

# Agenda Item 6

		<b>THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE</b>	
Boston Borough Council	East Lindsey District Council	City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
North Kesteven District Council	South Holland District Council	South Kesteven District Council	West Lindsey District Council

**Report on behalf of Sarah Connery, Chief Executive at  
Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**

Report to	<b>Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire</b>
Date:	<b>6 December 2023</b>
Subject:	<b>Specialist Mental Health Services in Lincolnshire - Update</b>

**Summary:**

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) is the principal NHS provider of mental health services, along with some learning disability, autism, and social care services in the county.

The Trust reports regularly to the committee on changes to services but has been asked to provide a general overview of developments in specific services.

This paper will concentrate on the learning disability and autism services provided by LPFT in the county and the specialist mental health services available for armed forces veterans.

**Actions requested:**

That the Committee consider the information presented by Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and decide on the next steps.

**1. Introduction**

Lincolnshire Partnership provides some aspects of specialist healthcare for people with a learning disability and autistic individuals. These are predominately focused on mental health support, as we know having a learning disability and/or autism makes it more likely that someone will experience mental health problems. It also means that the mental health problem may be harder to notice, more difficult to assess and often means that the mental health problem is not recognised until it is acute in nature.

People with learning disabilities and/or autism have the right to access mainstream mental health services, however mental health practitioners may need support to make reasonable adjustments. It is the role of the liaison practitioners to support the mainstream services and the individual and their families.

People with learning disabilities also experience poorer physical health than the general population, differences which are largely avoidable. Physical health liaison with acute and primary care services is provided by specialist practitioners within the learning disability service.

For a full list of learning disability and autism services the Trust provides please refer to Appendix A.

The Specialist Service division also provides a wide range of other specialist mental health services, some of which we have updated the committee on previously, so in addition to information about our learning disability and autism services we will briefly add in some additional information about the specialist veterans' mental health service (Op Courage). The full list of services is again available in the appendix.

## **2. Learning Disability Services for Adults**

Wherever possible people with a learning disability and/ or autism should have the support they need to access mainstream mental health and physical health services. Reasonable adjustments should be made to enable and maximise meaningful opportunities for this. Access to mainstream services is encouraged with advice and support from specialist professionals within the service as necessary.

LPFT is commissioned to provide the following specialist learning disability services:

- Mental health assessment, clinical formulation, evidence-based intervention and review for adults with learning disabilities.
- Behavioural assessments, clinical formulation, evidence-based intervention and review for adults with learning disabilities.
- Specialist therapeutic assessment and interventions for adults with a learning disability including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language therapy.
- Mental health crisis intervention and home assessment and treatment for individuals with learning disabilities.
- Liaison services to enable people with a learning disability to meaningfully access and engage in mainstream mental health and physical health services.

There is not normally a waiting list to access our community learning disability teams for support, but some people may have to wait to access specialist therapeutic interventions such as speech and language therapy where it is required.

A review of the existing liaison services has recently been jointly undertaken by LPFT, Lincolnshire NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), and United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust (ULHT) to review what support is currently provided and what more could further aid individuals with learning disabilities and their families when they need to access physical healthcare services. A case for change is currently in development to expand the existing services available and more information will be provided once agreed.

### **3. Crisis and Enhanced Mental Health Services for Individuals with a Learning Disability and Autistic Individuals**

In 2017, LPFT was commissioned to provide Community Crisis Home Assessment and Treatment (CHAT) services for individuals with a learning disability who cannot access mainstream mental health crisis services with appropriate reasonable adjustments.

The CHAT team provide home assessment, intervention and treatment to service users in their home environment anywhere in Lincolnshire, whether that be a family home, supported living or a care home. Read more about this service in Appendix A.

In 2021, LPFT received additional funding to further reduce length of stay in hospital and promote timely discharge for people supported under the Transforming Care agenda.

In October 2023 there were 33 adults who met the transforming care criteria in inpatient services. Of these 17 were in beds commissioned by NHS Lincolnshire ICB and 16 were in secure beds commissioned through the IMPACT provider collaborative.

