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## CAMHS Referral Guideline

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## **1.0 Introduction**

NHS Ayrshire and Arran Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) consists of a multi-disciplinary team that provide (i) assessment and treatment/interventions in the context of emotional, developmental, environmental and social factors for children and young people experiencing mental health problems, and (ii) training, consultation, advice and support to professionals working with children, young people and their families.

CAMHS will provide support to universal and targeted community services (Tier 1 and Tier 2), but primarily works as a multi-disciplinary team at Tier 3, supported by services that have specific and additional expertise, often provided over a larger area e.g. Tier 4 inpatient services are delivered by Skye House, Stobhill Hospital Glasgow.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran CAMHS will accept referrals for young people who present with mental health problems that are causing significant impairments in their day-to-day lives, and where the other services and approaches described above have not been effective, or are not appropriate.

CAMHS will accept requests for assistance and referrals from all children's services professionals, where the National Referral Criteria are met.

## **2.0 Purpose of the Guideline**

This guideline aims to support those considering making a referral to CAMHS by

- clarifying the people for whom a referral may be appropriate
- explaining the referral procedure
- describing the response of CAMHS to the referrals received

## **3.0 Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment Statement**

Staff are reminded that they may have patients who require communication in a form other than English e.g. other languages or signing. Additionally, some patients may have difficulties with written material. At all times, communication and material should be in the patients preferred format. This may also apply to patients with learning difficulties.

In some circumstances there may be religious and/or cultural issues which may impact on this guideline e.g. choice of gender of Health care professional. Consideration should be given to these issues when treating/examining patients.

Some patients may have physical disability that makes it difficult for them to be treated/examined as set out in the guideline requiring adaptations to be made.

Patients' sexuality may or may not be relevant to the implementation of this guideline, however, non-sexuality specific language should be used when asking patients about their sexual history. Where sexuality may be relevant, tailored advice and information may be given.

## 4.0 Scope of the Guideline

This guideline is for staff from all health professions, education and social services referring to CAMHS.

## 5.0 Definition of Terms

CAMHS      Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services  
GIRFEC     Getting it Right for Every Child

## 6.0 Guideline Content

The team provide a service for children and young people up to the age of 18 years and their families in Ayrshire and Arran who are experiencing difficulties ranging from significant emotional or behavioural problems to persistent mental health problems which have a significant impact on everyday life.

**N.B.** Children under the age of 5 years old and not at school please contact Rainbow House to discuss referral

CAMHS (Tier 3) will provide services for:

- Severe Depression and Anxiety
- Moderate to severe emotional and behavioural problems, including severe conduct, impulsivity, and attention disorders
- Psychosis
- Obsessive-compulsive disorders
- Eating disorders
- Self-harm
- Suicidal behaviours
- Mental health problems with comorbid drug and alcohol use
- Attachment disorders
- Post-traumatic stress disorders
- Mental health problems comorbid with neurodevelopmental problems

When a young person has complex needs and/or significant associated social factors, such as being Looked After; being a child or sibling of someone with severe and enduring mental or physical health problems; the victim of abuse or has witnessed abuse; then a multidisciplinary and multiagency approach should be considered.

A full description of the difficulties is required, including nature and duration, relevant background information, social circumstances and school information. CAMHS operate within a GIRFEC approach which ensures that anyone providing that support puts the child/young person – and their family- at the centre resulting in the young person experiencing a more streamlined and co-ordinated response from practitioners (Scottish Government 2012).

Contact with CAMHS is voluntary and a referral must be made in agreement with the parents/guardian and/or young person (depending on age). People are more likely to

have a positive experience and a successful outcome when they have been involved in the referral decision and are motivated to attend.

Referrals are screened daily and priority level is considered in terms of the immediate risk to the child or young person in relation to their mental health difficulties.

A specific referral can be made for:

**Consultation**

A consultation may be offered by the CAMHS team which provides an opportunity to gather more information from all the professionals involved; to think about a young person in a therapeutic way and offer support and advice to the network already working with the young person. An information request form will be sent to the referrer to allow for the consultation time to be utilised as effectively as possible. If there requires to be more than one consultation regarding a young person, the team will require to meet with the young person to complete an assessment.

