

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE A new model of Mental Health Social Work in Camden	
REPORT OF Director of ASC Operations and Deputy Director of Adult Social Services	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	DATE 8 July 2025
SUMMARY OF REPORT This report provides an update on the development of Camden's new model of Mental Health Social Work and outlines progress to date and planned next steps. Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report. Contact Officer: Avril Mayhew Director of ASC Operations and Deputy DASS Adults & Health London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG Avril.Mayhew@camden.gov.uk	
RECOMMENDATIONS That the Committee note and comment on the progress outlined in this report, and identify any further information the Committee would like to receive as the project moves into its next phase.	

Signed: Avril Mayhew



Date: Thursday 19th June 2025

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the development of a new model of Mental Health Social Work in Camden, and welcome comments from the Committee on progress so far as well as planned next steps.
- 1.2 This report follows the update to Committee that was provided by the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care's update in February 2025.
- 1.3 The ask of the Committee is to note and comment on the progress outlined in this report, and to identify any further information the Committee would like to receive as the project moves into its next phase.

2 Strategic Context and Background

- 2.1 Camden Council and its partners are committed to building a future where individuals, communities, and local services work together to improve health and wellbeing across our thriving neighbourhoods. Guided by the ambitions of *We Make Camden*, the *Camden Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022–30*, and the voices of Camden residents through the *Health and Care Citizens' Assembly*, Adult Social Care (ASC) is developing a new, integrated model of Mental Health Social Work that works alongside NHS Mental Health services and the wider health and care system to meet the mental health social care needs of Camden residents. The model is rooted in local relationships, accessibility, and a deep understanding of community needs, and, through the *What Matters* approach, ASC will place people at the centre of care - empowering them to lead fulfilling lives by focusing on their strengths and what truly matters to them.
- 2.2 Historically, the delivery of Adult Social Care in Mental Health services has been governed under a Section 75 agreement between the London Borough of Camden (LBC – the 'Council') and the North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT – the 'Trust'). Under these arrangements, mental health Social Work staff working are employed by the Council and are seconded into the Trust to deliver statutory social care duties.
- 2.3 A 2023 review of these arrangements identified opportunities for improvement relating to safeguarding practice, application of statutory duties (i.e. Care Act 2014), and equity of access to social care support for residents.
- 2.4 In November 2024, a formal staff consultation on proposed changes to the delivery of Adult Social Care within Mental Health Services was launched, with the ambition to create a new model for Mental Health Social Work which:
 - Works in partnership with the NHS Mental Health Services to retain the strength and benefits of a multi-disciplinary approach to Mental Health care,
 - Further strengthens models of integrated neighbourhood working,
 - Provides assurance on the delivery of the Council's statutory duties, and

- Embeds '*What Matters*' strengths-based practice within Mental Health Social Work.

2.5 The formal consultation concluded in January 2025, and the confirmed changes for the new model of Mental Health Social Work include:

- For all Mental Health Social Work staff to report directly to the Council and to exclusively work with residents who have care and support needs relating to their mental health.
- To create a Mental Health Social Work Hub to receive, triage, and progress all new referrals into mental health social care and connect people into local services.
- To create 3 localised Mental Health Social Work Teams (MHSWTs) to work alongside the Trust's three Core Mental Health Services, Inpatient, Specialist and Crisis Teams to meet the social care needs for people experiencing mental ill health. The plan is also for MHSWTs to become part of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) as they are established.
- For all mental health social care activity to be recorded directly onto the Council's Adult Social Care recording system (MOSAIC).
- To replace the existing Section 75 agreement with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreed between London Borough of Camden and North London Foundation Trust (NLFT).

3 Progress to Date

- 3.1 Since January 2025, significant work has been undertaken to prepare for the implementation of Camden's new Mental Health Social Work Service, which, at the time of writing this report, is scheduled to commence on **30 June 2025**.
- 3.2 The Service aims to strengthen mental health social care provision, improve integration with NHS services, and ensure residents receive timely, appropriate, and person-centred support.
- 3.3 This has involved:

1. Ensuring residents receive the right support in the new ways of working:

- **Service-level responsibilities** have been clearly defined, including joint responsibilities between Mental Health Social Work and NHS Mental Health Services, to ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities across health and care services.
- A **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** has been developed, outlining the functions and expectations of the new service and its interface with NLFT and wider support services in supporting the mental health social care needs of Camden's communities.

