

Green Light for Northamptonshire

Eligibility Criteria

One clinician was concerned that the eligibility criteria for Learning Disability services is broader than the criteria for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and so transfers can be problematic. This is particularly the case for people with mild learning disabilities whose behaviour suggests distress, but their self-report of psychological difficulties does not neatly conform to a traditional psychiatric diagnosis. Such people can “bounce” between services unless action is taken. All our Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) and adult in-patient wards are managed by a group of managers who regularly meet together, including the managers for Learning Disability services, and their agenda includes the task of quickly resolving these transfer problems when they appear. We try to ensure that we identify such potential situations as soon as possible to resolve difficulties and ensure that people receive timely care.

Resources

One clinician observed that people using learning disability specialist services have access to a wider range of Positive Behaviour Support and other psychological therapies than is on offer through the Child and Adolescent Mental Health service (CAMHS) to young people with learning disabilities. Concerns about resources can be raised in the manager’s meeting.

Communication

Staff sometimes respond with a blank face when the Green Light Toolkit is mentioned while other agendas have a more descriptive name, such as *Treat Me Well* and *Annual Health Check*. We need to maintain awareness of the Green Light agenda and to actively support it, otherwise the default assumption is that Community Teams for People with Learning Disabilities will be expected do “all things” for everyone with a learning disability.

We developed a Youtube video for professionals describing how we assess and diagnose learning disabilities. This video explains how and when someone would access a specialist learning disability service and refers to the Green Light Toolkit.

Seamless services

One clinician described a teenager with a diagnosis of ADHD and mild learning disability. They supported transition to the relevant CMHT as her primary need was mental health care. This went smoothly and there was good communication with the CMHT worker.

A clinician from the Learning Disability service described an example of good joint working with a nurse from CAMHS in relation to a person whose functioning was on the borderline for a diagnosis of learning disability. The clinician provided consultation to the nurse so that the person was well supported.

Another explained that they had recently referred an 18 year-old service-user to the CMHT, where the Personality Disorder pathway is being considered – showing that a wide range of possible diagnoses are examined in the delivery of care.