

**GETTING IT RIGHT FOR VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE**

---

**1. SUMMARY**

1.1 This report outlines the work being undertaken to reshape services to children and young people who have particular vulnerabilities due to their emotional or mental health needs. This work has been taken forward through an extensive interagency review of provision and the main report, *Getting it right for vulnerable young people*, has been accepted by the senior management teams in health and the Council. Attached to this report is a draft implementation plan arising from the report which will allow Members an early sight of the issues and how these are being taken forward (Appendix 1).

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 To note the content of the work being undertaken and consider the issues that have emerged from this.

**3. DETAIL**

3.1 An extensive review of support arrangements for young people with emotional and mental health needs has been undertaken during 2010. This review was jointly led by the Council and the NHS and considered in detail the services currently available and where there were gaps in provision. The review examined six main areas of activity and made a number of recommendations in respect of each of them.

These areas were :-

- Support to parenting
- The role of primary mental health worker
- Substance misuse
- Abuse & trauma recovery
- Learning & development for professionals
- Communications & networking

3.2 The draft implementation plan for these areas of activity is attached for Members information and early consideration. This

plan is due to be presented to governance groups with the Council and the NHS during May and June.

- 3.3 The implementation plan lays out how services will be developed. The plan is structured in such a way as to consider all of the area of service ranging from preventative approaches through to acute services and issues in relation to staff support and training. Of particular significance are the areas in relation to abuse and trauma recovery services, and the role of primary mental health workers.
- 3.4 Abuse and trauma recovery provides services for children who have high level needs and may be presenting severely troubled or troubling behaviours. The report envisages a joined up response to these children by creating an integrated pathway where their needs will be addressed through one point of contact. This involves bringing a wide range of services including psychiatry, clinical psychology, mental health nursing, trauma recovery, and play therapy together with one system, through partnership arrangements between health, the Council and the voluntary sector. This is a very ambitious and exciting proposal and would be the first of its kind in Scotland.
- 3.5 As indicated the review has considered the spectrum of support needs for young people ranging from early intervention to move acute needs. Within this a role has been identified for primary mental health workers. These workers would be attached to secondary schools and in conjunction with teaching and educational psychology they would provide an early intervention preventative function. These positions have previously been piloted with Oban and Rothesay and were very positively evaluated as delivering beneficial outcomes for young people. Argyll and Bute is one of the few authority areas across Scotland which does not have this role in place. There is currently no dedicated funding earmarked for these posts and further review work is being undertaken to examine how services can be reconfigured to allow these posts to be created. The omission of these posts would inevitably lessen the impact of the review and put additional pressure on universal provision and may mean that more children would require higher level services at a later date.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The review of services to vulnerable young people represents a substantial piece of interagency work over the past 18 months. It envisages a wholly integrated approach to working with young people who have emotional and mental health needs ranging from preventative and early intervention through to more high level acute provision and staff development. Implementation is well underway in respect of most of the areas of activity and more

resources are being sought to assist in the development of the PMHW role.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

<i>Policy:</i>	The review is in line with both corporate policy and community service development plans.
<i>Finance:</i>	The majority of the review is being implemented through redesign of existing resources with the exception of the PMHW role where work is underway to identify additional resources.
<i>Personnel:</i>	No implications.
<i>Legal:</i>	No implications.
<i>Equal Opportunities:</i>	The review actively promotes the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

Executive Director: Community Services

For further information please contact:

Douglas Dunlop  
Head of Service – Children & Families  
Argyll & Bute Council  
Kilmory  
Lochgilphead  
PA31 8RT

Tel: 01546 60 4256

[dougie.dunlop@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:dougie.dunlop@argyll-bute.gov.uk)