

Pathway to CAMHS: Healthwatch Rochdale update

In September 2024, Healthwatch in Greater Manchester published the report “*Pathway to CAMHS*”, which explored whether the current mental health care pathway effectively supports children and young people to access timely and appropriate mental health support.



The report was informed by surveys, focus groups and recorded testimonies from children and young people, parents and carers, and professionals across Greater Manchester, including contributions gathered locally by Healthwatch Rochdale. In total, more than 1,200 responses informed the findings.

The report outlined six recommendations aimed at improving the pathway to mental health support for children and young people.

Because of this work, local changes implemented include:

- Pennine Care NHS Foundations Trust is progressing transformation of its CAMHS Single Points of Access to improve consistency across all five localities and strengthen referral routes, including digital access options. The purpose of this work is to support earlier access to the most appropriate help and to improve the overall experience of referral and entry to service.
- The Trust continues to work in partnership with Northern Care Alliance, education, social care and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector to progress the Greater Manchester Neurodiversity Transformation programme.

The objective is to ensure that children and young people with suspected neurodiversity needs can access appropriate support without unnecessary reliance on formal diagnosis, while those requiring assessment receive it at the earliest opportunity in accordance with their presenting level of need.

- The Trust's aim is for all children and young people referred with a suspected mental health need to receive an assessment within 12 weeks; in Rochdale, initial assessment appointments are currently being offered within 6 weeks of referral.
- Children, young people and families accepted onto a CAMHS pathway are provided with information about available support while awaiting assessment, tailored where necessary to individual communication needs. Where a young person has been referred for assessment of a mental health disorder, the service maintains contact with the young person and their family during the waiting period.
- Information about support available in Rochdale is accessible through the local neurodiversity support padlet, and children, young people and families may also access the Neurodiversity Hub, which has been established locally for several years. Further information is also available on the Pennine Care website.

Healthwatch Rochdale will continue to monitor the outcomes and impact made from "*The Pathway to CAMHS*" Report and update as necessary.



Share your story

about your experiences of the pathway to CAMHS

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