

Mental and physical health care Briefing for consideration for Overview and Scrutiny agenda:

The specialist mental health needs of physically frail and often older people with long term conditions and severe and enduring functional mental health problems (e.g. psychotic illness, severe depression) are currently met by BEH MHT via the Older Peoples Mental Health Team (who also work with people with people with cognitive impairment and dementia of all ages). Broadly speaking this means that the specialist knowledge and expertise required to effectively support older and / or frail people with functional mental health problems is currently concentrated in the Older Peoples Mental Health Team whilst the other community based mental health services have more expertise in working with younger less frail people.

The future direction for commissioning mental health services is based on whole life course planning; this raises a question about the best service model for the specialist community based mental health support for frail and/or older people: Should services remain as they are currently configured or should there be a move to all age functional mental health services incorporating the needs of older and / or frail people alongside a separate all age cognitive impatient and dementia service. Different commissioners and mental health trusts have opted for different models and there are pros and cons for each option. This question has not been considered in Haringey for several years, it is now timely to consider it again particularly in the context of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee investigation into mental and physical health care and the emerging integration of health and social care commissioning and provision in the future.