

Health Policy & Performance Board (HPPB) Scrutiny Review 2025/26

Topic Brief

Topic Title: Mental Health Support

Officer Lead: Helen Moir, Head of Service – Independent Living Services & Mental Health

Planned Start Date: July 2025

Target PPB Meeting: February 2026

Topic Description and Scope:

The 2025/26 scrutiny review for the Health Policy & Performance Board will look at Mental Health Support, specifically how existing provision is meeting current demand and responding to predicted demand, and equality of access to services for marginalised or minority groups, covering both Adults and Children and Young People Services.

This will include:

- The range and type of support and services for mental health available in Halton.
- Access to mental health support via primary care and during times of crisis.
- Assessment, diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions.
- Community based mental health services.
- Inpatient mental health services and alternatives to hospital admission.
- The mental health crisis response.

Please note that services to support those with dementia, a learning disability and/ or autism are out of scope of this scrutiny topic.

The main focus of the topic will be on health services delivered by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust. Predominantly this will be looking at services for adults but the topic will also consider Child and Young People's Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

Through evidence presented at the scrutiny meetings, and/or site visits to services, the scrutiny group will develop an oversight of the key duties of each service, as well as the referral pathways, key operational practices and interface with other services. Through considering current performance, outcomes and service user feedback for each service area, the group will make recommendations on how services can further improve service user experience, outcomes and maximise performance.

Why this topic was chosen:

"Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our

individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right.”

(World Health Organization, 2022)

According to NHS England, one in four adults and one in 10 children experience mental illness. The NHS Long Term Plan makes a renewed commitment to improve and widen access to care for children and adults needing mental health support.

Mental health has a direct impact on an individual's overall wellbeing and quality of life and is interlinked with physical health. It is essential that people have access to support at the earliest opportunity when they are experiencing difficulties with their mental health. It is also important for those with mental health conditions to be able to access appropriate treatment and ongoing support.

It is important for Health PPB Members to gain an understanding of the local services that are in place to support the mental health needs of the local community in order to ensure that Halton residents have access to the right support at the right time.

Key outputs and outcomes sought:

- Understand who uses the services and why.
- Understand how the service ensures equality of access and outcomes for all sections of the community, including minority or marginalised groups.
- Understand referral/access pathways, including any barriers.
- Understand key performance indicators, outcomes and service user experience.
- Understand how each of the services interact with the wider health and social care landscape.
- Understand the level of capacity and demand within the services and highlight emerging issues through trend analysis.
- Understand how the service is meeting current demand and what it predicts future demand will look like and how it will meet that demand.
- Understand any opportunities, challenges or emerging issues faced by the services.
- Highlight any innovative work taking place to improve performance, outcomes and service user experience.
- Make recommendations as to how services can further improve performance, outcomes and service user experience.

Which of Halton's strategic priorities this topic addresses and the key objectives and improvement targets it will help to achieve:

Priority One: Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

Encouraging good quality health, wellbeing and social care, by involving everyone in our community. To support the people of Halton to feel safe, be active, happy and lead their best lives.

This scrutiny topic will contribute to the following objectives from the Corporate Plan 2024-2029:

- Offer easily accessible and integrated health care, advice and services from birth.
- Encourage preventative care and healthy lifestyles for the people of Halton throughout their lives.
- Support mental health services and tackle elderly isolation in Halton.

Nature of expected/desired PPB input:

This Member-led scrutiny review of Mental Health Support Services in Halton will be undertaken through a series of six monthly meetings at which Members will receive evidence presentations by the service areas identified. Service site visits will be arranged as applicable/requested. Members will make recommendations for inclusion in the Scrutiny Topic report to be presented to Health PPB and Executive Board.

The Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board will be invited to attend the CAMHS session due to the overlap with their remit.

Preferred mode of operation:

- Meetings with/presentations from relevant officers from each of the services identified.
- Visit to services where applicable/requested.

Agreed and signed by:

Role	Signature	Date
HPPB Chair (<i>Cllr Eddie Dourley</i>)		
Lead Officer (<i>Helen Moir, Head of Service</i>)		