The Transforming Care Liaison Service (TCLS) offers a consultation/specialist assessment model for people who are inpatients in mental health services (in and out of county), to support the exiting community liaison practitioners.

A number of staff were also aligned with local forensic service and adult crisis teams to support decision making around hospital admissions and reduce admission where possible.

Both the CHAT and TCLS services have undoubtedly demonstrated positive impact in providing guidance and support across the Trust, and have managed to avoid inappropriate admissions for many of our Lincolnshire residents who present in crisis and/or at risk of placement breakdown, as well as promote timely discharge for others.

Despite this, the number of people in Lincolnshire who register under the formal transforming care cohort (who are in an inpatient in a mental health facility either within Lincolnshire or outside of the county) with a learning disability and/or as autistic is still too high.

This suggests that there is more we can do, and we recognise that within the current trust-wide offer, gaps remain for autistic and learning disability patients.

We are therefore currently undertaking a programme of work to consider how we provide appropriate adapted care and support to individuals in times of crisis, based on need rather than diagnosis. This could help to avoid unnecessary admissions, as well as continuing to promote a timely, safe and successful discharge with individuals remaining in the community.

#### **4. Services for autistic individuals**

##### **4.1. Diagnostic services**

LPFT is commissioned to provide autism diagnostic assessments and post diagnostic support for adults aged 18 and above. Since 2016 the demand for autism diagnosis has increased year on year, rapidly exceeding the capacity within the service and creating longer than we would like waiting times for services. These were also impacted further during the pandemic when all by urgent face to face assessments had to be paused.

In 2021, the average waiting time for an adult autism diagnostic assessment was approximately two years, with referrals into the service continuing to increase.

In 2022, additional funding was secured to address the waiting list for autism diagnostic assessments in adults and meet current and future demand. The funding was for additional posts within LPFT to increase capacity and also provided an opportunity to work with other partners to increase capacity to address our waiting lists.

Recruitment and procurement challenges unfortunately impacted on the implementation of the additional capacity in 2022, but over the last twelve months this additional capacity is now in place and having a positive impact.

As at 31 October 2023 there were 546 adults waiting for an autism diagnostic assessment, 448 people had been waiting more than twelve weeks.

The average wait for assessment is currently 30 weeks and the average completed wait 42 weeks.

In October 82 assessments were started and there were 65 new referrals accepted the same month, which shows the significant demand on the service.

##### **4.2. Virtual Autism Hub**

This year, following extensive engagement with the autistic population in Lincolnshire, we have been pleased to have received funding to develop a new Virtual Autism Hub in the county. This will initially be hosted in LPFT, however with the aim that this will be an independently run community offer in the future - distinct from, although working collaboratively with, statutory services within the county.

It will be a central hub of easily accessible community support for autistic people, their families and carers throughout their lives, providing a central source of expertise in relation to navigation of the Lincolnshire systems. This could be in relation to accessing services, understanding diagnostic pathways, signposting to specific support groups/services (e.g. SEND support, employment and benefits services), providing communication/information in a format that best meets individual needs such as face-to-face or email.

Individuals will be able to access this community support offer whether or not they have received a formal diagnosis of autism, including those considering or awaiting diagnosis, those that self-identify as autistic and those who have been formally diagnosed. Launching this initiative is a significant first step towards the Lincolnshire health and social care system addressing some of the many challenges faced by autistic individuals in Lincolnshire.

