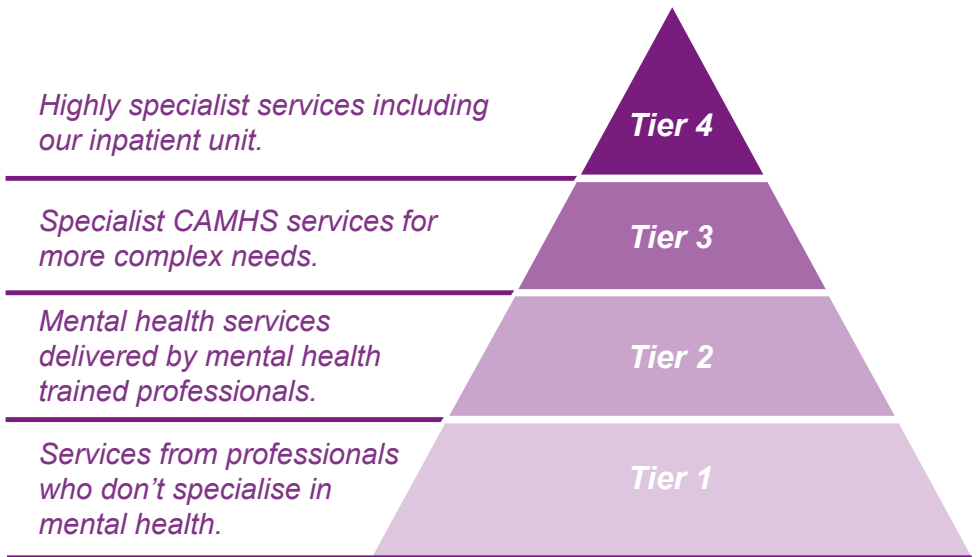
Information for parents and carers

# Who are we?

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are currently set up within a 4 Tier system.

The diagram below represents the 4 Tiers in mental health services.

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) CAMHS provide services at Tier 3 and Tier 4.



Most children and young people are seen at Tier 1 and Tier 2, with those having more specialist or complex needs being seen at Tier 3 or Tier 4.

Tier 3 CAMHS are delivered across the whole of Hertfordshire and treat emotional difficulties that children, young people and parents/ carers experience in the community.

Tier 4 CAMHS provide more specific therapies either at home or on our inpatient unit depending on individual needs.

## You're not alone

Our most recent statistic shows 1 in every 10 children (aged 5-16 years) have a diagnosable mental problem. There are other children who do not require a diagnosis who may also receive support.

Being the parent or carer of a young person with mental health concerns can be challenging for many reasons and it is important that you seek support from others in your position. Carers in Herts offer a great support network for parents and carers of young people who are using CAMHS. You can find their contact details on the back page.

## Why am I coming to CAMHS?

The treatment offered at CAMHS includes talking therapies, which focus on the child or young person setting goals and finding new ways to think about or manage their difficulties by themselves and with their parents/ carers.

A variety of different therapies may be offered including cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), child and adolescent psychotherapy or family therapy.

As you are central to your child's life, it is important that you are included in developing your understanding of your child's difficulties and what support they need during their first appointment, known as a Choice appointment. Ensure that you speak to the CAMHS professional during that Choice appointment and express any concerns you have about your young person and any needs you have as their parents or carers.

## First Appointment (Choice Appointment) – what to expect

The aims of the Choice appointment are for you and your child to discuss any difficulties you or they might be experiencing. You and your child will then decide with the professional(s) what support would be best for them and you. This may involve continued support within Tier 3 CAMHS or identifying the most appropriate service.

Before your appointment please complete the questionnaires included with this pack, some are for you and some are for your child/young person. These questionnaires are called outcome measures; they can be helpful for identifying goals and for those who find it hard to talk about their difficulties.

If your child gets support from other services (e.g. social care), you might also want to bring any information that you think would be helpful for us to read.

