**Protocol for GPs and CAMHS for young people with eating disorders in Buckinghamshire**

This protocol has been drawn up following meetings between CAMHS and GP representatives, discussion at the Local Medical Committee and agreement with local commissioners.

**Background**

A specialist Child & Adolescent Eating Disorder Service (CAEDS) across Bucks and Oxon was launched on October 12th 2016. This new service was developed with additional funding from NHS England following a national review of outcomes for young people with eating disorders. The aim is to encourage early intervention, reduce inpatient admissions and promote improved long term outcome. The service provides easier access for patients where an eating disorder is suspected. This document includes recommendations for joint care with GPs to ensure safe management of medical risk in these patients.

**Service structure in Bucks**

The service covers the whole county, with a central specialist team based in Aylesbury . All assessments are done in the central bases but some follow-up appointments are offered in satellite clinics (High Wycombe and Amersham). The service provides outpatient treatment and intensive home treatment. Inpatient treatment is provided by the Highfield Unit, Oxford, the Marlborough Unit, Swindon or other national inpatient provisions if the local units are full.

**Key aims of the service**

**●** Easy access to the service and minimal waiting times

● Safe delivery of specialist care

**●** Seamless transitions

**●** Ongoing development of service in response to evaluation and outcome monitoring

**Referral Criteria**

**●** Young people under the age of 18

**●** GP is situated in Bucks

**●** Suspected eating disorder where this is the primary problem: symptoms include avoidance/restriction of food, loss of weight, fear of weight gain, bingeing/purging, concerns about weight/shape

**Referral pathway and response times**

Referrals are accepted from GPs and other non-medical professionals. Self-referrals are accepted over the age of 16 years. Referrals from GPs should cover specific eating disorder symptoms and sent to the Single Point of Access (SPA). If the referral is accepted onto the eating disorder pathway, urgent cases will be seen in one week and routine cases within 4 weeks. Treatment will start at the time of assessment. In the case of emergencies, the GP should ring the duty CAMHS eating disorder Consultant to discuss whether the patient is best seen in CAMHS or in Paediatrics. If it is decided that CAMHS is appropriate the patient will be seen within 24 hours.

* Prior to referral, GPs are requested to undertake a physical assessment and blood tests (including FBC, ESR/CRP, LFT, Urea & Electrolytes (including Mg, Ca and P), blood sugar, Thyroid function, Fe and B12 levels) to exclude other causes of weight loss and clarify risk (including height, weight, BP and pulse – and other investigations as relevant). If more information is required or if the bloods have not been completed prior to referral a CAEDS medic will contact (either by phone or letter) the GP to discuss further.
* Where referrals are received initially from non-medics or through self-referral, the patient will be asked to make an appointment with the GP for an initial physical assessment as above. The Eating Disorder team will liaise directly with the GP either by phone or by letter to request this assessment and if necessary discuss the patient further.

**Interventions in CAMHS**

The core intervention in CAMHS is a family-based approach for anorexia nervosa and cognitive behavioural therapy designed for people with eating disorders (CBT-E) for bulimia nervosa. Intensive home treatment will be offered where necessary.

**Communication with GPs**

We aim to send an assessment report within a week, invite the GP to attend CPA reviews where relevant and will make telephone contact, where necessary, as part of collaborative risk management.

**Blood tests**

When blood investigations are needed as part of ongoing assessment within CAEDS, blood request forms will be given to the patient and they will be asked to book a routine appointment for a blood test with the Practice Phlebotomy service (usual fee claimable) or the Phlebotomy service at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. The results will be obtained and managed by the Eating Disorders service. If the blood test is required urgently, CAEDS will contact the GP Practice to see if there are available phlebotomy slots or make other arrangements e.g. with Paediatrics. If the blood test reveals abnormalities that require further assessment or investigation by GPs there will be direct communication either by phone (if urgent) or by letter. Abnormal blood tests that come back after hours will be managed by duty CAMHS Consultant

**Medical review**

In the majority of cases medical reviews will be done regularly within CAEDS. However, in occasional cases, the young person may be reluctant to attend CAMHS for physical review despite significant physical risk. In these cases the GP may be asked to undertake regular medical reviews following direct discussion between a Consultant in CAEDS and the GP.

**Transitions**

We aim to facilitate smooth transitions to adult eating disorder services, psychiatric inpatient service or paediatrics, where necessary. Patients that require admission to paediatrics for management of their eating disorder will be referred directly by CAEDS.

**Discharge**

Where relevant the GP may be invited to the final discharge CPA review. Some patients may need ongoing weight monitoring by the GP following discharge. If the GP is not able to attend the CPA review, this will be requested either by phone or letter by the Consultant in CAEDS.

**Feedback:** We encourage feedback in order to continually improve what is offered. Please contact Vickie Kearney (Operational manager, Oxon) [Vickie.kearney@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:Vickie.kearney@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk), Dorothy Dan-Cooke (Operational manager, Bucks) [dorothy.dan-cooke@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:dorothy.dan-cooke@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk) , Anne Stewart (Consultant Psychiatrist) [anne.stewart@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:anne.stewart@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk); Jo Holliday (Consultant Psychologist) [joanna.holliday@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](mailto:joanna.holliday@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk) Feb 2019