## **5. Specialist Veterans Mental Health Services (Op Courage)**

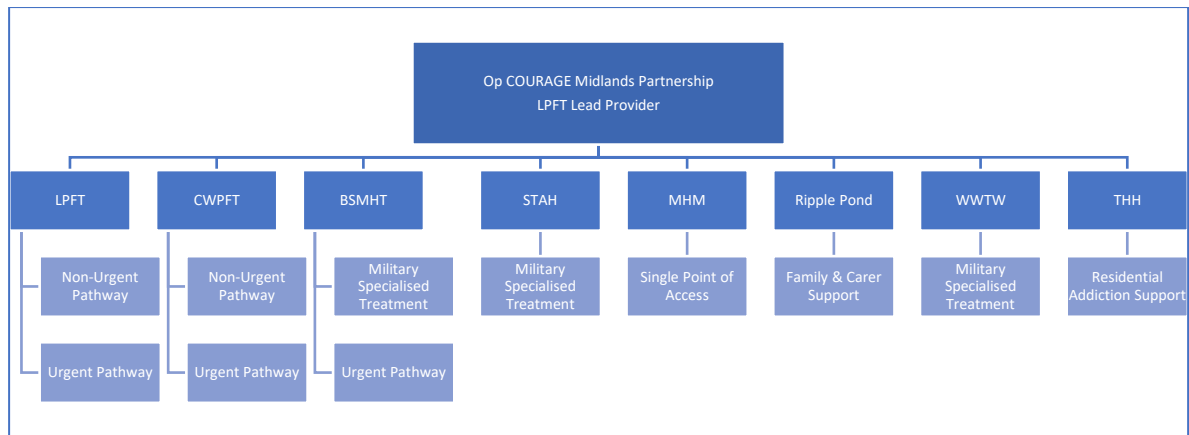
Op COURAGE is the nationally funded programme for Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing, providing specialist care and support for service personnel, reservists, armed forces veterans, and their families. It is delivered on a regional footprint rather than county specific, and was recommissioned earlier this year by NHS England, to formally bring together what had previously been three separate parts of the mental health pathway for veterans, under one cohesive service.

As part of the recommissioning process, we were pleased to have been appointed the lead provider for the Midlands wide service – working in collaboration with seven other providers in the NHS, private and charity sector to provide care and support across the region.

The partners within Op Courage (Midlands) are:

- Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) – lead provider
- Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust (CWPFT)
- Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (BSMHT)
- St Andrews Healthcare (STAH)
- Walking With The Wounded (WWTW)
- Mental Health Matters (MHM)
- The Ripple Pond
- Tom Harrison House (THH)

The service builds on the existing statutory provision within local areas to ensure that veterans can access a wider holistic service, bringing together mental health, physical health and wellbeing provision to meet the veteran's individual need. The services provided within the collaborative are outlined below:



Veterans within Lincolnshire have access to all of the services provided within the Op Courage partnership as appropriate to their needs.

Unfortunately, whilst a positive step for collaborative working and bringing together all aspects of support for veterans and their families, we are currently experiencing workforce pressures in some parts of the service resulting from vacancy and long-term sickness. This, combined with high referral numbers, has led to waiting times for veterans to access the non-urgent pathway that LPFT provides. Mitigations are in place, including some partners covering an increased geography within the partnership, and a recovery plan has been developed by the LPFT team.

The impact on veterans in Lincolnshire is that there are 42 veterans waiting for non-urgent assessment, waiting an average of 35 working days. Overall however the integration of services is proving positive, it is easier for veterans to access the specialist services they require and move between services without having to retell their story.

This month the Op Courage (Midlands) partnership was a finalist in the National Health Service Journal Awards in the category of Innovation and improvement in reducing healthcare inequalities category.

## 6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Description of the specialist learning disability, autism and mental health service within the specialist services division of LPFT

## 7. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Chris Higgins Director of Operations at LPFT, who can be contacted via ([Christopher.Higgins3@nhs.net](mailto:Christopher.Higgins3@nhs.net) / or 01522 309199)