There are lots of professionals within CAMHS. You will see one of these professionals at your Choice appointment. If it is agreed that your child requires further treatment from Tier 3 CAMHS, they will then see a different professional for subsequent appointments which is called Partnership Work, who will also be their care co-ordinator and main contact.

You are invited to attend the Choice appointment with your child, so you are fully involved and because it can be helpful to hear from people close to them.

Young people can also bring other family or a professional from another service.

There will be an opportunity for both you and your child to speak privately, on your own with the professional you are seeing.



# Frequently asked questions

## What types of therapy are offered?

Therapy at CAMHS is typically called Partnership Work. These appointments focus on reaching the goals identified in the Choice appointment.

A variety of different therapies may be offered including, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), child and adolescent psychotherapy, family therapy or medication.

If medication is advised, the reason for this and the side effects should be explained to you and your child fully. The type of therapy offered will be different for each individual and will be based on their own individual needs.

## What are goals and why do we set them?

At the Choice appointment you and your child will be asked to identify individual and family goals to work on in order to feel better.

Sometimes the individual and family goals are very similar, but it may be that your child has different ideas to yourself about what is important for them to work on with CAMHS.

Goals are set at the beginning of Partnership Work to make sure the sessions focus on what is important to you and your child.

The goals set should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-specific (also known as SMART goals). This will help you and your child's clinician to know when the goals have been met.

## Will I attend every session?

Some children or young people who come to CAMHS will have appointments on their own; others will have meetings with their parents/carers. Some will have a combination of both.

It can be difficult for some parents/carers to regularly attend appointments. We may agree with some parents/carers that they do not attend the appointment. A plan will then be agreed about how a child or young person is supported if they have attended an appointment alone and are

distressed. Parents/carers may be contacted in these instances to ensure a plan is in place to provide support for the child or young person after their appointment.

We may also contact you if we do not feel they are safe.

## **What if my child doesn't want to attend the appointment?**

If your child is nervous, they can visit our CAMHS website at [www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk](http://www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk) for helpful tips and videos. Sometimes it is helpful to know what this first appointment will look like and that can also be found on the webpage.

If your child does not think it would be helpful, have a discussion with them about what they feel would be helpful for them. It may be that with support from yourself, their school or other organisations, they may be able to cope without CAMHS. See [www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk](http://www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk) for more contacts to support your child.

If your child does not want to attend but you feel it is necessary that they attend their appointment, it may be useful to let the professional know that the young person did not want to attend.

If your child cannot attend their appointment, please let us know as soon as possible.

## **Will my child see the same person every time?**

You will see one member of staff for your first (Choice) appointment. If Partnership Work is agreed, this will often be with a different member of staff to ensure you are seen quickly and by the right person.

Where possible we like your child to see the same person during Partnership Work and appointments, however this may not be the case for a number of reasons.

Sometimes your child may think that progress is not being made working together and that a change of therapist might be helpful. Sometimes your child might make this decision alone. It can be helpful to discuss this with the therapist first.

## **What information will be shared with me?**

You are responsible for keeping your child safe and making some decisions on their behalf (hopefully with their agreement too).

You might be invited to review sessions, receive regular telephone contact or more formal family work. We will not usually tell parents/carers everything that has been discussed in therapy, but we may share important information or themes from the Partnership Work, so that you can support your child.

## **Who do CAMHS work with or speak to?**

We may speak with/share reports with your child's GP, social care, school, the child development centre, and others depending on who it is important to share information with.

We usually speak with you and your child first before sharing information with any of the above services/people, but may have to do so without your permission if we think you or your child is unsafe.

Generally we need to keep your child's GP informed of their care as they usually become responsible for their care once they are discharged from CAMHS, so it is important they are aware of therapy received.

## **What can I do if I am unhappy with the service?**

You can speak to your child's therapist if you are unhappy with their treatment at CAMHS. If this is not possible, then you can speak to the CAMHS manager.