- A **review of residents currently known to NLFT's Mental Health Services** has been completed to identify individuals currently supported by mental health services and determine the most appropriate team or service to meet their needs under the new model. This includes a transition process to ensure continuity of care for residents.

2. Establishing the new team structure and bringing teams together

- The new team configuration has been integrated into the Council's Human Resources (HR) system, with roles and reporting lines formalised, and staffing budgets confirmed
- Recruitment to key posts is underway, with a focus on both professional experience and alignment with the values and principles underpinning the ambition to create a strengths-based, relational, and person-centred model of Mental Health Social Work
- Internal staff are being supported through development opportunities to support workforce development and retention of expertise.
- A launch programme is underway, including team-building sessions to foster a shared identity and collaborative culture across the newly formed teams.

3. Ensuring staff have the right tools, training, and support to successfully deliver their functions

- A comprehensive learning and development induction programme has been designed and has started to be delivered, covering practice and system training, new ways of working and developing a deeper understanding and awareness of local resources, and wider Council services.
- Existing IT systems have been reconfigured to support accurate recording and reporting of mental health social care activity, enabling better oversight and performance monitoring.
- Staff being provided with IT equipment and system access to support joint working, particularly with NHS partners.

4 Key Risks and Priorities

- 4.1 Whilst significant progress has been made in establishing the new Mental Health Social Work Service, the implementation process has also presented a number of challenges which are being actively managed and addressed.
- 4.2 One of the most pressing challenges has been supporting staff to manage the competing demands of:
 - Reviewing and transitioning their existing work to ensure that residents receive the right support under the new arrangements

- Completing the necessary training to support staff in preparing for the new ways of working
 - Continuing to deliver high-quality care and support to residents
- 4.3 This balancing act has placed temporary pressure on some frontline staff. In response, flexible timelines have been introduced, essential training has been prioritised, and additional opportunities for staff to share their views to help them navigate this period of change have been provided.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 As the new Mental Health Social Work Service moves from initial implementation into its next phase from July 2025 onwards, the focus will shift toward embedding the new model in practice, strengthening relationships, and ensuring the new Service delivers high-quality, person-centred care, and meaningful outcomes for residents and staff. The following priorities will guide this work:
- **Embedding the New Service Model:** Defining and refining the Service and individual team offers, ensuring clarity of purpose and alignment with the overall service vision.
 - **Strengthening Relationships:** Building strong internal relationships across the newly formed teams to foster collaboration and shared identity. Externally, the Service will continue to work hand in hand with NHS Mental Health Services and wider support services, including housing, employment, and the Voluntary and Community Sector, to ensure holistic support for individuals.
 - **Transitioning Work Appropriately:** A structured process has been developed to transition existing work to the most appropriate team or service based on the individual's needs, ensuring that people receive the right support at the right time.
 - **Embedding Teams and Culture Change:** Ongoing work will focus on embedding the new team structures, including regular reflective practice, supervision, and team development sessions. Culture change will be supported through leadership development, staff engagement, and the promotion of shared values such as compassion, inclusion, and accountability.
- 5.2 The new service will sit within the Council and ASC's existing governance and assurance and arrangements and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining interfaces and partnership arrangements will replace the existing Section 75 agreement.
- 5.3 An important element of measuring the effectiveness of the new model will be through the lived experiences of the people being supported. This will be measured and understood through the Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Framework as well as:

- The Adult Social Care Outcomes Survey
- Analysis of compliments, complaints, and other informal written and verbal feedback.
- Feedback from advocacy services and peer support networks.
- Resident and carer stories gathered via engagement groups or case study methods.
- Audits and other requirements as set out within the Quality Assurance Framework.
- Community-based engagement.
- Staff feedback and engagement.
- Monitoring and reporting of key service performance indicators which are outlined within the Standard Operating Procedures.
- Quality assurance and audit.

6 Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

- 6.1 The introduction of the new service is not expected to create any additional financial burden or budgetary pressures for the service as it has been designed to operate within the existing available resources.

7 Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted on the contents of the report and has no comments to add to the report

8 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 This project has no environment impacts.

REPORT ENDS