**Description of services within LPFT specialist services division**

<b>Learning Disability and Autism Services for Adults</b>	
<p><b>Community Learning Disability Hub Teams</b></p>	<p>The service is provided in four community hubs across Lincolnshire. These hubs are based at Boston, Grantham, Lincoln, and Spalding. The teams also have access to a number of satellite clinics which are used to enable choice and care close to home, when required.</p> <p>The four community hubs provide a integrated multi-disciplinary approach to supporting people with a learning disability. Each hub has specialist nurses, psychology, physical and mental health liaison nurses, psychiatry, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and specialist liaison nurses for people with autism.</p>
<p><b>Community home assessment and treatment team (CHAT)</b></p>	<p>Working closely with the community hubs the Community Home Assessment and Treatment (CHAT) team provide home assessment, intervention and treatment anywhere in Lincolnshire to service users in their home environment, whether that be a family home, supported living or a care home.</p> <p>The CHAT team work to a Positive Behaviour Support model to provide intensive support to people who are experiencing a deterioration in their mental health, or an increase in behaviours of concern and associated risk to self and others. The service will respond quickly and positively to assess the level of risk and put in place a plan of care to address the immediate concerns.</p> <p>Once the immediate risks have been addressed and a clear plan is in place the CHAT team will liaise with the community hubs who will then continue with the ongoing care plan as needed.</p>
<p><b>Learning Disability Liaison Services</b></p>	<p>In each hub there are liaison nurses for physical health, mental health and autism. They work with local health services and service users and carers to ensure equal access to mainstream services, helping to develop reasonable adjustments and provide appropriate training for professionals.</p>

<p><b>Transforming Care Liaison Service</b></p>	<p>The Transforming Care Liaison Team work with teams and services across the Trust to provide support and intervention for Autistic Individuals and/or Individuals with an Intellectual Disability (otherwise known as Learning Disability) who are currently admitted to Mental Health/Specialist inpatient services, who are at risk of admission to these inpatient services or who are at high risk of placement breakdown.</p> <p>This support is primarily through liaison, advice, training and consultation with other trust services and with wider system partners including Integrated Care Board (ICB), Lincolnshire County Council, United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust, Police and Voluntary and Third Sector Organisations.</p>
<p><b>Autism Services for Adults</b></p>	
<p><b>Autism Diagnostic and Post Diagnostic Support Service</b></p>	<p>The service provides a diagnostic pathway for Autism Spectrum Disorder, which follows NICE guidance. This includes feedback to the referrer and service user, with post diagnostic recommendations and signposting. The service is commissioned for adults aged 18yrs+.</p>
<p><b>Lincolnshire Virtual Autism Hub</b></p>	<p>The Virtual Autism Hub being developed is an innovative source of all age autism support to empower autistic people and their parent/carers. Initially the organisation will be under the auspices of LPFT with the intention of becoming a separate community organisation over time.</p> <p>The organisation goes beyond statutory support and will work closely with the voluntary sector, in particular local, volunteer-led support groups. The Hub will strengthen and develop volunteer-led community support for autistic adults, CYP and parent/carers, increasing the range, breadth and reach of these groups. It will also itself offer Specialist Autism Navigators to work directly with people to help them access statutory services and other local support.</p>



<b>Specialist Mental Health Services</b>	
<p><b>Op COURAGE: The Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing Service</b></p>	<p>Op COURAGE: The Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing Service provides specialist care and support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those due to leave the Armed Forces</li> <li>• Reservists</li> <li>• Those who've already left.</li> </ul> <p>It is developed by veterans, for veterans. Op COURAGE is available across England. LPFT is the lead provider for the Midlands wide service – working in collaboration with seven other providers in the NHS, private and charity sector to provide care and support across the region.</p> <p>Depending on need, a veteran could be offered a range of specialist support and treatment. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help with recognising and treating early signs of mental health problems, as well as more advanced mental health conditions and psychological trauma.</li> <li>• Providing support and treatment for substance misuse and addictions.</li> <li>• Liaising with charities and local organisations to support your wider health and wellbeing, such as help with housing, relationships, finances and employment.</li> <li>• Referral to other NHS services, where needed.</li> <li>• Recognising that the veteran's family may also need help and care and supporting them to access this.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adult Eating Disorder Service</b></p>	<p>The team provides a county wide service for both men and women over the age of 16, who need help, support and treatment for an eating disorder such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. The service offers assessment and treatment in a variety of community bases across Lincolnshire.</p> <p>The service offers a range of interventions including advice and consultancy, Psychiatric assessment, liaison work with other services, CBT-e (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy adapted for eating disorders), SSCM (Specialist Supportive Clinical Management), MANTRA (Maudsley Anorexia Nervosa Treatment for Adults), dietetic consultation, community support - including enhanced community support work if deemed appropriate and liaison with First Steps Voluntary Sector who work alongside Lincoln University.</p>

