**Consultation on the proposal to continue with integrated Adult Mental Health Services.**

**Background**

The London Borough of Merton has a long standing arrangement with South West London & St George’s Mental Health NHS Trust for integrated adult mental health services.

Integrated arrangements allow social care staff to work alongside health staff in combined teams to meet the needs of patients and service users seamlessly. There has been a trend for councils to undo these arrangements, but the London Borough of Merton remains committed to integrated arrangements for adult mental health services as we believe this provides the best outcomes for our residents.

The arrangement is governed by section 75 of the NHS 2006 Act, which is why integrated arrangements are sometimes referred to as section 75 agreements. The arrangement will be overseen by the Mental Health Integration Board, a board made up of officers from the Council and the Trust.

The agreement is a legal contract between the two organisations. Each agreement has a lifespan, although they contain a clause that means that the agreement still holds unless or until it is ended or replaced.

This consultation is about the renewal of the current agreement, which has expired.

The consultation is conducted jointly by the London Borough of Merton and South West London and St George’s Mental Health NHS Trust.

**Scope of agreement**

The agreement provides for the management of Council social care staff by the Trust. The staff concerned are seconded to the Trust and are subject to their day to day management, but remain Council employees.

The staff concerned include qualified social workers, social work assistants, vocational support workers and administrative staff. In addition, the Council contributes to the costs of the management of the teams.

These staff work in teams alongside health staff. The key teams they are part of are as follows:

* Merton Assessment Team – the main assessment gateway to adult mental health services for people aged 18-75 who are experiencing mental health problems and who are not responding to primary care interventions.
* The Recovery & Support Teams – these teams provide the main treatment, recovery and support functions where there is no clear diagnosis of a psychosis or mood disorder. The teams are linked to GP practices and support is provided in the community. The teams also offer education and employment support.
* Merton Early Intervention Team – which supports adult aged 18-65 with a first episode of psychosis.
* Merton Crisis & Home Intervention Team – which provides rapid assessment in A&E and in the community.
* Merton Placement Review Team – which works closely with the Recovery & Support Teams to support the needs of those who required commissioned social care packages.

Up until now it has also included the Merton Older Person’s Community Mental Health Team, but the council is proposing changes to this arrangement (see below).

Under the terms of the agreement, the Council and the Trust work together to ensure that the Council meets its responsibility for ensuring sufficient Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) are available to carry out their roles under the Mental Health Act 1983. The Council remains responsible for approving individual AMPHs. The Trust is responsible for making sure that AMPH’s under its management are released for duties and for training.

*Approved Mental Health Professionals are professional staff with a registered qualification (either Social Workers, Community Mental Health Nurses, Occupational Therapists or Chartered Psychologists) specifically approved and appointed under Section 114 of the Mental Health Act 1983 by a local Social Services authority ‘for the purpose of discharging the functions conferred upon them by this Act’. Among these, one of the most important is to carry out assessments under the Act and to function as applicant in cases where compulsory admission is deemed necessary. Before being appointed, AMHPs must undertake post-qualifying training accredited by the Health and Care Professions Council.*

**Pooled budgets**

The agreement covers the secondment of these staff and thereby ‘pools’ the budget for their employment costs. This Pooled Fund means that the Trust is responsible for managing the budget and ensuring that posts are appropriately filled and subject to supervision and performance management alongside their budget for their own staff. Some posts are shared, for example the Council makes a contribution through the Pooled Fund to the management and supervisory posts in the relevant teams.

These integrated teams will, alongside a range of support and interventions, arrange for social care and support, either in someone’s own home, in a day unit or a residential unit. Eligibility for this care and support is governed by the Care Act 2014 and the Trust is responsible for ensuring that its teams comply with this Act.

The costs of this care is met by the Council from what we call the Placements Budget. This is not a pooled fund and is retained and managed by the council.

**Changes to the agreement**

The core agreement, which is in draft, has been updated in line with current national templates for such arrangements.

The staffing and budget schedules will be updated to reflect changes since the last agreement was written. It will also reflect the recent uplift in pay for AMPH’s to bring Merton into line with neighbouring boroughs.

The performance schedule will be updated to reflect current best practice.

The Council is proposing to remove the older people’s mental health social workers from the arrangement:

* This affects three qualified and one unqualified social work post;
* The proposal is that these four posts will instead be managed as part of the Council’s older people’s social work teams;
* The proposals is that there time will be split between Springfield and the Civic Centre, but with Springfield remaining their main base;
* The rationale is that mental health is core business for all of our older people’s teams and as we are working to integrate these teams with community health services, these four posts should be part of that new integrated arrangement;
* The posts will be linked to the four Locality Integrated Teams and the emerging Primary Care Networks.

This proposal is subject to further discussion with the Trust and this consultation.

**Consultation**

The proposal to continue with integrated adult mental health services, but to remove the four OPMH posts, is the subject of this consultation.

**Process**

The results of the consultation will be collated and considered with the Trust. If the decision is to proceed with the agreement, then this will be presented to the Council’s Cabinet and the Trust’s Board for agreement.

**How to take part**

You can participate by completing the short online survey which is available at:

The consultation will be open between Tuesday 21st May and Monday 10th June 2019.

**Mental Health section 75 consultation questions**

The requirement is to consult on the fact of having integrated arrangements under section 75 of the NHS Act 2006.

1. Are you a user of mental health services, a carer for someone with mental ill health, a professional, or other stakeholder? Tick as many boxes as apply.
2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the integration of adult mental health social care and health
	1. Integration helps make services easier to access, e.g. by having care and health staff in the same team;
	2. Integration means it is easier to work out who is accountable for services, e.g. because health and care needs are met by one organisation;
	3. Integrated teams means there is a more shared expertise.
3. Do you support the integration of the older people’s mental health social work team with other older people’s social work teams?
4. Any other comments