If still unresolved, you can contact PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) who can help you to find out what is happening with your child's care. They can also support you to get a resolution to any challenges you are facing with the service or process a complaint if necessary.

They can be contacted on 01707 253916 or via email at [hpft.pals@nhs.net](mailto:hpft.pals@nhs.net)  
PALS are available between 9am and 3pm from Monday to Friday.

## Support before and between appointments

A lot of children and young people come to CAMHS, which means that sometimes there is a waiting list for an appointment.

Whilst waiting, you may need support. There are a number of tools online and details of local support contacts on our CAMHS webpage at [www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk](http://www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk).

If you need support there are some useful contacts on the back of this booklet and under the parent tab on our [www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk](http://www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk) website.

## Non-emergency support

At CAMHS we have a duty system whereby if you need to speak to someone outside of session times and your care coordinator is not available, there is a named clinician on duty from 9am until 5pm from Monday to Friday.

You can call the main reception where you are being seen and ask to speak to the duty worker. Our CAMHS clinic information, including contact numbers, can be found online at [www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk](http://www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk)

For out-of-hours advice you can contact the Mental Health helpline on 01438 843322. This line is staffed by qualified clinicians in the NHS for support between 5pm and 9am, including bank holidays.

Finally for more support as a parent or carer, please see the back of this booklet for more helpful websites and contacts.

## Emergency support

In an emergency, when you are unable to keep yourself, your child or your family safe, please call 999 or make use of your local A&E service. A&E has staff from our Children Crisis and Assessment Treatment Team (CCATT) who will provide an assessment and identify whether more intensive support is needed.



## Other Specialist Teams and Services

As well as our Tier 3 community CAMHS services, we also have other specialist teams and services for children and young people including:

- AF-DASH (Adolescent and Families Drug and Alcohol Service) who help to support those experiencing substance misuse
- Targeted Team who work with looked after children in care
- Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (C-CATT) who work alongside our local A&E teams and Tier 4 services
- Community Eating Disorders (CED) who specialise in treating eating disorders
- Forensic Adolescent Services who work with young people in the criminal justice system.

## Contact Information

Saffron Ground	Tel: 01438 792600
Rosanne House	Tel: 01707 364001
Hoddesdon Health Centre	Tel: 01992 465042
Oxford House	Tel: 01992 465042
Hertsmere Civic Offices	Tel: 0208 7313050
Peace Children's Centre	Tel: 01923 470610
The Marlowes Health and Wellbeing Centre	Tel: 01442 913569
99 Waverley Road	Tel: 01727 804214 / 804806
Eating Disorders Team	Tel: 01923 633396
Crisis Team	Tel: 01923 633400/633401
Targeted Treatment Team	Tel: 01923 633577
Forest House	Tel: 01923 289940
Home Treatment Team	Tel: 01923 289940
Dialectical Behavioural Therapy Team	Tel: 01923 289940

# Helpful Apps and Services

## Carers in Hertfordshire

Useful information and support for parents and carers of children and young people who are using mental health services:  
[www.carersinherts.org.uk](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk)

## HPFT Wellbeing Team

Our Wellbeing Team offer talking therapy for people aged 16 and over and practical support for carers: [www.hpft.nhs.uk/wellbeing-service](http://www.hpft.nhs.uk/wellbeing-service)

## Herts Help

A network of support organisations in Hertfordshire: [www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net)

## Young Minds Parent Helpline

Useful parent and carer resources available online and a parent and carer support helpline: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) 0808 8025544

## Beat (Eating Disorder Charity)

An eating disorder charity that offers information and support:  
[www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk) 0808 8010677

## Royal College of Psychiatrists

Useful information for parents:  
<https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyoungpeople.aspx>



**Cover Artwork: See *the light* by Joely Elstar**

**Page 4: *Hope* by Jake Lowe**

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