<b>Community Forensic Service</b>	<p>The Community Forensic Team support adults with a Mental Disorder, Learning Disabilities and/or Autism who have a forensic history. This means they have undergone legal or court proceedings for offending within the Criminal Justice system. The Teams also work with people at high risk of harming others by their own risk related behaviour.</p> <p>The Community Forensic Team provide specialist advice and training to all Trust teams and partner agencies. They support colleagues as and when requested.</p>
<b>Criminal Justice Liaison and Diversion</b>	<p>The Criminal Justice Liaison and Diversion (CJL&amp;D) service supports vulnerable people whilst in contact with the criminal justice system. The service is available to anyone who is being investigated for criminal activity. The service is available at the point of need in the custody suites and magistrates courts.</p> <p>The CJL&amp;D service is provided by Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) in partnership with Lincolnshire Action Trust(LAT).</p> <p>As commissioned by NHS England, the service provides vulnerable people with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a 7 days a week, 365 days a year, service</li><li>• Support through criminal justice proceedings</li><li>• Access to social care and housing providers</li><li>• Access to services to help reduce reoffending</li></ul>

<p><b>Reconnect</b></p>	<p>RECONNECT is a care after custody service that seeks to improve the continuity of care of people leaving prison or an immigration removal centre (IRC) with an identified health need. This involves working with them before they leave to support their transition to community-based services, thereby safeguarding health gains made whilst in prison or an IRC.</p> <p>In Lincolnshire RECONNECT is delivered by LPFT in partnership with the Lincolnshire Action Trust (LAT).</p> <p>RECONNECT services aim to improve the wellbeing of people leaving prison or an IRC, reduce inequalities and address health-related drivers of offending behaviours. Whilst not a clinical service, RECONNECT offers liaison, advocacy, signposting, and support to facilitate engagement with community-based health and support services.</p> <p>Any person aged 18 or above leaving a secure or detained setting (prison or IRC) with an identified health need which means that they would otherwise struggle to engage with community-based healthcare services and/or relevant support services is eligible to access RECONNECT services.</p>
<p><b>Mental Health Treatment Requirements Team</b></p>	<p>Mental health treatment requirements (MHTRs) are for adults (aged 18 years or above) who have been charged with committing the type of offence that is eligible for a community or suspended sentence order and who have a mental health condition, such as depression, anxiety, dual diagnosis (with drug or alcohol issues), personality disorder, neurodiversity, trauma, abuse and a range of social issues.</p> <p>As part of this, treatments can be provided to people with various neurodevelopmental disorders and neurodivergence (for example, autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), as the appropriate reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate individual needs in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). These individuals typically have high levels of complex health and social care needs, which are contributing to their offending behaviour.</p> <p>Many of the individuals sentenced to an MHTR present with histories of trauma or abuse and may not have previously been supported by statutory services until this point.</p>

**Sexual Assault Referral Centre  
(SARC)**

Lincolnshire's Sexual Assault Referral Centre, also known as Spring Lodge provides support to any adult who has been raped, sexually assaulted or sexually abused at any point in their lives.

The service provides a non-judgemental service and has helped many people in many different ways. The aim of SARC is to provide a service which is appropriate to each person's needs and this support will vary depending on when the incident has happened, the person's age and their circumstances.

The team of Crisis Workers, ISVAs and Support Workers have been specially trained and we have someone available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to give the required support and advice.

The ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Adviser) service offers practical and emotional support to anyone who has been raped or sexually assaulted, both recently or in the past. They support everyone in a non-judgemental way and work with individuals and professionals to identify a person's needs. They also help the person access other available support to address both their short and long term goals.

A forensic examination may be offered to individuals within 7 days of the assault taking place.

The forensic examiner is a doctor or nurse and a crisis worker will also be present to provide support to the individual and explain the process.

LPFT services for children and young people also sit within the specialist services division and were described in Appendix A of a paper presented to the Committee in September 2023