**N.B.** Not all consultation cases will be accepted into the service for ongoing intervention therefore the referrer retains responsibility for the care of the child/young person until a decision has been agreed.

**Routine Assessment**

An assessment will be undertaken to ascertain the presence of mental ill health and formulate with the young person a plan of care.

**Urgent Assessment**

When making an urgent referral, the referrer should discuss the child or young person with the duty clinician for CAMHS in order to agree the level of urgency and response required from CAMHS clinicians. CAMHS operate a rota of clinicians available to respond to urgent referrals and offer next day assessment for young people admitted to hospital within working hours.

<b>Urgency</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Routine	4 weeks	All other referrals
Urgent	within five working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marked and acute deterioration in presentation</li> <li>• significant risk to self or others</li> <li>• significant and rapid weight loss secondary to severe food restriction/refusal to eat</li> <li>• suspected psychosis</li> </ul>

**How to Make a Referral**

Referrals will be made through:

- SCI gateway

- Letter by post
- Clinical mailbox
- GIRFEC paperwork

CAMHS offer a locality triaging service and can be contacted at the below addresses

East CAMHS Team,  
 North West Area Centre, Western Road, Kilmarnock, KA3 1NQ  
 Telephone number 01563 578540  
 Fax number 01563 578741  
 Clinical\_MentalHealth\_CAMHS\_East

North CAMHS Team,  
 Rear of Horseshoe Building, Ayrshire Central Hospital, Kilwinning Road, Irvine, KA12  
 8SS  
 Telephone number 01294 323425  
 Clinical\_MentalHealth\_CAMHS\_North

South CAMHS Team,  
 House 1, Arrol Park, Doonfoot, Ayr, KA7 4DW  
 Telephone number 01292 615931  
 Fax number 01292 617181  
 Clinical\_MentalHealth\_CAMHS\_South

## 7.0 References

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) NHS Scotland National Service Specification, Scottish Government 2020.  
 The Mental Health of Children and Young People: A Framework for Promotion, Prevention and Care (2005).  
 Needs assessment report on child and adolescent mental health (2002)  
 The Integrated Care Pathways for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, (2011)  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright) (2012)

## 8.0 Appendix

Appendix 1

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), information for referrers

## **CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE (CAMHS) INFORMATION FOR REFERRERS**

### **Who we are**

CAMHS is a mental health service who offers assessment and interventions for a wide range of mental health problems that affect children, young people and their families/carers when these problems are more persistent, complex or severe. Contact with CAMHS is voluntary and a referral must be made in agreement with the parents and/or young person, depending on age. People are more likely to have a positive experience and a successful outcome when they have been involved in the referral decision and are motivated to attend.

### **Who to refer?**

- A child/young person up to age 18
- Suspected of having a mental disorder or other condition that causes symptoms of psychological distress
- Results in significant impairment of day to day social functioning
- May cause serious harm either to themselves or someone else

CAMHS (Tier 3) will provide services for:

- Severe Depression and Anxiety
- Moderate to severe emotional and behavioural problems, including severe conduct, impulsivity, and attention disorders
- Psychosis
- Obsessive-compulsive disorders
- Eating disorders
- Self-harm
- Suicidal behaviours
- Mental health problems with comorbid drug and alcohol use
- Attachment disorders
- Post-traumatic stress disorders
- Mental health problems comorbid with neurodevelopmental problems

This may appear as:

- Significant changes in mood that are out of character or keeping with social situation, for example
  - social withdrawal
  - change in interests/motivation
  - change to sleep and appetite
  - increased anxiety or agitation
  - thoughts /acts of self harm or suicide
- Unusual behaviour/confusion, “voices” or other abnormal experiences and disturbed thinking
- Persistent obsessive or repetitive behaviours that interfere with daily function
- Eating problems such as food restriction, self induced vomiting, purging or significant reduction in body weight
- Extreme distress such as explosive outbursts, acute agitation

We also see young people with a range of neuro-developmental difficulties, namely:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism
- Asperger’s syndrome

*Please note, Children under 5 and not in school should be referred to Rainbow House*

When a young person has complex needs and/or significant associated social factors, such as being Looked After; being a child or sibling of someone with severe and enduring mental or physical health problems; the victim of abuse or has witnessed abuse; then a multidisciplinary and multiagency approach should be taken.



